

# **Theosophical Writings of Julia Keightley**

Julia Wharton Lewis Campbell Ver Planck Keightley



*Jasper Niemand.  
(Mrs H. Keightley)*

JULIA WHARTON LEWIS CAMPBELL VER PLANCK KEIGHTLEY  
(10 AUGUST 1850 – 9 OCTOBER 1915)

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Julia Wharton Lewis Campbell Ver Planck Keightley

Compiled and edited by  
Scott J. Osterhage



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# PREFACE

**Julia Wharton Lewis Campbell**, later Ver Planck, and still later Keightley, was a prolific writer during the latter portion of the nineteenth century. She began writing in her teens, and wrote until illness overtook her mortal frame, shortly before her consciousness passed quietly from the visible world. In 1886 she discovered theosophy. (Theosophy elucidates the core truths of science, religion, and philosophy, and reveals the ‘perennial philosophy.’ With study, reflection, and inculcation it approaches an explanation of the universe and helps guide the conduct of our everyday lives.) Her efforts from that time on, were channeled into writing about theosophy’s impressions and for its promulgation in the world. Most of her writings are assuredly as applicable today as when they were written over a century and more ago — and most are as timeless as the theosophical concepts that they embody. My hope is that they will bring Truth-seekers of today a healthy philosophical diet to feast upon.

Over her lifetime, Julia gathered many names and wrote under several *noms-de-plume*. Due to her surfeit of names, I will simply use her first name, Julia, when I speak of her hereafter. Upon a quick search, there are only a couple dozen theosophical articles circulating on the internet today. Perhaps the discreetness William Q. Judge wrote about in 1894 has continued until today: “I tell you very plainly that J.C.K. ought not to let herself be too well known to all. She is too sensitive, and it injures her.” \* After a disciplined search of all accessible major theosophical magazines and books, I found nearly 300 articles attributed to her. Julia’s use of pseudonyms made tracking down all her works elusive at times, and they are often subjective as to authorship. She did have a distinctive style, used some words, phrases, and combinations consistently, and there was a certain cadence to her writing that became clear to me over time.

Julia’s most important works were brought forth primarily during the last quarter of the Nineteenth Century. It was a time of many significant historical occurrences, the central one for this work being the establishment of the Theosophical Society in 1875, by H. P. Blavatsky, H. S. Olcott, and W. Q. Judge. With it came a new explosion of thoughts and ideas which were radical for the Victorian era; for theosophy to resurge during that time was very disruptive and innovative when compared to the ‘norm,’ the then standard customs. The conflict between *Religion* and *Science* was fully raging. Theosophy — instead of being an either/or between Science and Religion, brought a synthesis of those two together with Philosophy, creating a triad of understanding underlying those groups, the universally true concepts which bring an elucidation of the wide array of Cosmogony and Anthropogony — literally everything about how the universe is manifest, without crystalizing thoughts into dogma.

Julia’s writings speak to a wonting place in my heart. They speak to a place that few other theosophical writers have, or regularly, wrote for. Julia has been an overlooked strength in theosophical history. She had an esoteric connection with H. P. Blavatsky and a Master of Wisdom; and she undeniably had a very close *esoteric* tie and working relationship with William Q. Judge. There is unquestionably a higher influence at work. Those who come to find this book, and read it, will not be disappointed in the inspiration within its pages, poetically eloquent yet familiarly written.

Scott J. Osterhage  
Tucson, Arizona  
21 March 2025

\* Letter from W. Q. Judge: See *The Theosophical Quarterly* – January 1932, Vol. 29, pp. 245-246.

# THE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY AND THEOSOPHY.<sup>1</sup>

**The Theosophical Society** has been operating continuously since its inception, and is still active worldwide today. Its main Headquarters are in Pasadena, California (theosociety.org). The Society was founded in New York in 1875, primarily by Helena P. Blavatsky, Henry S. Olcott, and William Q. Judge. The successors after H. P. Blavatsky, were William Q. Judge, Katherine Tingley, Gottfried de Purucker, Arthur L. Conger, James A. Long, and Grace F. Knoche.

The Theosophical Society, Pasadena, California, continues to pursue its original program under the current leader, Randell C. Grubb. Theosophical University Press is its publishing company. The primary purpose of the Society is to encourage altruism and compassion. Its objectives are:

- to diffuse among men a knowledge of the Laws inherent in the universe;
- to promulgate the knowledge of the essential unity of all that is, and to demonstrate that this unity is fundamental in nature;
- to form an active brotherhood among men;
- to study ancient and modern religion, science, and philo-sophy;
- to investigate the powers innate in man.

The word THEOSOPHY is derived from the Greek *theos* (god, divinity) and *sophia* (wisdom). Its philosophy is a contemporary presentation of the perennial wisdom underlying the world's religions, sciences, and philo-sophies.

Blavatsky held that “the very root idea of the Society is free and fearless investigation.” She addressed the question “What is a theosophist”:

one need not necessarily recognize the existence of any special God or a deity. One need but worship the spirit of living nature, and try to identify oneself with it.... Be what he may, once that a student abandons the old and trodden highway of routine, and enters upon the solitary path of independent thought — Godward — he is a Theosophist; an original thinker, a seeker after the eternal truth with “an inspiration of his own” to solve the universal problems.

— *The Theosophist*, October 1879, p. 6.

## NOTE

1. See Appendix: “Theosophy & the Theosophical Society” by Grace F. Knoche, for additional exposition. See also theosociety.org for more information on theosophy.

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# INTRODUCTION

**This book presents a comprehensive collection of the theosophical writings of Julia Wharton Lewis Campbell Ver Planck Keightley**, that have never been collected or published in a single spot. In general, I have included all the articles I found that are directly (or sometimes indirectly) attributed to Julia, that speak directly to theosophical concepts.

There are times when Julia, or others (as many authors of that time did), attempted to create a realistic spoken tone, by writing character speech in a slang vernacular that would have been used in the late 1800's. In no way should this be interpreted as demeaning or slandering a person or group of people — it was simply intended to create a realistic atmosphere of diction at the time. See also the Challenging Words section following this Introduction for some words used which have changed in meaning since written, or have gained an unfavorable meaning or tone over time elapsed.

Language changes over time, and with it, spelling and punctuation. Even during the span of these articles, from 1886 to 1912, spelling and diction changed. My intent was to modify only what seemed necessary — so it kept the original language style — while cleaning up all the typos, inconsistencies, and annoyances, spelling changes, and still present it in a cohesive whole. *I don't believe anything that I have changed has altered the meaning or import of the original language or message from Julia herself.* In order to retain some flavor of the time of Julia's writings, I left some of the original spelling and punctuation as I found them in the diverse sources cited. I have also included items in footnotes that provide reference or context for the items mentioned in the text;

Braces { }, shown within titles and articles are to show my notes or comments, or added footnotes to the original. For Sections and intros which are my writing, no braces are shown. Parentheses ( ), and brackets [ ], had already been used in many places, and remain. Additionally, 'Ed.' or 'Compiler' without braces are from the original. All of the book's front matter is by this compiler/editor unless noted.

Some words inevitably tend to pejoration, and I have changed a few of those now disparaging words from their common usage of the time to more currently acceptable ones; and also added a list of Challenging Words following this section which have come to have double or multiple meanings, to help those who read this work which meaning is attached to the words.

For the non-specifically signed ("Student," "Pilgrim," etc.) or "Unsigned" articles, I gave them my own rating of potentially being Julia's. *Probably* (almost certainly in my opinion), and *Possibly* (the article could well be hers, based on content and style), are added to the NAME above the article. There are undoubtedly articles Julia wrote that were unsigned or signed generally which I have missed, just as there are articles I may have included which may not be hers. I was diligent to try and match writing style, word usage, punctuation oddities, subject type, and general cadence, to articles that I felt were definitely hers. Even if they are not hers, I believe they still contain valuable thoughts that we can gain something from. In the end, authorship does not really matter, but the universality of the teaching and how it aligns with our heart-feeling does. That is what makes these theosophical works ring true; something W. Q. Judge once explained. 'We are all One,' and at some point our thoughts are bound to be similar to another.

SJO

## CHALLENGING WORDS.

**Aryan** — Āryan (Pronounced: r-yūn, not air-ē-an) is a generic term for the human race at present on the earth. It has come from the name of the people of Aryavarta, (India). The *Encyclopedic Theosophical Glossary* defines its *root* thus:

**Arya** (Sanskrit) Ārya [from the verbal root *ṛ* to rise, tend upward] Holy, hallowed, highly evolved or especially trained; a title of the Hindu rishis. Originally a term of ethical as well as intellectual and spiritual excellence, belonging to those who had completely mastered the *aryasatyani* (holy truths) and who had entered upon the *aryamarga* (path leading to moksha or nirvana). It was originally applicable only to the initiates or adepts of the ancient Aryan peoples, but today Aryan has become the name of a race of the human family in its various branches. All ancient peoples had their own term for initiates or adepts, as for instance among the ancient Hebrews the generic name Israel, or Sons of Israel.

Also applied as a title by the ancient Hindus to themselves in distinction from the peoples whom they had conquered. {The ‘peoples’ being the Dravidian and other aboriginal peoples the Aryans displaced in northern India in the 2nd millennium B.C.E.}

**Brotherhood** — This word as used herein means simply a community of people linked by a common interest; and the Brotherhood of Humanity includes all people, the entire human family, with no exclusions.

**Comrade** — This word is used throughout. These articles were written before any possibly negative connotation of the word. The meaning I believe Julia intended, is the simple first definition in most dictionaries: ‘a companion who shares one’s activities or is a fellow member of an organization.’ And completely without regard to gender or station.

**Isis** — “Isis” herein refers to the Mother goddess in ancient Egyptian religion. It obviously had nothing to do with any organization begun in the 1990s with a similar name. All the main works herein were written before the 1920s. Sometimes the book *Isis Unveiled* is abbreviated as *Isis*.

**Occult** — “The term OCCULT has noble but largely forgotten origins. Derived from the Latin *occultus* meaning “hidden,” it properly defines anything which is undisclosed, concealed, or not easily perceived. In astronomy, the term is still used when one stellar body *occults* another by passing in front of it, temporarily hiding it from view. “Writing a century ago, when the word had not acquired today’s mixed connotations, H. P. Blavatsky defined OCCULTISM as “altruism pure and simple” — the divine wisdom or hidden theosophy within all religions. Occultism is founded on the principle that Divinity is concealed — transcendent yet immanent — within every living being. As a spiritual discipline occultism is the renunciation of selfishness; it is the “still small path” which leads to wisdom, to the right discrimination between good and evil, and the practice of altruism.”<sup>1</sup>

**Race** — This word has nothing separative to do with ethnicity, nationalities, or colors of human groups. It refers to the waves of incarnating humanity, ‘races,’ described in *The Secret Doctrine* and other theosophical works, which describe the great groups of humanity which have evolved and are evolving on this planet.

**White or Black (Adepts, Lodges, or Rays)** — These correlate to the ‘Right’ hand or ‘Left’ hand path, and mean only those working for good or those working for evil. The words *white* and *black* have nothing to do with skin color — they speak respectively to the ‘light’-ness and ‘dark’-ness of deeds and aspects in the world.

## NOTE

1. From the back cover of *Studies in Occultism*, Theosophical University Press.

**For Sanskrit and Theosophical terms**, see: *Encyclopedic Theosophical Glossary* ([theosociety.org/pasadena/etgloss/etg-hp.htm](http://theosociety.org/pasadena/etgloss/etg-hp.htm)) & *Collation of Theosophical Glossaries* ([theosocietyamsec.org/publications](http://theosocietyamsec.org/publications)).

# BIOGRAPHY<sup>1</sup>



JULIA WHARTON LEWIS CAMPBELL VER PLANCK – MAY 1891.

**Julia Wharton Lewis Campbell Ver Planck Keightley** (10 August 1850<sup>2</sup> – 9 October 1915) — is a name as lengthy as her number of pseudonyms,<sup>3</sup> and of the full list of her written works.

Julia was born in Pottsville (South Ward), Schuylkill County, Pennsylvania, U.S.A., into a distinguished, well-to-do, and well educated family.

Julia's father was the Honorable James Hepburn Campbell (8 February 1820 – 12 April 1895), son of Francis C. Campbell, a lawyer, and Jane (Hepburn) Campbell. James was a prominent Pennsylvania lawyer practicing in Pottsville. He served as a Capitol Guard for the Union in 1861 and by 1863 he commanded the 39th Pennsylvania Militia 25th Regiment. He served as a member of the U.S. Congress from 4 March 1855 – 3 March 1857, and 4 March 1859 – 3 March 1863. He held 2

diplomatic commissions under President Lincoln — U.S. Minister to Sweden and Norway (18 May 1864 – 29 March 1867) where the family moved during that time; and subsequently he declined the diplomatic position to Bogota, Columbia. He became a personal friend of Abraham Lincoln during his posts.

Julia's mother was Juliet Hamersley Lewis Campbell (5 August 1823 – 26 December 1898), daughter of the Honorable Chief Justice Ellis Lewis of the Supreme Court of Pennsylvania, and Josephine Wallis Lewis. Juliet married James Hepburn Campbell in 1843. Juliet was a poetess and novelist: "a writer of verse possessing great poetical charm and value."

Julia had three siblings, all brothers: Francis Duncan Campbell (5 July 1845 – April 13, 1864), James Hepburn Campbell, Jr. (26 September 1847 – 10 February 1864), and Ellis Lewis Campbell (9 August 1854 – 30 May 1900). Her two older brothers died an early death from diphtheria during the Civil War. Ellis Lewis Campbell married Ada Smith (12 June 1857 – 15 February 1953). Ellis was 'afflicted' with a 'mental disease' at some point, and his wife Ada Smith Campbell became his guardian. After Ellis died, Ada married William Henry Sayen (14 May 1846 – 14 June 1921) on 6 November 1907.

Julia married Philip Ver Planck (28 March 1844 – 15 December 1876) in 1871 and they had two sons: James Campbell Ver Planck (3 December 1872 – 21 September 1875) and Gordon Ver Planck (17 October 1874 – 29 June 1875). Both her sons died in 1875 before the ages of 8 months and almost 3. Her husband Philip died in 1876 in Colorado, only a year after their sons. Less than a decade before two of her brothers had died. All four grandparents had also died in that span. In a little over a decade Julia had experienced the death of *nine* close family members. After her husband Philip died, she moved back home with her parents, and while recovering from a protracted illness, no doubt caused by her sensitiveness and sorrow, she began to write again.

Fifteen years later, in 1891, Julia married Archibald Keightley (19 April 1859 – 18 November 1930), a medical doctor and a prominent member of the Theosophical Society. Archibald was born in England, was a steadfast proponent of theosophy, and deeply involved in the Society's inner workings.

Julia lived in Pennsylvania for much of her life. First in Pottsville, then in Wayne, and she also spent time in Philadelphia. She lived in Sweden for three years when her father was U.S. Diplomat there. After Julia married Archibald, they lived in New York City for a time, and in 1893 moved to London, England; and they successively occupied a few different residences there. Julia died in Wales, most likely while visiting relatives from her mother's side.

Julia wrote extensively during her life, and used pseudonyms from the beginning. Her mother being a poet and her father a lawyer, reading and writing were undeniably prevalent in her life. Both parents obviously passed down their traits to their only daughter. While a teenager living in Sweden she translated poems written by the King of Sweden into English. This time period must have yielded the source material for her early article "A Birthnight Ball." When back in the U.S., she wrote poems and articles for popular magazines of the time: *Harper's Monthly* and *The Galaxy* amongst them, and likely others. She even wrote lyrics for a song. During 1880-1885 she wrote the bulk of her plays for the stage. She wrote four plays herself, and co-wrote another eight with Francis Bohun Devereux. Her first notable co-written play, *The Puritan Maid*, and her most famous and successful play, *Sealed Instructions*, played many places over the U.S. She wrote two theosophical books: *The Wonder-Light* for children, and *The Vow of Poverty*, for everyone. She compiled two other theosophical books of some writings of William Q. Judge, titled *Letters That Have Helped Me* (Vols. 1 & 2). Most content of the first volume is included here as the original articles.

Julia picked up the thread of theosophy in 1886, eleven years after the founding of the present day Theosophical Society in 1875, by H. P. Blavatsky (12 August 1831 – 8 May 1891), H. S. Olcott (2 August 1832 – 17 February 1907), and W. Q. Judge (13 April 1851 – 21 March 1896), and others.

The story related by Bertram Keightley is this: “One day, however, quite by chance it is were, when {Julia was} lunching with her close friend, Mrs. Anna Lynch Botta, {née Anne Charlotte Lynch} the name of Madame Blavatsky was mentioned, and mentioned as that of an exposed fraud. From thence to Theosophy was but a step; Mrs. Ver Planck had never heard of either, and Mrs. Botta, whose circle comprised almost every distinguished member of society at home and abroad (that well-known circle unique in American life), invited her friend to accompany her to hear Mr. Arthur Gebhard speak on Theosophy to Mrs. Ole Bull {née Sara Chapman Thorpe}, Mrs. Celia {Laighton} Thaxter, and others in the drawing room of a friend. The impression made upon Mrs. Ver Planck was so deep that she joined the T.S. within two weeks, and thenceforward began her unceasing work for Theosophy.”<sup>4</sup>

While Julia never physically met H. P. Blavatsky in her lifetime, she wrote: “When I began to write articles along these lines, H.P.B. sent me a pen which I always used. The articles were and are always written in full objective consciousness, but at these times there is a feeling of inspiration, of greater mental freedom.” She also wrote about how H.P.B. appeared to her one night after H.P.B.’s death.<sup>5</sup>

Work for the Theosophical Society seems to have completely supplanted her previous worldly writing, and she became even more prolific — this time with an altruistic purpose. In her work for theosophy she labored mostly behind the scenes, and although she seems well-known and did speak at some formal gatherings of the Society, she was mostly working without credit, or fame, or pomp. She silently helped edit *The Path* magazine under William Q. Judge, and used her many pseudonyms to cloak authorship of various articles. The practice of signing articles with pen names and initials or other names was fully accepted then, for a couple reasons. Using men’s names for women writers helped gain credibility, and due the limited number of qualified writers for theosophy in the beginning, using them helped ease that appearance.

As far as I could find, Julia never held an official office in the T.S. She was co-editor of *The Path*, and took over its editorship when William Q. Judge was out of town, at his request. Upon his death, Judge willed The Theosophical Publishing Company jointly to her and August Neresheimer. Judge and Julia were not only born less than a year apart, but they had in common the loss of young children: a daughter in Judge’s case, and two sons in Julia’s.

From 1893 on, Julia worked from England, where she and her husband, Archibald Keightley, had relocated due to his mother’s health. In England, Julia took over some of the London work, beginning in 1893 when Annie Besant left for India.

During her work for theosophy, which spanned from 1886 until around 1913, Julia not only helped manage many aspects of the Theosophical Society and its organs, she published four books and about 300 articles. After William Q. Judge died in 1896, her activities through the years lessened. She was again ill for a few years preceding her death. Julia died 9 October 1915.<sup>6</sup>

## NOTES

1. See The Collected Writings of Julia Keightley for more biographies.
2. According to many sources and articles, Julia's birth year is stated to be 1851. According to her baptismal record in the Episcopal Diocese of Pennsylvania Church Records, 1759-1970, she was born on the date shown, 10 August 1850. That date also agrees with all the Census records I found, as well as her age at death of 65 years. (65 years, 2 months, and 5 days.)
3. See Appendix: Names and Pseudonyms.
4. Julia joined the Theosophical Society May 25, 1886.
5. "A Private Letter," R.S., *Reminiscences of H. P. Blavatsky and "The Secret Doctrine,"* p. 121.
6. Julia Keightley (10 August 1850 – 9 October 1915) (65) of 46 Brook St., Middlesex, died suddenly of a cerebral hemorrhagic stroke (she had been diagnosed with arteriosclerosis), at Glanmawddach, Dolgelly, Merionetshire (North Wales) U.K. Julia was most likely cremated – possibly at Woking Crematorium.

For additional information on Julia, a timeline of her life, her found early works, many articles about her, and an expanded Appendix, see: *The Collected Works of Julia Keightley*, edited by Scott J. Osterhage.

# NAMES AND PSEUDONYMS.

MRS. JULIA WHARTON LEWIS CAMPBELL VER PLANCK KEIGHTLEY

During her lifetime, Julia signed her poems and articles with many different names, initials and pseudonyms. The ones I found, and which appear herein, are listed below. Any one of them might also have the initials F.T.S. placed after.

Variations of her unmarried name used:

L. Wharton

Variations of her first married name used:

Mrs. J. Campbell Ver Planck

J. Campbell Ver Planck

Julia Ver Planck

Mrs. Ver Planck

J.C.V.P.

Variations of her second married name used:

Julia Wharton Lewis Keightley

Julia W. L. Keightley

J.W.L. Keightley

Julia Keightley

J. C. Keightley

Mrs. J. C. Keightley

Mrs. Archibald Keightley

Besides variations of her real names, she also used the following *noms-de-plume*, confirmed by people who knew her:

Jasper Niemand (Meaning: Jasper — *Master of the Treasure*; Niemand — *Nobody*, in German.)

J.N. (Jasper Niemand)

Julius (Julia)

J. (Julia)

August Waldensee (Meaning: August — *esteemed, venerable*; Waldenses — Members of a 12th century Christian movement which sought to follow Christ in *poverty and simplicity*. This group is also referenced in *Isis Unveiled* 2:332. Their motto was *Lux Lucret in Tenebris* — *The Light shines in the Darkness*. Spelled *Waldensee* (a German family name.)

In all articles *about* Julia this name is used, though the two articles included herein had it spelled *Waldersee* in the original, which I kept, believing that she most likely wrote and edited them.

R.S. ("Wachtmeister, 1893, pp. 121-5; this chapter was signed "R.S.") Who or what the initials stand for is unknown to me.

These names were also probably her:

F.T.S.; Pilgrim, Student; Unsigned (At times, especially in *The Path*.)

# **Theosophical Writings of Julia Keightley**

Julia Wharton Lewis Campbell Ver Planck Keightley

# THEOSOPHICAL BOOKS

Julia produced two books of her own writings, one book of William Q. Judge's replies to her and Archibald Keightley's letters (questions), and one book of William Q. Judge's replies to letters (questions) from his correspondents around the world.

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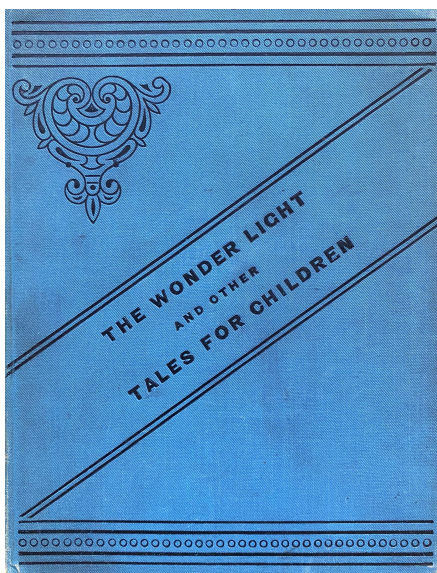
## *THE WONDER-LIGHT, AND OTHER TALES.*

*TRUE PHILOSOPHY FOR CHILDREN.*

MRS. J. CAMPBELL VER PLANCK

---

*The Wonder-Light, and Other Tales* – 1890.



1890 FIRST EDITION

## DEDICATION. {TO H. P. BLAVATSKY.}

MRS. J. CAMPBELL VER PLANCK

TO THE  
LION HEART  
NOW KNOWN AS  
HELENA PETROVNA BLAVATSKY  
THIS LITTLE BOOK  
IS OFFERED  
BY  
THE AUTHOR

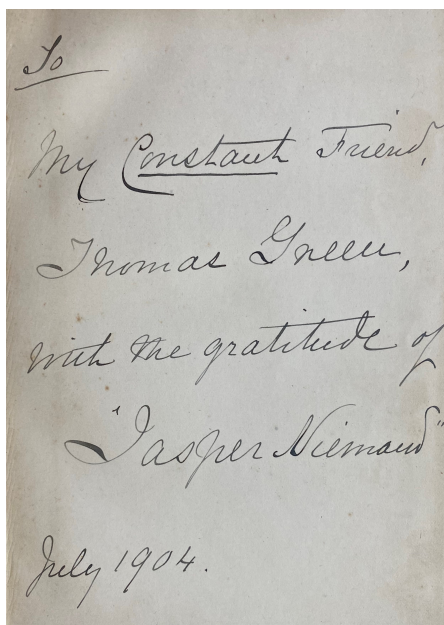
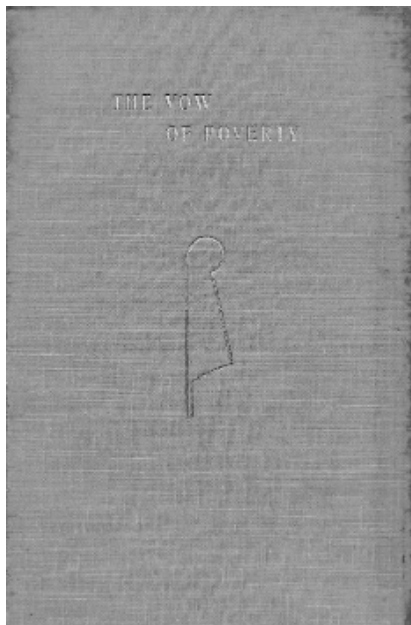
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# THE VOW OF POVERTY, AND OTHER ESSAYS.

JASPER NIEMAND

---

*The Vow of Poverty, and Other Essays* – April 1904.



1904 FIRST EDITION

## DEDICATION. {TO WILLIAM Q. JUDGE.}

JASPER NIEMAND

To

**William Q. Judge**

*Teacher and Martyr.*

**“THE BLOOD OF THE MARTYRS HAS WATERED THE GROUND,  
AND THAT THE CRY ‘LORD, GIVE US EVERMORE OF THIS  
BREAD,’ MAY NEVER GO UNANSWERED, WE MUST BE  
PLOUGHING AND SOWING FOR HARVESTS YET TO BE.”**

*The ancient fable of the Dragon’s Blood is true to-day as ever.  
Where that Blood was spilled, earth opened to receive it;  
a warrior struck the sacred spot and armed men sprang forth  
conquering the World.*

*So with the Blood of the Martyrs. It waters the earth, and from  
that consecration new human harvests and fresh fruits of Wisdom  
spring. For the Dragon typifies that Wisdom to which the  
Martyrs bear witness, and those who have seen with the spiritual  
sight — as those who, following after, bear the tale with the ear  
of the spirit — these arise, warriors of the Soul, to war with and  
to subdue the earth; in themselves first, in the ever widening  
human field thereafter.*

*In the heart of man is that hallowed ground which receives the  
creative essence of the Dragon’s Blood. Witnesses of the doing to  
death of the Martyrs in many an era, such comprehending hearts  
breathe a deep vow, and in each future effort towards the True, they  
are sustained and nourished by the Life Blood of the Dragons of  
Wisdom. They bow themselves to The Law, and whispering  
each to each that “Word at low breath” which is the Mystery-  
Name of the Martyrs, they work on expectant of harvests  
yet to be.*

JASPER NIEMAND.

London, 13th April, 1904

### NOTE

1. {This Dedication is dated exactly 53 years after W. Q. Judge’s birth day.}

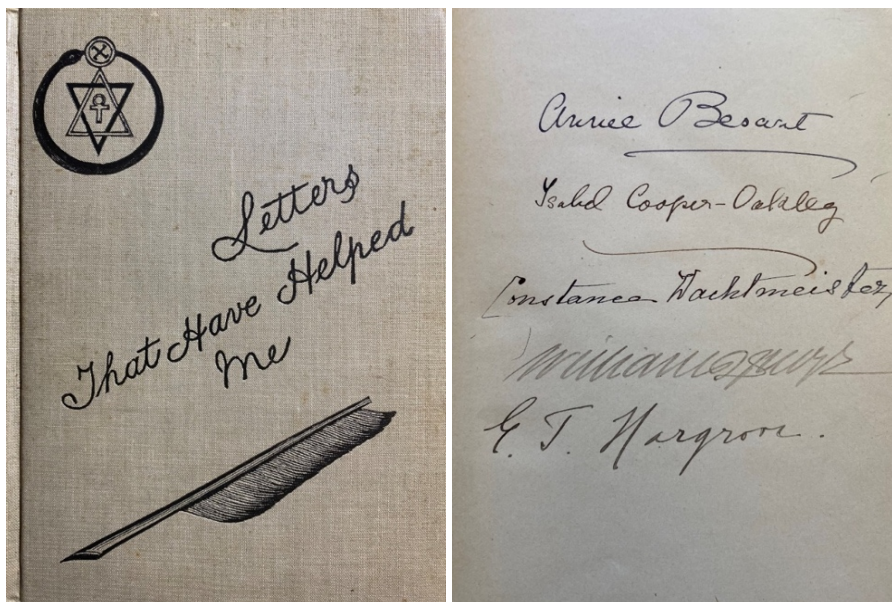
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# LETTERS THAT HAVE HELPED ME. {VOL. 1}

WILLIAM Q. JUDGE, COMPILED BY JASPER NIEMAND

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*Letters That Have Helped Me* {Vol. 1} – 1891.



1891 FIRST EDITION

## DEDICATION. {TO WILLIAM Q. JUDGE.}

JASPER NIEMAND

To

Z. L. Z.

The Greatest of  
The Exiles, and Friend  
of all Creatures: from his  
Younger Brother, the Compiler.

Jasper Niemand,

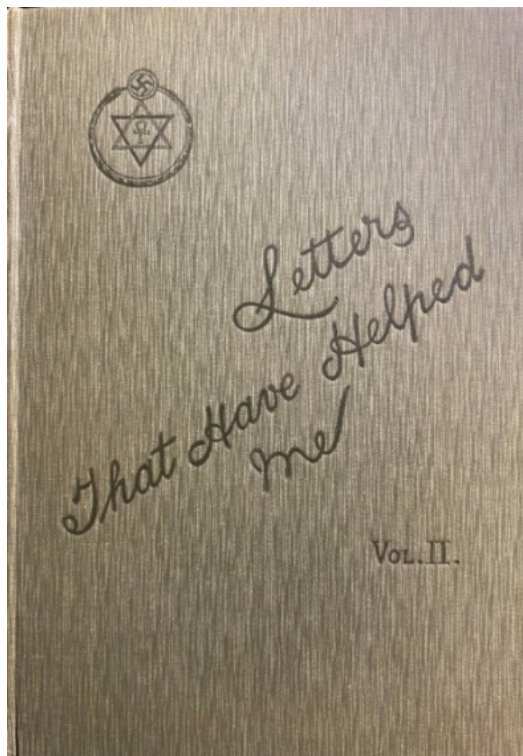
1891.

*Letters That Have Helped Me*, Vol. 2. – 1905.

## **LETTERS THAT HAVE HELPED ME, VOL. 2.**

WILLIAM Q. JUDGE

COMPILED BY THOMAS GREEN & JASPER NIEMAND



1905 FIRST EDITION

### **DEDICATION.**

UNSIGNED {PROBABLY JULIA KEIGHTLEY}

In Devotion  
TO THE IMMORTALS  
and in  
The Service of Humanity  
This little book  
is laid  
Upon the Altar

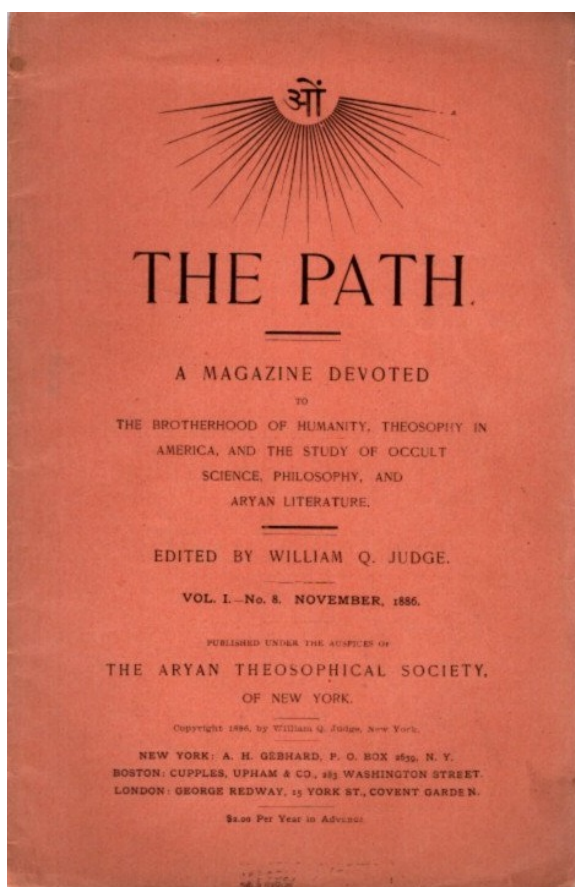
*June*, 1905.

# THEOSOPHICAL ARTICLES

## (Chronological Order)

**The main significance of Julia's work**, especially the work for theosophy, are the articles which follow. She wrote from 1886 to before her death in 1915. Of these articles, Julia writes: "When I began to write articles along these lines, H.P.B. sent me a pen which I always used. The articles were and are always written in full objective consciousness, but at these times there is a feeling of inspiration, of greater mental freedom."<sup>1</sup>

Most of Julia's articles are as pertinent today as the day they were written. The theosophy contained in them is timeless, having been taught in every age to then present Humanity. Careful study and thought are important for learning any concept, and inculcation into one's life is perhaps the most important. Read, think, and try to make theosophy a living part of your life.



EARLY EXAMPLE OF *THE PATH* COVER

### NOTE

1. "Faces of Friends: Jasper Niemand," Bertram Keightley, *The Path*, April 1894, p. 14.

## 4004 B.C.

J.W.L. KEIGHTLEY

Very few people are aware of the fatally suffocating effect upon religious thought, the result of trying to restrict the history of humanity into the artificial limits of six thousand years. Perhaps there are no more who are aware how this artificial era was arrived at.

It is placed at the top of our Bibles when they have a marginal reference, and is taught in our Sunday schools and preached in our pulpits, and millions of devout Christians believe it to be a divinely revealed thing. Many a compassionate Christian is praying to-day for “free thinking” relatives who have dared to think differently, and for whom they anticipate an eternal perdition for having refused to accept the church teaching.

For it is not the teaching of the Bible. Bible scholars have tortured the dates and events of the Jewish Record and evolved numerous chronological systems, but there is no ground upon which to erect any certain standard, and no harmony among these conflicting authorities. Colonel Wilford, Archbishop Sepp of Munich, and Archbishop Ussher, are responsible, in various degrees, for the settlement of the date 4004 B.C. The figures 4321 were found at the beginning of many ancient MSS. and after much speculation and many endeavors to make things fit, it was decided that these figures represented lunar years, and by changing them into 4004 solar years, the exact date of the birth of Christ, reckoning from the day of creation, would be attained. Archbishop Ussher pieced together the patriarchal and prophetic fragments to support this invention, and our pastors have been leading us for a long time to believe in its inspiration.

The figures 4321 are the first four digits in reverse order, symbolized by the Pythagorean triangle of the ten jods, and make up in their sum the number of perfection, ten itself. Unity becomes dual; the duality is manifested in the trinity; and the triangle is embodied in the square. Mystical numbers of creation, truly, but having little connection with ordinary historical chronology.

Imprisoned in these narrow limits the thought of our times has been contracted to the ungodly proportions of current theology. With a restricted perdition of souls it appeared excusable to accept the comparatively recent dogma of eternal damnation for sinners, and to contemplate the edifying spectacle of the Divine Being compelled to create souls at the lustful caprice of fallen men. To think of these processes as having continued for hundreds of thousands of years in the past, with the consequent perdition of the illimitable millions of people who thus never heard of the “scheme of salvation,” is more than even the orthodox mind can accept. Hence the orthodox disinclination to accept the truth of history, and, indeed, of the Bible itself. Many church people prefer to abide by the inventions of the scholars of the dark and the medieval ages, to the honest pursuit of truth itself. They doubt God, and imagine that He might be false to them.

The day is at hand when every pulpit must accept the historic records of the past. Nipur, the ancient city of Assyria, with its tablets giving up the story of ten thousand years ago; Eridu, the wonderful Chaldean seat at the head of the Persian Gulf in the height of its glory six thousand years ago; King Sargon, 3800 B.C., with his marvelous library recording the history of his times and the story of human knowledge and

sparing hands have swept past us in the night. The under tow of the Past was too strong for them. They have loosed their hold upon their comrades, and the long, living line has closed up again, has pressed forward, not without a tear for those who fell. But the great line is standing, is advancing, and the cause of its well-being and its power is that "pull all together" which equalizes the strain. Because we are in brotherly unity — for this reason is it well with us. Our accord is our safety.

And yet it is a time of trial, interior and unremitting. Now should it not be so when the welfare of a Race is at stake? For the dying throes of the elder cycle have power to impair the vibrations of the new one and it is precisely for this reason that our unwavering hearts, our steadfast minds and rooted ideals create an atmosphere of strength about us filling the decadent hours of the old cycle with a calm and a harmony in which, as in the lap of a mother, the young cycle may gather its forces together: their dispersion will not be witnessed, their fight will be strong in this calm atmosphere which we provide.

Still is the strain felt by us. We whisper it not to one another. Each endures, and is silent, working on; or here and there a song of cheer arises as men sing at the hardest labor, to make that labor lighter by their lightness of heart. That is the brave spirit. That is the true spirit. Yet, because the trial is everywhere so unremitting, in one or another way — sometimes in all ways — it is good to remind one another that we knew this provision of Nature, that we entered the trial year unafraid.

For did we not know too that more destinies than our own hung upon it? That heroes not yet incarnate hung above it, waiting, hoping, longing to descend? Did we not know that armed and turbulent nations paused, unawares, upon the brink of war, awaiting an issue foreseen by us, but to them unknown? And the little children the world over, tender-eyed and wistful, did not their future await decision while they played unconsciously through all the trial? Yes; we knew it all. Knew it to be big with Destiny. Knew that we ourselves had, ages ago, with others, provided the trial, and could even now provide the triumph.

For all these possibilities we must supply the required conditions. Great events are in the air. Under existing conditions they cannot take shape and life here below. When we shall have transformed the present conditions, so that the necessary base shall be supplied, then shall these waiting potentialities become actual in the daily life of the world. There must exist — as a base on this material plane — an opportunity for the right development, the orderly unfolding of character under wise encouragement and with the stimulus of right contemporaneous thought, in order that the progress of the soul here in matter may be helped. This opportunity will be given through the children of every nation when in each nation right conditions of education are supplied. Theosophy alone can do this. That is to say, theosophists must do it, affording everywhere a base. As they pass through the trial year they not only give this base; they also find their own base; each one his own. Re-birth of heroes, peace of nations, help for the children, these shall follow on the Crusade work as that awakens the ancient fires of nations; and what are all these but a universal nearness to The Self?

For that triumph each soul of us, Comrades, has stood and stands ready to suffer the awful strain. To us it seems assured — that hour of victory. *To us*. But how about your country, mine, all the nations? Which stand? Do any stand? How fares it with the Race, too? Ah, we know not these things. And, not knowing, shall we not redouble the effort, both of work and for unity; shall we not clasp hands closer as we breast the foaming world stream? Our harmony of aim secures more than now we dream of. Our fraternal love, self-impelled, has reached forward until more centuries than we count are in its charmed hold.

But even were we not secure of this — and in hours of gloom who is secure? — then were it still wise to press forward where solitary retreat is impossible save as self-destruction while the living line stands and will not turn back.

Since then, to look behind is all in vain,  
And all in vain to look to left or right;  
Why face we not the future once again,  
Turning stout hearts towards the shadowy main  
And strong to bear ourselves in patient pain?

Ye suffering hearts, each one is seen and loved! Ye brave minds, each one is upheld! Ye deathless souls, each one nears the hour of self-consciousness and power. Though the trial year be heavy, yet its gifts are many, are wonderful, its last hours are full of healing for the nations, if so be ye stand. Therefore stand; stand singing. Singing for joy that we have met and known this hour, whose trials spell Redemption, Freedom, Light.

J.W.L. KEIGHTLEY.

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## THE ALTAR OF LIFE.

J.W.L. KEIGHTLEY

In the observation of Man, and his destiny, there is one indisputable fact with which we are at once confronted; it challenges our attention; we cannot evade it; we cannot escape it. This fact is:

There is one factor common to all men, one thing with which all have to deal, and which each has to master,— in some degree at least; this common factor is Life.

We all live, and must live on, in one mode or another, in one form or another, upon one plane or another, until we understand Life and become masters of Life at some one, or more, of the many points with which we are confronted: when we have achieved such knowledge we enter upon still wider modes of existence and partake still more fully of Life. And this truth is applicable to every mode of existence, to every form of Life. The universe teems with lives; no created thing can turn from Life and lay it down, dreaming of an end. No man that ever lived has ever seen Death. We have only seen Life changing its mode of action.

Take, for example, the new born child. It has at once to master the power of breathing upon a new plane of matter, in a new mode: this it does master. Or it turns back into the unseen. Then it must acquire powers of digestion, of assimilation, of hearing, of seeing, of walking; finally, of thinking and the use of the wonderful brain. In all this, there is some sub-consciousness at work, with which we have but small acquaintance, and with which we are not at the moment concerned. Our present point is this: the child, in its growth and development runs through a wide gamut of experience, and acquires powers upon various planes of Life: when it is fully grown, it enters upon a still wider area of achievement, for now it must learn how to think,— how to think *rightly* in relation to its environment and how to adapt its thought to its aims in Life. So that Life tests and teaches, teaches and tests as we pass along its spiral; and this is true of every life in any world: it must be true of all, being true in any.

This being so, we set out upon the great adventure with one sure clue in our hands. For Life is at once the great adventure and the hidden secret, the beginning, the goal, the prize. Whatever our desire, we obtain it *by living*, and by utilizing that which Life has brought to us; even when we fail, it is still through having lived, but in a sense obstructive to our true desire and hope. That our very bodies fall out of line and “die” so soon, being so vulnerable to disease, age, and the like, is because of the misuse of Life, because the congeries of Lives within them tend to a fuller, separated Life of their own.

Look at it as we will, Life meets us at all points, and must be understood, and then mastered by us. The man who succeeds,— whether in a material sense, or in the sense spiritual,— is the man who has grasped to some extent some group of the Laws of Life. Life has many planes and values, and it depends upon the man himself,— and upon the nature of his desire,— whether he succeeds or fails. He who attains has done so because he has understood how to set about making his effort; the man who fails has not known how to apply his Life powers to the end he had in view. So evident is this, that if we will consider mankind and their efforts, we are soon able to discern why the one fails, and why another has met with success. Achievement comes through the right effort having been made,— and made persistently,— in the right way. And on the other hand the failure has come about because the man has failed to understand some of the Laws of Life. And yet these Laws are all simple — *so* simple. For this very reason, perhaps, the crowd has passed them by.

As we study Life, we are at once struck with this primary fact: All the true powers of Life are *spiritual* powers. It is not the material with,— or in which,— a man works, nor is it the environment in which he lives which achieves his ends. We have innumerable instances of persons born and living amidst poverty and ignorance, whose great success has lain in the accumulation of wealth. We have read in the pages of history how the deep scientific secrets of the world have often been revealed as by magic to some simple student, one of reverent mind who really found what he sought, not through his mental equipment, but through the intuition of the quiet and trusting heart. Courage, not cannon, has won the day of battle. Endurance has outstayed the host of foes — even the ice, the cold, the sirocco, the whirlwind and all the irate wardens of Nature. When Saul the persecutor journeyed to Damascus, and, being struck down upon the way by a great light, arose as Paul the Christian teacher, was it some material power that wrought that change which has echoed down the centuries? Or was it rather some spiritual Life that smote his heart as he lay prone, and thereby converted him? In a word, it is the *spiritual* qualities wielded by mankind that win each prize of Life; even the most sordid miser has won his luxury of possession by the exercise of an adamant will that faced hunger, thirst, desires and wants to gratify the master passion. He exercised the will by the means of which the Saints have attained — but *he* misapplied it. And so, too, it is not the preacher who converts his fellow men, but his Life speaking through his words to the hearts of his hearers.

When we have grasped this great truth,— that all the powers of Life are *spiritual* powers, we are ready to take another step onward. We wish to exercise these powers, to prove them, to exert them to some desired end. This brings us to a moment of vital import; for now we face a choice. In what direction will we apply them? “Under which King?”

Whatever the decision, we make a fresh discovery — as must be when Life itself is the great adventure and all its secrets are fresh joys. We find that we are deficient in the spiritual power necessary to the attainment of our object, whatever that may be: we lack the weapons necessary to our battle. We have not the courage, or the self-denial needed; we are poor in perseverance, in hope, in self-trust, or what not else; above all, we are beggared of faith. This last lack is by far the most serious, for faith,— faith in

our destiny, in our self, in the possibility of attainment,— is an absolute essential to success. No man or woman undertakes to reach to eminence in the material world, who has not a burning belief that success is possible,— is even sure and certain, and to himself or herself. Each time that Jesus of Nazareth was entreated to confer some miraculous boon, what was His answer? Did He not say: “Dost thou believe that I can do this thing?” Without faith,— faith in His power and His compassionate will to exercise that power,— the longed-for gift could not be bestowed. At the root of all power lies faith. If we are wanting in faith, we must acquire faith, somehow, or we are undone.

But there is yet another power, going hand in hand with faith and equally necessary: that power is *will*. We speak in modern phrase of the “will to live,” and yet how rarely do we remember the strict accuracy of this phrase. We have seen what a vast work we accomplished while we were still in our infancy; we did so under the guidance and the imperious mandate of the “will to live” deeply hidden in the soul. Where we fail, our will and our faith are lacking; we may not be able to touch the weak spot within our nature with the finger of introspection, but it is there: nothing is impossible to the soul which has these two spiritual powers in their fullness, whether that soul work “in heaven” or upon the gross and crude material of the earth. You and I alike do all that we do by virtue of these twin, spiritual powers; that which we do not *will* to do, and do not believe we *can* do is not done by us: we stand aside and behold others among our fellows bearing away the prize.

There is still a third necessary power, and it also is a spiritual potency. I refer to the power of the imagination. This it is that the old mystics and alchemists called the creative power, the “image making power.” By the exercise of this power, we are able to contemplate the goal to which our thoughts and our efforts tend, and to render an account of that goal to ourselves, to say whether or no it seems a possible thing to us. Each one of us unconsciously uses this power each time a new thing is attempted, no matter how small it may be; we embrace it with our imagination and see it as if it were already done, in the mirror of the mind, before we attempt to do it at all. And when we have not used this power, our action is abortive; the deed drops, still-born, from our sphere.

Thus we see that our common Life, so far as it is known to us, is governed, ruled, conducted by the use of spiritual powers, no matter in what direction, or upon what material these are used by the human spirit. It remains to be seen in what direction these powers are most wisely and most successfully used. Let us then consider the question of Life.

We,— each one of us,— are acquainted with fragments of Life only. Life as a great Whole escapes our mental vision, because it is too vast for the mind to conceive. Again, we are only able (humanly speaking) to take note of limited areas of Life: there are regions of land and water, of air and ether, of sunlight and darkness; formless worlds, conditions of substance, immense spaces of experience and of consciousness alike, of which our human thought has never dreamed. Each man concerns himself only with those phases of Life which stand nearest to his diurnal consciousness, which are most immediate to his own experience, and upon these he uses such powers of discernment, of understanding, of mastery or of avoidance as it may please him to use — or to neglect. We live in narrow sections only; our sight reaches only to the rim of near horizons, and our god-like powers, hidden in embryo within us, are atrophied for want of recognition and use.

Is this as it should be? Does it not behoove us to ask ourselves why, and for what purpose, we are here at all? Why are we embedded in material life as the oyster in its shell, with perhaps some least infiltration of the vast spiritual ocean into *our*

surrounding shell? Surely the answer to this question is a simple one. We are here for the same reason which is operative in all that we do or leave undone: we are here because we wished, and hence willed, to be here. Some say that this cannot be true, and that we,— all of us,— often find ourselves in situations which are painful, distressing, unwished for; repugnant, even, to every fiber that quivers within us. That may be so, in the *immediate* sense. But if it be true that every effect has a cause, and that all causes must work themselves out in the sphere of their creator, then we are indeed bound to concede that the distasteful situations of Life have been brought about by ourselves; in some deeply hidden fashion, it may be, but still caused by ourselves, and by no other. Action and re-action being equal and contrary in direction, we need not marvel at the many transformations of Life.

If, on the other hand, you say that effects may exist without a cause, and that the cause and its creator — its evolver, rather — are not interrelated, why, then, Life is not consecutive, and is not governed by law or order at all. And to this you, not improbably, will refuse to assent. Or you live amid a mad confusion.

So let us consider that we willed to be where we stand today, and that the human spirit within each one of us has obtained satisfaction, experience, opportunity and teaching by the situations in which we find ourselves; that, given the free exercise of our will and choice, our lives are now as that spirit willed the environment to be. Could we but discover and have touch with that inner spirit, all would be well with us, for we should understand that every event of our lives is an opportunity, is helpful and is willed by our soul. Denial of our purely personal desires, of the whims and wants and cravings of the human mind would then appear to us in a truer aspect; we should discern a *spiritual* purpose beneath the denial, and the will of the soul in bringing about each experience through which we pass would be seen in its true aspect, in its Life-renewing and Life-sustaining power. We should all at once leap into the comprehension that the “will-to-live” comprises the whole of Life — Life in its entirety and its unity; that the will of the soul is towards the Whole, and not towards the circumscribed parts. We are the heirs of Universal Life, and towards that immeasurable Whole the human spirit hastens, even as the strong runner runs his race in joy.

But we are in truth circumscribed, and by a jailor of our own choice. Our mind it is that shuts us away into a region of exceeding definiteness and precision, where only the things visible to the gross senses are apprehended. The testimony of these senses is what we term “reality:” all other testimony is excluded as being “unreal.” An odd error, this, for us to make, since the unseen things of Life, the things that escape the senses, are really those which we value most! Happiness, contentment, love, peace, joy — these are our treasures, nor would we part with the least portion of these for material possessions of any sort, were we bidden to choose. We value the material possession only in the degree in which we suppose that it can obtain for us the longed-for and rarer treasures of the heart; once sure that the material wealth will beggar us of these higher values, we are willing to cast away the visible power for the invisible ones. Who would desire wealth of any kind, once he were sure that it would make him utterly miserable? Even those who crave material and lower things are looking,— all unknown to their own minds,— for the spiritual riches, really. The ambitious man wants power; could he but see that self-control is the greatest of powers, he would concentrate upon that, casting away all lower forms. He who seeks passion, in time embraces the deepest discontent; he endures all the miseries of satiety and one day learns that not lustful passion but a very passion of divine and all compassionate love was that of which his spirit whispered him, while he so blindly sought. Every possession which men so eagerly desire, and so perseveringly pursue, has thus its hidden lesson. We see the forms of our desire changing continually in the kaleidoscope of our lives, weaving

patterns ever brighter and more splendid, until at last we come upon that mysterious and rapturous moment in which we see that what we so ardently seek,— that perfect happiness pursued with age-long desire,— is Life itself; it is the Soul.

Behind all manifestation there lies, invisible but imperial, the Soul, the Mover, the Ruler of Life. This it is which the heart of man desires; this it is of which the human spirit sings in the ambient spaces of our dreams. The Soul is everywhere; and Life is the altar of the Soul.

Once this mighty secret in its divine simplicity dawns upon our eager imaginations, how changed are all the issues of our daily lives. Life becomes holy to us. In each moment of the diurnal round we find a meaning, a beauty, an aid. For now we understand that the high Soul seeks us even more ardently than we seek it; it is the hidden lover of all mankind. Life is the method and manifestation of that Soul which we seek, and our portion of Life is the daily bread which we entreat at the hand of the Father in Heaven.

Life, then, continuous and eternal, is the altar of the Soul. What will we lay upon that altar? What shall be our daily sacrifice? What the bread for which our petitions arise?

Each one of us must answer these questions for himself. But answer them each one must. Aeons of delay, if you will; the hour will strike for each when the answer must be found, and *consciously* found. What is our burnt offering, consumed in the fires of our lives? What do we bring to the altar of the Soul? Is it our patience? Is it our faith? Our love? Are we consecrated to the service of the Soul? Do we eat, as Krishna said, only the food which remains from the sacrifice? Or do we refuse our hearts and our treasures to the altar? Is it our discontent, our desire, our passion and our greed that we cherish, and is it at the altar of self that we worship, rather than at that of the Soul? If this we do, we do but cheat ourselves. The human spirit will not be so cheated. At the end of ages it will still make its claim upon us. In the long, long course of time, as men know time, the hour comes when we must acknowledge the Soul.

Why not, then, acknowledge that great Soul here and now? Are we happy as we now live? Let us look into our hearts.

The heart of man is the source from which all his energies flow; all his powers have their rise in his heart. So, too, at the Heart of Life abides a sweetness and a power which all feel, but which few recognize. Denied of most, derided by many, unperceived, often, by those whose intuition dumbly hints at its presence, this silent bounty pours forth upon the careless world, mellowing the whole round of Nature.

What is its source? Why comes it? Whither does it go?

These questions the ages, rising and falling, have not answered. But here and there among the human hosts men and women have sensed, as by some finer mode of perception, the outpour of this sweetness. Some of these have essayed to convey it to the listening world in the highest accents of art, of music, of song. Thus a volume of noble sound has come down to us. But the soundless song, the spheric music, has escaped expression. Then there are others who have felt the music in their hearts and who have tried to render its sweetness in terms of action: the patriot, the mother, the children of self-sacrifice one and all have heard it thus, distilling its essence into the cold, material life. Still others there are,— the best beloved children of the Soul,— who have pressed the meaning of the silent music close and closer to their hearts, living it out day after day, until their lives keep time with the eternal harmony: some of these lives are glorified, they are made identical, they are merged into light, they become one with the hidden lover in the heart. In these a boundless compassion is the outward sign of the interior light. All others are orphans: they wander to and fro among lifeless forms and cast molds of thought, casts which the free and fluid life forces have broken

and thrown aside. And yet they clutch at empty creeds and ancient formulae. And why? Because in the general and instinctive movement towards some abiding form of happiness, we all feel the joyful impulse of the Soul, even when our actions most seem to deny it. Humanity is indeed orphaned if it deny the Soul. Each orphan feels that he has a right to which he was sealed from the hour of his birth, a right to some real and entire joy, and that Life — the Life encountered at each turn of the days and the nights — (*Oh! those nights*) — has beggared him of this. Bitter is the complaint of the disinherited. When wordless, then most bitter. It fills the earth and reverberates back from the stars through the thin and chilling air. Some there be, indeed, who enjoy Life in matter; these say that they are joyful, that they voice no complaint; but the challenge of their lives summons Fate to the bar and forms her worst arraignment. Now and again some lover of his kind, some great captain clad with war, some golden hearted hero, some saint on earth who lives for God alone, some statesman modelling the life of his era and handing the pattern down the centuries, some

— singer, hidden  
In the light of thought,  
Singing songs unbidden,  
Till the world is wrought  
To sympathy with hopes  
And fears it heeded not —<sup>1</sup>

— these think to have found happiness, to have touched that unalloyed delight which looks out from the eyes of childhood and which the fullness of nature continually presages. But all who find the treasure lose it. Under the subtle alchemy of Life, happiness breaks up at the purely human touch; some volatile, spiritual essence escapes; the precipitate thrown down is sorrow.

Why should this be so? Is there, then, no permanent substratum to human joy? Is the fabric of heart's delight but the chill of nightmare, the mist of dream? The weaver within the breast of man can he weave no more enduring web than these? When the human dreamer wakes, the glory has faded from off the inner sky and Life lies cold and grey about him until some other will-o-the-wisp beckons again across the morass and lures him on, and on. Again he pursues. Again he grasps and misses — what? A shade! Again he stumbles, falls, arises,— and stands disillusioned under a steely sky. Ever and ever he seeks, because without some hope of happiness — whatever the kind or mode — mankind cannot live. Man lives on, because he hopes for something, he knows not what; he hopes something may arrive, something may change into the happiness he feels must await him, at some turn of the road; no matter how low or degraded its form, or how elemental its nature, he believes that it exists for him, it must find him one day — and he lives on. So he waits; he finds, or seems to find; he touches — and that which he possesses is but a wraith of joy; the spirit and the soul of happiness have fled.

Must this reiterated process be a barren one, *of necessity*? Surely not: that is as if we were to say that the formula of Life yields an ash, but no result. This can only be the case under the hands of a tyro, one unlearned in the science of Life. He who studies Life at close, inner range *and impersonally*, and who reverences while he studies, finds that we are in truth happy only when we lose ourselves. Self-consciousness is the grim specter haunting all mankind, barring the way of escape into the wider universe. If this be so, it were wiser to take a broader and a fresher view, starting anew upon this vital search. It seems most difficult for us to do this, as if some fear, like a drawn sword, barred the way. And in truth each man does fear to lose himself, to lose that fixed body

of thought which represents each to himself. Yet what if this which we so fear to lose be actually an enemy which, octopus like, strangles that shy and vital essence which we seek? What if our self-consciousness enmeshes and confines the Soul?

How, then, to find the Soul? Each man must do this for himself. But each must obtain some hint from Life, the Life about him and of which he is a unit, the Life of which he forms a part. The clue is near at hand. Life emits a light by which it reveals itself. Life is common to all: Why, then, does each use Life as if he were set apart? Life is *impersonal*, but we use it *personally*. This simple fact — once we recognize it, alters the whole focus of Life. Viewed from this new standpoint, the path is seen to be straight and cleared of all its mazes.

One wise in the science of Life once said something to the effect that the spiritual is neither personal nor impersonal; it is not an abstraction; but seek to find *the impersonal in the personal*, and there is the spiritual; your difficulty is solved.

With this in mind, our maze still winds, but is a maze no more. All our actions, when we relate them to the larger, the Universal Life, become symbols; within the action is a spiritual, an impersonal meaning which ensouls, as it were, the action, and so relates it to the great Life.

To take a concrete and a very simple example: a woman sweeps a room. She is doing this because she is paid to do it, and so earns a livelihood; or she does it because it is a part of her daily home duty; it has to be done, it is a part of her work. So, she sweeps, doing it well as to the mechanical part of its nature, and but little more. Another woman comes, taking up the same work, but as she sweeps, a pure motive is singing at her heart: she is doing this work as if to the Lord; in her heart, her intent, her will she is doing the life work He has given into her hand; the Lord decreed her necessity and her labor, and the deed is done as if for Him. Can we not see the difference in spiritual dynamics between the first worker and her who hath swept the house and found her piece of silver, rejoicing and praising God? The difference of the forces engendered by each is enormous and wide. The one, working personally, living as to herself, was shut in by an airy barrier, imponderable but rigid as the barrier between element and element; the constriction of a lower order of force shut into a vicious circle, revolving around herself. The second woman, sensing with fine intuition the omnipresence of that Divine Life which we sometimes call “God,” works as one bowed to Its Rule, vowed to That Service; and thus serving in this impersonal manner, she becomes a co-worker with the Supreme: through her life the spiritual forces are freely playing, divinely working out their appointed ends far, far beyond her visible sphere of action; and she herself, in her degree and place, is evolving from her apparent limitations the spirit that ensouls every atom of Life.

And so with any other action. As we eat, drink, work, play, stand, sit, fall, rise, give, take, every single action symbolizes something of the Universal Life. That largest Life is mirrored in the least deed of man or woman; their *intent* in each deed declares the nature of their alliance, whether with Evolution or with Devolution. He who seeks the hidden meaning within his daily actions and who views them in the light of their inner significance, raises no barriers, enters no entanglements, and finds a light emanating from Life which does illumine the darkness of his Consciousness, does purify it from the haunting ghosts of self-consciousness, does lift and strengthen his heart and wash clean the tablets of the mind.

“That life is carnal in which our spirit, meant for God, is dragged at the chariot-wheels of our lower life; and that is spiritual which is ruled and mastered by the Spirit. Secular business is spiritual if it is ruled by the divine Spirit according to the law of righteousness. Politics are spiritual, commercial and municipal life are spiritual, and

everything that develops our faculties is spiritual, if we will allow the divine Spirit to rule in all according to the law of righteousness, truth and beauty.”

And then so many come, asking, “What, *precisely*, do you mean by the term Spirit?” They, it would appear, would like to touch, taste, see the Spirit. Surely there are very few amongst us who cannot discern the spirit of an act, the spirit in which it is done, and whether it be a spirit of truth and of mercy, a spirit of wide and deep bearings and of outlook upon Life. Or is it still true what some of the elder alchemists said, that “the discernment of spirits” is a rare gift? And readers have looked solemn and wise, thinking that ghosts were meant!

Dealing in this wise with our personal lives and finding the impersonal significance within them, we come by degrees to the perception that Life is in reality an altar, whereupon we lay our sacrifices, offering up the *personal* motives, desires and viewpoint upon that altar of the Soul. So offering, our sacrifice is accepted — and then real Life begins. We learn of Life all that we need to know. Our self-consciousness no longer imprisons the inner nature. The soul within, freed from the tangled nets of personality, looks about the inner world, sees, comprehends, and then — Ah! my friends, have you ever seen the butterfly, freed from the cocoon, sitting stunned in the shade awhile; and then,— the breath of the wide, free Life touches it, and oh! the rapturous dash into the blue ether, the wide and ever-widening circles of Life as God meant it to be! When the inner Life begins, and the inner joy is tasted, Life,— your Life, my Life;— has become an indivisible portion of the Universal Life, an altar of the Soul.

Shall we not, then, lead our lives as priests serving at a mighty altar? Shall we not be consecrate? Shall not our daily life be to us as the daily bread from the hand of Divinity? For if we can so envisage Life, our narrow horizons vanish like mists gathered up by the sun; in the place of a fretted and paltry existence, now fevered by a selfish hope, now chilled by a selfish despair, we shall find ourselves secure, joyous, vibrant with faith, ripened and enriched with compassion which shall wear a spiritual likeness to the Compassionate Law and Soul from which it sprang. Each moment shall be freighted with a splendid meaning: our very human sorrow shall be sanctified with courage and trust. In the smallest act we shall feel the touch of a spiritual purpose, the breath of a diviner sphere — beyond our ken, perhaps, but not beyond the intuitive insight of our faith. There will be nothing small, nothing petty or mean or circumscribed in our lives as we shall then live them, for each event will be irradiated with Life.

Our present consciousness is mainly of the lower self, the self almost wholly concerned with Life upon a gross plane. We are largely ignorant of, or indifferent to the Life of higher regions; we have tasted, but we lack the courage to pursue with unflinching will the Life which wells up in the heart. When we feel the touch of that Life we taste happiness; but all too soon we seek to *perpetuate some chosen form* of happiness; we wish to find our delight there where we are used to perceive it,— that is, in consolidation, in perpetuation, in possession, in inertia, in rigid crystallization around some preferred mode of living, of experience. Then great Life, the All-Compassionate, arises and breaks our puny mold. Happy are we if we perceive the Compassion within the seeming disaster, and know that all which we lay cheerfully upon the altar of Life partakes of the nature of sacrifice;— that all willing sacrifice is already of the Soul.

At the core of Life the Soul, the unknown lover, waits. Nothing so small but the heart of it harbors the Presence. The planets know it well; the ion is its chosen home; it sings in the corn, it aspires on every wing, but its goal and prize is Man,— Man the orphaned one. Divinely it yearns towards him, trembling into music in his heart. Since the heart of Man,— his source of Life,— is the interpreter of this Light, how blessed

are we if we hearken to the aspirations and the inspirations of our hearts, and translate them into our daily actions.

J.W.L. KEIGHTLEY.

## NOTE

1. {"To a Skylark," 1820, Percy Bysshe Shelley.} Verse(s) as found:

Like a Poet hidden  
In the light of thought  
. . . . .  
Singing hymns unbidden,  
Till the world is wrought  
To sympathy with hopes and fears it heeded not:

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*The Path* – January 1888, Vol. 2, pp. 304-308.

*The Vow of Poverty, and Other Essays* – April 1904, pp. 46-56.

## THE APPEAL UNTO CAESAR.

JASPER NIEMAND, F.T.S.

When Rome ruled the world, in her Caesar was focused all her power. A claimant for Justice, challenging judgment with the cry:— "I appeal unto Caesar!" was answered: "Then Caesar will hear you." He had taken refuge at the foot of the throne, and men spoke of an appeal unto Caesar, as a supreme and final step. It evoked an irrevocable decision. Despite the lapse of time this appeal impresses the mind with unimpaired majesty because it is the type of a living truth. The appeal unto Caesar has an eternal place in the spiritual world.

When a man first feels within himself the strange throb of that power which tells of a higher life than that in which he is immersed; when it spurs him away from the material and beckons to him as from glimpses of the spiritual, he looks about him for information, for traces of a course to be pursued. He questions his fellows; he reads many books; he hearkens to teachers and authorities, both real and nominal. A huge mass of external information is sifted by him, and in the end he finds — confusion! His intellect may be fed for a while, but at last the support of the heart fails it; it is saturated, plethoric, atrophied. He turns then to Life itself. He questions the boasts and the despair, the revelry and the agony; he asks of Love, of Hope, of Fear, and Faith. He contemplates the ideals of all art and the untrammelled freedom of Nature, aiming perhaps nearer to the secret as he marks the inalterable round of seasons, and how winter draws itself together with bitter contraction to burst into the ferment, the vernal revel of spring. He snatches at the wings of dreams; he confronts the phalanx of great problems and the most shadowy suggestions alike; but he has not the clue to the labyrinth; he knows not that this eternal alternation is Life itself, and that he must look deeper still. The heart, unsupported by the intellect, now fails him also. He hears, perhaps of the teachers of the East, or of the "Leaders of the world" from whom, "*when the wind is blowing*," comes the mystical fragrance which is the ambrosia of the soul.<sup>1</sup> But the wind is not then blowing (that is — his time has not come in the Law), and it is borne in upon him that he is but one of millions along the centuries who have given a momentary cry out of the press of existence, and have then returned

contentedly to the “flesh pots of Egypt,” He has yet to prove that he possesses, in some degree at least, the power of flight. So he receives no valid or enduring comfort from any of these directions; and meanwhile, all about him, the enticements of Life are plucking at his garments, the currents of the world are urging him to and fro. Here, many desist: he who perseveres listens next *within*. He hears vaguely, now this prompting and now that, in the multiform vacillations of the soul, itself bewildered by the long sojourn in matter; even the inner sanctuary, in which he most trusts, seems to betray his hope. Then if his soul be as yet weak, his thought fails, the spiritual vision fades into the mists, and he resumes the accustomed march of life, keeping “lock step,” with his imprisoned companions like one awakening, heavy and unrefreshed, from the phantasmagoria of dreams. We lose sight of him in the struggling multitude; he has leapt from the wave only to fall back into the depths. But he who is strong, rendered stronger still as he gathers to himself the forces he has overcome, now discards all other powers, and takes his resolute stand upon his own nature. He declares that since he can conceive a higher Life, it must exist within his reach, and he wills with an indomitable will to attain it. How, he knows not, but he relies upon that inner prompting alone.

*Then he makes the appeal unto Caesar. By Caesar he is never unheard.*

In those shining spheres where dwell the glorious ones forever, all is peace and silence. A far sound travels up the star strewn cope. The stir of its approach touches the Gods with a tremor; they thrill to it, bending closer, for it has that charm which alone conjures them, the essential charm of humanity.<sup>2</sup> It is the voice of man, which selfless, is stronger than all the angels, and selfish, is weaker than the dumb plaint of the brute. Perhaps this is the first intelligence of the wanderer received in his Father’s house. Perhaps they have heard it coming before, and Life has beaten it back. Nearer it comes and nearer, gaining force as it advances, from the sympathies of heaven’s messengers and powers all leaping forth to increase and sustain it; it falls like a star into the sea of eternity which swells to meet it, and ripples spread and overflow, magical, musical and full of healing. Oh! with what exultant flight, with what a rush of glory the strong voice of humanity cleaves the interstellar space and opens up the way from Gods to men. Along that way, long retarded souls come flocking after, jubilant among the jeweled auroras. Celestial spheres flash responsively; the silver echoes waken, and God proclaims to God, with solemn triumph, that man once more has claimed his own! “There is joy in the presence of the angels of God, over one sinner that repenteth.”<sup>3</sup> For this hour the God has waited longer than souls can remember. The power of the divine self rests upon the rights of the man who has appealed to it. They are the two poles of a sphere, and the might of the higher can only be universally manifest, below as above, through complete union with the lower. This union ensures immortality to the human soul, and the splendor of distinct fruition to the divine spirit. So when the Higher Self hears the appeal, it responds to the holiest of pledges. This appeal may have been made before in other ages, and the present cry may be the renewal of forgotten vows; or it may now be made for the first time in the first expansion of psychic evolution. For this no special rule can be given. In each life all previous lives repeat themselves, just as the law of reproductive thought or association operates at any cataclysm, so that all similar events may thus be seen. Each sleep brings up all former sleep, and an accident to-day would enable one sufficiently developed to see and feel all the accidents that had before come to the sufferer.<sup>4</sup> So it seems that there comes finally one incarnation which repeats with emphasis the sum total of all other lives, so that the man is hurried through the round of experience with furious rapidity. Such an incarnation ripens the period known as “the moment of choice.” The actual advent of this period is denoted by the strength of the soul which encounters it: it must *know*, before it can decide. It is not a “moment” in the usual sense of the word,

but a period of greater or lesser duration, and I believe it may even extend over several lives. It cannot be entered upon, until the appeal to Caesar has been made.

This appeal is not really the initiative. The spark within, which we carry from the Father's house as a traveler takes with him the love tokens of his home; that exiled spark awakens. It does so because it has at last heard a messenger from the heavenly mansion, and it asserts its remembrance in answer, just as ties of blood assert themselves when estranged brothers meet suddenly in foreign lands, or as the bonds of humanity draw close, in automatic and inherent action, before a common danger. The divine spark knows, what the mind of man ignores, and what the soul forgets, that there is peril for its associates, even peril of eternal death. As from time to time the God remembers the wanderer, so its responsive longings break forth in muffled warning within the troubled breast of man. The Great one, waiting patiently through the ages, sends airy heralds, an impulse of power, a formless, soundless, vibratory message like a flaming light, down the mysterious thread which connects man and God as the moonbeam connects earth and sky. Up that wondrous way every aspiration of man must travel, and down it scintillate the responses of that enduring Love by which alone we live.

He who is strong now passes into a blank darkness, which no power can penetrate for him: from the vortex of pain he suddenly snatches his soul and places it upon the outer verge of peace. Then he must find his way into the heart of the silence.

He is answered, I said; but he does not always hear the answer. The spiritual language is not understood by him. At first, the echoes of his own need are all that come back to him, fraught with a majesty and a pathos from the spheres they have touched, which often intoxicate him into a passion of self-pity. He does not recognize that this added grandeur is the olive branch brought him from beyond the waste of waters; that it is a guarantee of the divine hearing. He does not know that its significance enters his heart, his eyes, his speech, and that in the added dignity of his mien, weary seekers feel blindly an assurance that the higher life exists. They feel, though too often unable to translate clearly, that another has called upon Caesar and that the Supreme Power lives. He has touched IT for a moment, though he knows it not, and all are heartened though none may discover it of himself or of the others.

A certain melancholy then floods the heart of the seeker. It is a sadness sweeter than the ringing clamor of worldly joys; its aftertaste is gracious and not fevered. It is "that which in the beginning is as poison, and in the end is as the water of life."<sup>5</sup> He continues to meditate and to search his soul; to look for truth apart from his conceptions of it; to distinguish the necessities of his lower nature from the intuitions of his higher nature (though both seemingly speak through the one voice,) and to send up aspirations to the God, who responds with a vivifying shower of new hopes. He feels them faintly. For as the ray of light speeds to his succor, it encounters the material darkness in which he lives. A small portion of it may pass through and invigorate his heart, but part is refracted by the things about him, reflected in the surface thoughts and customs of the world and reaches him distorted and falsified. Then too, the more powerful the ray, the more the darkness, receding before it, impacts itself about him, denser than ever, and the faults, the errors nearest his heart are driven home and hold riot there. So it often happens that when rescue is nearest it seems to the beleaguered one immeasurably remote, and that the response of Caesar seems to condemn him in the mocking voices of despair and sin. Men fancy that the answer of the Divine Self must bring peace; it is not so at first. Jesus said: "Think not that I am come to send peace on earth: I came not to send peace, but a sword."<sup>6</sup> There is much warfare yet; only through it do we enter into the peace. We have to wrestle with the power, as Jacob did with the angel, before it will wholly bless us. When it does so, it is for the sake of humanity and man must make his appeal for the same reason. This is the rite of

sacrifice which the *Gītā* speaks of as having been instituted from the beginning — this interchange with the Divine. Having consciously appealed, we have challenged the Supreme: we have placed ourselves within the grasp of the law and the compact must be kept. Nor can we advance until then. A master once wrote to one who asked to become his disciple: “May the powers to which you have appealed *be permitted by still greater and much higher powers* to help you.” He meant the Great One and the law.

I knew a seeker after Truth who was beaten back at every point. He lay prostrate in despair under the most awful weight that ever crushes the human soul. All his nature cried out for God. He felt a touch that rolled the stone away and looking upward, he beheld in the air above him a shape of light all calm and resplendent, whose aspect was a transfiguration of his own. More I know not, but this my brother who was lost has been found again.

There are many of you, my comrades, who stand in just this stead: you have called and you have been answered; but you have not heard. You will say to me: “How shall we hear, and how interpret the voice?” I cannot tell you this; there are as many ways as there are men. Each of you, and he only, is judge of himself; he and Caesar. But I can assure you that every aspiration you feel, and the renewal of them, are messages from the God. His replies may take the shape of added sorrows and gathering storms, for all these are the means of your trial and your growth, and you have elected them yourself, sowing their seeds in other lives. Try then to look upon each as just the help which you now need. So long as you have an unselfish thought, you are not deserted; so long as you have faith, you have heard. This succor stands fast in the True: it can never be uprooted, severed or lessened. It is your inheritance, your right which no one can deny you but yourself. Even your ignorance can only obscure it. The true voice will speak to you of the sorrows of the world, of the grand futurity of mankind, of your diviner Self.

The hour of appeal is the pregnant moment. If you lose it now, how long may you not have to wait, powerless dreamers in the heavenly lands, tasting rich rewards which fail at last? Then you must return again from that world of effects to this one. Seek the world of cause instead. Causes are sovereign; they alone are eternal.

Amid the roar of the world, the stupendous rush of its fierce tides, the swoop of its hurricanes, the fell power of its lightnings which reveal only darkness to the seared soul; amid its miasmatic pettiness, amid its joys and its better hopes, cling still to that one thought which, like the sea gull, can well outstride a thousand storms, the thought of that Humanity which shall merge into Divinity; the thought of the Self, the All. Strengthen it with all the love of your heart, all the sweetness of your nature, and send up a mighty cry to heaven. For when through the spirit, the man wills, when his soul soars to claim its right, then distant spheres are shaken and Being is apprehended. Appeal! Appeal unto Caesar!

JASPER NIEMAND, F.T.S.

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An active charity is the legitimate outcome of the sole article of our confession of faith — Universal Brotherhood. This is a term fitted to convey to all minds in all languages a clear, distinct, and ethical idea. It covers and conveys in its highest sense the truth of the “spiritual identity of all Being” on which alone can a real universal brotherhood, true in fact as well as in potentiality, active on all planes alike, be based.<sup>7</sup>

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Every day we wage our warfare with the world. Every night, when the throb of desire and the whirl of the senses grow still, we sink, as we call it, to sleep. We might more truly say we arise to our awakening. The shadows of our desires hover awhile around us, haunting us as we linger in the borderland of dreams. As our desires were,

so are our dreams; things fair or hideous, grim or radiant with lovely light. But dreams soon fade and desires cease, and we enter into our rest. We pass from the world of the senses to the realm of immortal will. We enter in through the golden portal, far better than the fabled gates of ivory or horn, and for awhile we are immortal in power, immortal in peace. For without power there is no peace.

Beyond the land of dreams and the shadows of desire stands the gate of peace. All men enter there and all creatures. Were it not so, all men must go mad. And within that portal, all are equal. All alike awake to their immortal selves. Sinner and saint have left their difference at the threshold. They enter in together as pure living souls. Weak and strong are one there, high and lowly are one. The immortal sunshine, the living water, are for all. For great Life has wrapt us around with beneficence, so that even now we are in the midst of the everlasting.<sup>8</sup>

## NOTES

1. *Saddharma Pundarika*.

2. In the Hindu and Buddhist books we find this referred to as, the growing warm of Indra, or other Deity, who thus knows that his interposition below is needed; as, when Buddha's father wished to build a lotus pond: then Indra, in one night had it done. — J.N.

3. St. Luke xv: 10 and 7.

4. A friend, sitting recently with an injured man, saw in the astral light an accident that had happened to him 25 years before. — J.N.

5. *Bhagavad Gītā*, Ch. 18.

6. St. Math. ch. 10, v. 34.

7. {This paragraph is not in *The Path* article, but *is* in the book following the chapter.}

8. {This follows the article in *Theosophical Quarterly*, January 1904, p. 78.}

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*The Theosophical Quarterly* – April 1909, Vol. 6, pp. 305-316.

## THE ASCENT OF PRAYER.

JASPER NIEMAND

{I.}

In prayer, as in all other things, there is evolution. The truth discerned by the intuitive mind of Darwin was not given by him, so far as we know, a bearing so wide or so deep. This is as well, since it is better that truth, in any of its universal aspects, should dawn *gradually* upon the mind of man. The human mind has a definite and a limited capacity of assimilation; we have had many occasions to note that there is a dyspepsia of the mind. But Darwin laid a broad and firm foundation, one easily verifiable in its broad, general sense, and readily disproved as to its suggested limitations. The point of greatest importance is that a door was opened into human thought, and that the idea of evolution became familiar to all the world.

It would appear that our modern, western civilization has to a wide extent discontinued the habit of prayer. Where the habit still continues it is automatic in a great proportion of cases, and is unaccompanied by a living faith; anyone who receives the confidences of his fellows cannot come to any other conclusion. This fact, deplorable at first sight, is not wholly so. The Spirit of Life which rules and protects

the world has more ways than one of advancing, of lifting upwards; under its action, human thought often pauses — even seems to retrograde — in order to take a great leap in advance. Disbelief in the common mode of prayer as we now know it, and its discontinuance, bring about a silence and a void in our human nature and life; in this silence our consciousness, reaching upward, may embrace a wider and truer idea of the reality of that force which we name prayer. There are always religious minds, devout hearts which turn habitually and naturally in aspiration and petition towards Divinity. Minds, like water, invariably find their own level; the level once actually found it can be raised at will. Where the heart aspires, the level of thought always is raised, and this by way of the innumerable methods which the universal Spirit has forever at its command. There are those amongst us who are not evolving for the time being; those to whom eastern phraseology alludes under the striking term of “the living dead.” But with that stage of existence — the stage of human crystallization — we are not at the moment concerned. It suffices to say that there are comparatively few in our midst to whom prayer is a refuge, refreshment and solace to the heart, a consolation to the mind, a communion with the divine Life. When sharp and sudden trial is upon us; when darkness overspreads the mind and sorrow thrones in the heart, are there very many of us, we wonder, who find in prayer a steadfast anchor, an ark of angelic hope? Sad as the statement may appear, we do not find prayer, as a *living* evidence of faith, at the core of our civilization.

Yet the ideal of prayer, like all ideals, must be a thing of life. As an ideal it must share in the evolution of all life and consciousness. As the consciousness of man expands towards the universal Movement, and embraces ever widening areas, his ideals, always in advance of him, evolve also. We can see this plainly enough if we consider the evolution of any single ideal of the human mind. As individuals, we have no ideals which have not expanded with our mental and moral growth. This is a truth which we are far too prone to disregard. Change involves effort, pain, struggle — all the pangs of growth — and in no department of life is this struggle more complex than upon the mental plane. The reason for this is not far to seek; it resides in the tendency to crystallize, a tendency deeply seated in the human mind. Mental change costing us so much, the impulse of the natural man is to shrink from it, to resist it, while the Spirit of Life, eternally free, breaks up every mold and form, be these upon what plane they may. Through the sharp throes of this struggle every man must come, soon or late, to the perception that evolution is present in all thoughts and ideals which are living ones at all, no less than in the more objective manifestations of life; that it is present in all the embodiments of Soul. The fact of evolution really resides in the impetus and motion of the omnipresent Life, which is always advancing, and which moves all existence with it towards its transcendent goal. We regard thoughts and ideals as if they had sprung from the mind of man ready-made and complete, as Minerva is fabled to have sprung — mature and fully armed — from the head of Jove. This is not so; the germ of truth is sown in the heart of man by the Spirit thereof: how the man will develop the germ, and how far, depends upon himself; upon the direction and exercise of his will. Thought is a grand power; but the Soul is greater, and is not the slave of thought save by its own choice.

In the course of a lifetime each one of us has ample occasion to observe the fallacy of the present inconsequent mode of thinking upon this subject of evolution. Not only does each generation do its part towards the evolution of any idea, but we see it in each human life as well. Take our individual lives. There are few, if any subjects upon which we feel and think in maturity as we did in childhood or in adolescent youth. Some of the intuitive ideas of our early youth may still be present; but as a rule they have been effaced by the successive waves of life; or they have stood still and then have gone retrograde as all ideas will if they are not lived out and evolved. Where there

is stagnation there will always be retrogression, decay: this is a law of life and the plane of thought offers no exception to its sway. Retrogression persisting, there is at last a breaking down, a splitting up, and death — to that form or idea. Others of our ideas have broadened, have developed. Even the intuitive beliefs which we have held to and lived by are not the same; at first a living plant in the heart of a child, they have now borne living fruit.

If we consider the ideas common to all minds, such as the ideas of crime, or of law, we find a great change. Less than a century ago a man would be hung for the theft of a sheep, imprisoned for life for an unpaid debt. Look somewhat further back, and we see people put to death for witchcraft. Our ideal of humanity and of justice has evolved with the passage of time. So with our ideals of Science; of Art; of Religion; of the air, the ether; of international relations and duties. Most of all we have expanded and deepened our ideas of man, his constitution, his history, his powers, his consciousness and his destiny. Con the lists of human invention, with their immensely extended ideas of what is possible to man; we find evolution of thought on every side. The mass-consciousness of humanity has raised its level. The level of conscience is raised as well. In individuals, as distinct from the mass, this mental evolution is of course more marked; but the consciousness of humanity is tuned an octave higher.

The ideal of prayer has passed and is still passing through a change in many minds. The habit of prayer, instilled into many of us by the authorities of our childhood, has fallen into disuse among the mass of the people; and even among many really devout and conscientious thinkers. Why is this? It may be of interest to consider the subject, even within the brief limits of this paper, tracing in part the evolution of the ideal of prayer through various phases of the human mind.

Either we never prayed at all, lacking the customary religious instruction:

Or we were taught in childhood to pray.

If we were never taught to pray, we went through life gaining such experience as we could at each step, and comprehending this experience truly or mistakenly, as the case might be. If our minds were evolving, ductile minds, we were presently struck with the fact that there *is* this ideal of prayer. We then either accepted the idea provisionally, tentatively: or we rejected the idea altogether.

Those who reject the idea pass at once into the category of minds who, as to that given ideal, are not evolving at all. They may be evolving, probably are evolving, as to other ideals; but in respect of the ideal of prayer their evolution is checked until, at some later period of time, they are brought again to its consideration. For the immediate purposes of this paper, we have no further concern with them.

Those who accept the idea, provisionally and in sincerity, may be divided into two classes. Either they come at once to find that the effort to pray meets some need of their nature, and so feeling they grasp intuitively, finding in it an essence of spiritual happiness: or they continue to accept it provisionally, now trying to pray; now, it may be, relaxing their attempts. But whether taught to pray in childhood, or whether finding the idea later on in life; and whether continuing steadfast in prayer or dropping the custom, these minds come under the same category as to this point, viz., that the idea of prayer is now under consideration; the seed of his ideal has been sown in the nature.

For some time it exists in the background of our consciousness as a seed only; an idea, not as yet an ideal. Apart from those cases (and we shall find them in the minority) where the idea has been intuitively selected and has become an ideal, the idea of prayer remains a creation, a figment, of the mind, and that alone. But say now that we continue to pray because we were taught to pray; or because we have learned that others pray and we wish to test the value of prayer. In either case, if we continue, we form a *habit* of prayer. At first we pray because we want something which we have not

got; we pray as the child petitions Santa Claus for its toys, as the savage prays to his idols for the fulfilment of his desires. And as we find that we do not receive the object of our desires — our desires masked as prayer — we gradually discontinue the useless custom; we pray mechanically, or we pray no more.

At this stage our idea of God is not high. God, the power to whom we pray, is to us something like what our French neighbors call *le bon Dieu du pot-au-feu* — a domestic deity, stirring the soup of daily life and giving out choice morsels at call; reserving, moreover, the emptiness of the iron pot for those who have not petitioned. We call upon a power which will hear (or so we think) our selfish urgency. It will lay aside its work and the claims of others to hearken to the voice of our materialistic desires; will reserve for *us* the victory; ensure to *us* the harvest, to *us* the prize. It will ignore the entreaties of other petitioners in order to grant to us — as we hope — the precedence for which we so ignorantly pray. To arrest our misfortune and avert our sorrow, it will suspend judgment; it will disregard merit and demerit, and will miraculously expunge the effects of the causes which we set in motion; the laws of the universe will be cancelled at our call. To appease our dread of the wholesome discipline of life, this power will remove every opportunity of development through evolution; it will suspend the growth of our souls; check the expansion of our will-power through the exertion of our will against obstacles, by removing the obstacles; impede the unfolding of all the grand qualities of Soul — and all because we fear to trust to the wisdom and compassion of the Power Divine! Hosts of such prayers are continually arising, mutually obstructing; ephemera, many of them, of the passing hour; many rescinded by our changeful fancy before their covenanted hour has struck.

There comes a time when we see the childishness, the puerility and selfishness, the poverty of such a conception. When this moment comes, we pause; we reconsider our idea of prayer.

Pressed now by our need, we observe more closely, and it is given us to perceive that all *sincere* prayer has had an answer — but an answer addressed to the essence of our need; an answer which is not in kind, in the sense that it is not addressed to our erroneous ideas of what it is that we *really* stand in need of. For example: we have prayed for something definite which we thought would bring us happiness; the prayer was denied so far as the thing asked for went; but later on we discover that happiness is ours; the answer to our prayer was there, but it entered by another door. Or we have asked for something which was already well within our reach, would we but reach out for it — conquering some inertia of mind or soul. Or something for which we ardently implored God has been denied and later on we see that it would have brought us a deep misfortune, and have been thankful for the refusal of our petition. Then, too, there are the petitions of pure selfishness, and reason alone must agree that the world, as well as ourselves, is the better for the denial of our prayer. Worst of all it is when the object of some frantic entreaty is given to us and life becomes a torture under it. The human heart has oftentimes shuddered under what has been called “the curse of an answered prayer.” But the suffering brings a blessing if the lesson which it enfolds has been apprehended and under the thorn a fruiting blossom has appeared. This rising perception of an adjustment of our prayers makes us reconsider our position, so that this stage of our thought constitutes a step in advance. It is a difficult stage of our progress which we now enter.

In such moments of difficulty there is one thing which comes to our rescue, guiding us past a danger point. *Did we pray sincerely?* Did we really believe in the existence of such a God as we imagined to be there, harkening to the sound of our prayer? If trust were indeed within us, we should gradually find that there arose in our minds, quite simply and naturally, a further expansion of our idea of prayer. Did not Krishna say to Arjuna: “And even those who worship other gods with a firm faith in

doing so, involuntarily worship me, too — albeit in ignorance?” Our earlier idea, gross concept that it was, was still the carrier of a germ of faith. And though this germ were but as a mustard seed we might still look to see it expanding, and in its expansion giving shelter to many a winged petition of unselfish love. All unknown to our ignorance — as Krishna implies — that living germ, a spiritual potency, was our instructor, our evolver. Our ignorant prayer was still ensouled by faith, the living faith which no husk of mold of mind can long impede. In its own good time the vital nucleus outwears the enshrouding husk and leads us one step nearer to the Soul of the world. To faith an answer must ever come. The answer is made in terms of life. Our thought is touched as by a flame, and by its glow we discover the selfishness of our prayer. We feel the Power Divine which transcends the God-idea of our earlier thought. It is a greater love which now we feel; it whispers to us of the needs of all beings and of the creaturely world. We recognize that our prayers of selfhood often sought to override and overlook their kindred necessities; to grasp some *common* issue for our very own. The clutch of that prayer has shut our hearts away from our kin and kind. With this perception a new blossom of our thought unfolds; from being an idea, the thought of prayer has become an ideal; we perceive that this ideal evolves, and we are ready to follow its leading yet further along the dim aisle of experience.

Seeing this, we have now entered upon a long train of thought which involves much and which illumines a further stretch of our path. We deepen the area of our prayer. It is now for noble things only that we pray — as we conceive nobility. Our prayer is now pure — or so we think. The truth is that we have narrowed, even while we deepened the scope of our prayer. We pray for results which are righteous — in our own sight! For conditions which have our personal esteem and approval; for the happiness of those of our kind whom we love. We still look for results: we still prescribe the answer of the all-wise Power. In asking for all these fair and good things our interior thought is really parceling and weighing, judging and adjudging; labelling one portion of life “good,” another portion “evil.” Among the so-called “evil” things are pain, sorrow, misfortune, loss; the denial and strain of circumstance — in short, all the high re-adjustments worked by the Divine Law for the purification and strengthening of our souls. We deny to the Soul of the world its fundamental justice; we deny its right freedom to pursue its adjustments through all modes of action, all conditions. We ignore that the just and the unjust are *alike* the objects of its compassion. We ignore that the evil which we see is often working out and off, removing some hideous cancer from the human soul; teaching the human being through the purifying alembic of pain, of loss — of despair, it may be — to go on his *rightful* way and sin no more. The Universal Soul has unimaginable modes of action to the breadth and splendor of which our fixed conceptions make us blind. Seeing the scope of our isolated lives merely, we do not see; we are worse than blind. Blindness may be visited by gleams of interior insight, but to the perverted mental vision there is nor help nor cure until that offending eye — that mode of mental vision — be plucked out and cast from us. While the sense of separateness wholly directs our conceptions, what can we see of the unity, the harmony and compassion of Being?

In the presence of our sincerity there is still every hope for us. Our faith has wings to uplift, to bear us on. Once again our mind is illumined as by a flame from the central Life, and we now recognize that this which we love and approve is still our self; a wider self, truly, but not the Self Divine. And so we ask ourselves a question: for what shall we now pray, if the taint of selfhood is to be removed from our beseeching?

Let us retrace our mental steps. While we have thus been engaged in indrawing and assimilating our experience — the teaching of life which has brought us to this stage — our ideal of God has been evolving, too. We no longer look upon the Supreme Power as a *Deus ex machina*, managing the small effects of our lives by the aid

of our suggestions; intervening at each stage of our progress to remove the consequences of our actions, to relieve us of the results of our deliberate choice of sin. The God of our ignorance now reveals Himself to our thought as a just and all-compassionate Power, immanent in all life, acting through divinely coordinated laws which make up the unity of the One Life. No caprice, no favoritism, no variableness nor shadow of turning on the part of this Power; we know that its faultless balance justly weighs. We feel intuitively that the heart of it is love. When again we see, as in a vision, the hosts of prayer, the petitions of mankind blindly seeking the hidden throne, we now have a fuller understanding of our interior thought. We know that of such prayers the large proportion strive to nullify one another, being but naive expressions of egotism, the outcries of children confused in the mists of life. Something of the pettiness of the purely human attitude flashes across our startled minds. A weariness, a disgust for this attitude comes bitterly over us: we pause in doubt and bewilderment before this glimpse into the human heart — that heart which is still our own.

And now our thought sinks down into darkness. We are silenced, finding no egress, no light. The place in which we now stand is one in which our trust in our ideal shall be tried as by ordeal of fire. For an instant of time we have breathed a rarer air; we have caught a glimmer of the central Light. The voice of our lamentation has been extinguished by the vision of the need of the world: we realize the conflict of Desire as it unrolls itself under the eye of God.

We do not know it, but this is a place of peril, of trial; we are at the parting of the ways; much depends on what we now do.

Many minds turn back, at this point, into materialism and doubt. Others, with desperate effort, dismiss the thought, turning, self-narcotized, into some one of the many broad avenues of worldly psychic life. Some whisper to themselves: "Since no such God as I conceived can be — there is no God at all." Others there are — and these in smaller number — who substitute for their earlier idea of God an ideal of Divine Law. Under a gleam of intuitive understanding they realize that the world is governed by Law and not by chance; that ordered and successive unfolding is the Law of the Soul evolving through Nature. Such thinkers change the venue; they alter their habits of thought; they resolve to accept the Law, whatever it may appoint. They will no longer ask for especial gifts. They will not attempt to divert divine favor. Their ferocious egotism shall besiege the Infinite no more. The need for prayer has disappeared! Finding in resignation their stay; in steadfast faith their guide, they bow their hearts in silence, mute, submissive, dumb. The effacement of their human personality leaves them lost and chill in the lonely regions of thought.

But the Heart Divine is all-merciful, and cannot leave them there. Into their darkness comes a light. Into their silence steals a silent voice. A gentle touch upon their nature thrills them with hope. The shackles of the mind are undone. The mystical reconciliation is breathed into their heart; they are bidden — as by some angelic messenger, felt, though unseen by the outer vision — to pray, as the Great Christian Master prayed, that the will of the All-Father may fulfil itself upon earth as in the heaven of Divine Consciousness. Oh! wondrous moment. In it how sweet a secret is revealed! Pray, that you may approach the Divine One. Pray, that you may mingle your finite will with The Will. Pray, not that you may appropriate somewhat of life to yourself, but that you may melt your human being into Divine Being; that in an outpouring of aspiration you may be attuned to the immortal Soul. Our prayer has become that yearning to go out to the Infinite of which every saint and martyr has sung in fullness of soul.

Not long are we able to maintain ourselves upon this height. The vortex of human life swirls up, and our footing in the divine world is lost for a time. But the

wonderful moment still pulsates in the heart. It is now that the man of dauntless courage summons up his will, determined to lay hold upon the Soul. In trying to do this, he reaches the first stage of Meditation: he now attempts the prayer, potent but silent, of the great servants of The Law. By the power of his will, fired by aspiration, he unlocks, one by one, the Gates of the Soul.

So doing, he finds many petitions made vocal in his heart when he is not engaged in Meditation. But these are no longer prayers for concrete gifts, even for others. He has confided himself to the Soul and its Law, and his prayers are all forms of ardent aspiration that The Will may fulfil itself wholly, that the Soul may reveal itself further to man. By such prayers as these a door is opened into the nature, a door which gives upon the divine world. Prayer in its highest meaning is now seen as the avenue of approach to the Soul. In the unutterable longing of such prayer we lay open the field of our nature to the inrush of that Spirit whose destiny it is to fill the assembled universe with itself. Prayer, the petition, has become, first a call, then a silent contemplation of that Power which hath no name among men. We lay hold upon the Power as we realize that the Soul stands forever there, an immense, eternal reservoir of spiritual energy: we long to ally ourselves with the Power, to attract the Power as Nature attracts and holds it until its purposes are accomplished; human as we stand amidst humanity, we long to make ourselves a point of leverage for the Power, to become one of its many foci from which it radiates and distributes the energies collected there. To be, as the poet-philosopher has told us that we can be, an inlet into the whole of the ocean of Soul. By the purity of our contemplation we ally ourselves to holy messengers; to angels; to the high servitors of the Law, under whatever names they pass. The impersonal forces of our hearts, welling up from the altar of Life within us, have an invincible might derived from their pure source, that source divine and holy to which the purified heart of man serves as channel, as prophet, as priest. Holding up before the divine Consciousness all that seemeth amiss, we offer it there at the altar, asking only that the Will may be done: friend and foe, wrongs unspeakable, sorrows; errors; the lack of justice and the waning of courage and hope in our sad underworld — we offer all, all, to the Power which knoweth all: we trust it with our beloved, since the Power is Love at its zenith; we trust it with the foe, since the Power is the very self of justice and mercy. And now we know that this Power is that which fills all creation with its song; that its Soul is expressed in the music of the spheres. Ranging over the whole field of Desire, we reject thought after thought as not expressing the fullness of our hearts, and bowed at last before that inner altar, we contemplate Divinity and are still. Our awakened soul realizes — and with joy that no tongue can utter — the ascent of prayer.

## II.

It will be of interest to compare the utterances of two writers of quite different types as to the reality of the value of prayer. One of these writers is a man of scientific and literary reputation; a man of open mind — Sir Oliver Lodge. The other writer is a woman — the late Madame Blavatsky. In the higher sense, both are scientists, the latter writer being wise in the science of Life, the highest science of all.

In the *Key to Theosophy* Madame Blavatsky wrote on the subject of prayer, and although her ideas have been largely misunderstood, and hence misrepresented, we can clearly see that she believed in the evolution of the ideal of prayer. She antagonized with vehement decision the ordinary methods of prayer (which she considered to be selfish), asserting that true prayer is “Will-Power,” and saying that the theosophist does not believe “that prayer is a petition.” “It is a mystery rather,” she writes, “an occult process by which finite and conditioned thoughts and desires, unable to be assimilated by the absolute Spirit which is unconditional, are translated into spiritual wills and the will; such transmutation being called ‘spiritual transmutations’ —. Again she writes:

“Prayer, as now understood, is doubly pernicious: (a) it kills in man self-reliance. (b) It develops in him a still more ferocious selfishness and egotism than he is already endowed with by nature. I repeat that we believe in ‘communion’ and simultaneous action with our ‘Father in secret,’ and in rare moments of ecstatic bliss, in the mingling of our soul with the higher essence —.” This writer, regarded as a thinker of a very high order by many theosophists, deeply esteemed the true form and exercise of prayer.

In the latest book issued by Sir Oliver Lodge, under the title *Man and the Universe*, we also find testimony as to the value of prayer. His is a truly devout mind, one open to wide conceptions of the universe and its guiding laws; laws which guide it from within, and not from without. Sir Oliver Lodge writes: “We thus return to our original thesis, that the root question or outstanding controversy between science and faith rests upon two distinct conceptions of the universe: the one, that of a self-contained and self-sufficient universe, with no outlook into or links with anything beyond, uninfluenced by any life or mind except such as is connected with a visible and tangible material body; and the other conception, that of a universe lying open to all manner of spiritual influences, permeated through and through with a Divine Spirit, guided and watched by living minds, acting through the medium of law, indeed, but with intelligence and love behind the law; a universe by no means self-sufficient and self-contained, but with sensitive tendrils groping into another supersensuous order of existence, where reign laws hitherto unimagined by science, but laws as real and as mighty as those by which the material universe is governed. ‘For nothing is that errs from law.’ According to the one conception, faith is childish and prayer absurd;— According to the other conception, prayer may be mighty to the removal of mountains, and by faith we may feel ourselves citizens of an eternal and glorious cosmogony of mutual help and co-operation — advancing from lower stages to ever higher states of happy activity world without end — and may catch in anticipation some glimpse of that ‘lone far off, divine event to which the whole creation moves.’ ” (*Loc. cit.*, p. 22, *et seq.*)

Lodge further says that “each one of us has a great region of the subconscious to which we do not and need not attend: only let us not deny it, let us not cut ourselves off from its sustaining power. If we have instinct for worship, for prayer, for communion with saints or with Deity, let us trust that instinct; for there lies part of the realm of religion.” (*Loc. cit.*, p. 48.)

Again he points out, that, to a certain order of synthesizing minds “prayer is quite consistent with an orderly cosmos, for it may represent a portion of the guiding and controlling will; somewhat as the desire of the inhabitants of a town for civic improvement may be a part of the agency which ultimately brings it about, no matter whether the city be representatively or autocratically governed.” (*Loc. cit.*, p. 65.)

It is quite plain to what order of universe the belief of this writer is given, for we find this fine passage at the close of one of his sections:

“Realize that you are part of a great orderly and mutually helpful cosmos — that you are not stranded or isolated in a foreign universe, but that you are part of it and closely akin to it — and your power of sympathy will be enlarged, your power of free communication will be opened, and the heartfelt aspiration and communion and petition that we call prayer will come as easily and as naturally as converse with those human friends and relations whose visible bodily presence gladdens and enriches your present life.” (*Loc. cit.*, p. 80.) What an admirable description this is of the belief of many theosophists regarding communication with those great Servants and administrators of the Law whom we call “the Masters.”

Elsewhere he identifies meditation with prayer, and says also that “It may be that prayer is an instrument which can influence higher agencies, and that by its neglect we are losing the aid of an engine of help for our lives and for the lives of others.” “Nor do we know how much may depend upon our own attitude and conduct.” (*Loc. cit.*, p. 51.) All this is precisely what H. P. Blavatsky taught, and a sentence of Lodge’s sums up the core of her teaching in these words:

“The region of true Religion and the region of a completer Science are one.” (*Loc. cit.*, p. 51.)

### III.

As we prayerfully contemplate the arena of Life, we find it holy, find it everywhere interpenetrated by the Soul. In the bright brown glances of the wayside stream; in the flicker of birds about the hedges; in the waxing stature of the trees, the increasing ripeness of the corn, the outbreathing sweetness of the flowers; in the fall of the leaf and the descent of the years; in the lifting of the clouds and the tides, we see the trend of the Power which consciously lifts Nature from within itself towards the splendid Soul. Turning man-ward, we see that as the currents of prayer and praise arise from the hearts of men the inner nature opens, and upon those currents the consciousness is lifted into contact with those diviner spheres from which, as from an ocean of love, the harmonies of Being ever flow. Hearing those vast harmonies we understand their voice; we realize that Spirit ensouls, as with a rosy flame, every center and nucleus of Life; that the soul consciously aspires to return, enriched and individualized in consciousness, to its eternal source. This upward Movement of all life is indeed the aspiration of the universe, and in its evolution we witness the cosmic ascent of prayer.

JASPER NIEMAND.

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## AUTONOMY; SOLIDARITY; CRITICISM.

J. C. KEIGHTLEY

The subject of autonomy has come so prominently before the theosophical public of late, that perhaps the expression of a few thoughts upon the subject may not be out of place.

In one sense, there is no such thing as autonomy, pure and simple. It does not exist. There is only interaction and interdependence. In manifestation all things are dual, are polar, and in the maintenance of equilibrium or circulation, health consists. Most of our mistakes in thought and action would appear to have their rise in undue insistence upon one pole or mode of action.

Autonomy in local affairs is all very well. Only those conversant with the local *statu quo* can wisely administer. But in their bearing upon the body corporate, upon the Society at large, a wider view is required. This seems trite enough. Yet the fact is often lost sight of in a craze for autonomy, which is the direct result of reaction from the undue use of official authority, self-styled. The relation of parts to the whole appears in danger of being forgotten. Not any organized body, from the simple nucleated cell to the man or the nation, but requires a center, a pivotal point, and this pivot relates it to the world exterior to it, whether that pivot be the nucleolus of the cell, the heart of the man, the head of the nation or the Manâsic entity known to the Dzryan as “the pivot” of the race. As a wheel without a hub, relying on its tire alone; as a sphere without its

“holding center;” as a star without its fiery heart, so are we without our wider relation and central point, for lack of which all alike must fall into chaos. The ideal of the Republic of the United States (not its present outcome) gives the true conception. A congeries of States, autonomous in all that relates to local action; federated and acting as one complex but united body in all federal affairs relating to the outside world and to the whole.

This brings us at once to the idea of solidarity. There can be no solidarity for an organized body, as such, if it does not elect, vivify and maintain a common center. Nature has provided her own, her sole mode of action and reaction. From center to circumference, from circumference to center, the forces play. There is, as well, a rotatory force playing around the circumference as around the center, but were this mode of action to prevail, were the action to and from the center to cease, the body as such must, and would, fall apart. In the bodies of man and of the universe, no one organ, no one planet, can separate itself from the body of which it is a part and declare its autonomy. The word, like all our words, is a limitation, and expresses a partial idea only. In the Theosophical Society, the officers should be the centers of their Branch; the central office and the journals are the natural centers of the Branches, the Executive, of these; a President of the whole should be the center for that whole, and he, in his turn, were he able to follow universal analogy, would be centered in the greater brotherhood, which in turn has a celestial center which we know not, but which we reach in our dreams.

It were well for each and all of us if we considered, in every act, its dual bearings, for every act has these. “How will this work affect my Branch?” to be followed by: “What is the relation of this work to the whole?” And the same in regard to our method of beginning a work. Let us consult, not alone our friends and comrades with whom our daily work is done, but also those more distant comrades, distant in time and space as men view these, but upon whom our work and the methods of that work may have their primary effect. The sense of proportion, the harmonious interaction of the whole, the equilibrated circulation in which alone *healthy life* is found to lie, would then govern our thoughts and deeds. A finer, higher light than ever radiates from the brain, is shed upon those who thus take the broader view of action. Give autonomy and solidarity or centrality (to coin a word) each their due place and await the result with confidence, whatever that may be. I say “whatever that may be,” because our failures are often the means and triumphs of a law above the human, a law divine. A thinker wrote: “Too great heed for results is poisonous and has damned many a good cause.” Let a man do his duty and leave the results to the Law. How much friction, how much wasted energy we might be saved, and by how much more the Theosophical Society might flourish if we — each one of us — had regard to these elementary facts. If in face of every thought and deed we were to ask: “Is it my present instant duty to think thus? Is it my immediate duty to do this?” These simple tests would keep us from the dangerous trick of meddling with the duty of another, of judging of the duty of that other. Heart-whole, single-minded, we should bend all our energies to the work entrusted to us by a wise Karma. By thus looking to our duty alone, both in the private and in the larger action, we do call upon higher powers; we do receive reply.

From these thoughts ensues naturally a consideration of that criticism which may make or mar our work. Criticism is of two orders: destructive and constructive. The former employs analysis as its sole mode. The latter analyzes but to synthesize. Destructive criticism really has its rise in the comparison of the work of another with our own work. Mental bias, mental configuration, inclines each one of us to some especial form of work, some given mode of doing that work and a particular view of its importance and relation to the whole. With these we compare the work of another and

in so far as it differs with them, in so far we find it faulty, unwise, useless. This failure to recognize other points of view; this failure to accept the fact that Universal Mind acts along all channels, and provides for evolutionary work at every point by impelling all manner of minds to all kinds of work, is the creeping paralysis of our Movement. Its slow chill gains upon us. Its victims are crying out everywhere. Great Nature has even her destructive agents and agencies, and their duty is their duty, and not yours or mine to-day. Yet great Nature destroys but to build anew, and follows destruction with construction, which wider Being equilibrates in the end.

Constructive criticism, on the other hand, springs from universal sympathy. Whatever mode it uses, we feel that sympathy underneath. If it points out a weak place in our plan it offers help as well. If it refuses assistance it does so because itself is inapt at our idea or our work, and not because worker and idea are alike judged as faulty and mistaken. Or it frankly confesses inability without harsh prejudice. We feel the true brotherhood of it because it is simple, frank, and not related to self, not self-centred. If it analyzes it synthesizes also, and it is further from passing judgment upon us or our idea than the star is set from the glow-worm. How foolish we are when we think we can justly judge that which we do not understand. Now want of sympathy with any idea *is* want of understanding of that idea. Can we doubt that, were we in the thinker's environment and had we his precise mental equipment, we should think as he does? And if we honestly cannot see good in his plan why not confine ourselves to the statement that our line of work and thought seems to us not to lie in that direction? Are we afraid his plan may work harm? This mere assumption condemns us as self-worshippers and hypocrites, for it denies that Karma is with him as with us. Who are we to judge of the universal relation of things? Let us simply set forth our own inadequacy, our own inability to join his work, and wish him God-speed in all good things. This vice of criticism has nipped more buds of hope and promise than all the frosts of the century. How many workers has it not paralyzed? From every point of the compass we hear of it. Everywhere are energies unused, hands idle because of it. Whatever work we begin, however faulty that work, if we commend it and its results to the Divine, that Divine will perfect our work, use it to Its own ends, find a better work for us to do. Let us, then, fear to traverse the Divine plan by paralyzing the impulse of another. Let us do our own work and refrain from the duty of another. Suspicion is the sword of criticism. Let us cast that sword away. Who has not seen able workers — both ourselves and others — neutralizing all their own good work by the blight they cast upon the work of their fellows which to them seemed not good? It is not enough to do good work. We should be the cause of good work in others. We should all in turn play the part of inspirers, of evolvers. He who is the cause of the inaction of another; he who hinders the work of another — even though the hindering arise from ignorance of Self and the motives of Self — does his own good work in vain, for he has killed the work of his other, his larger selves.

There is an early letter of Master K.H. to the London Lodge, in which it is written that we should not think we now work together for the first time. We have so worked before, and will so work again, and upon the degree in which we work fraternally and harmoniously now, will depend our being helped or hindered by one another in future lives. Oh, my brothers! Which of us is ready to serve as a stumbling-block from life to life? Were it not better to refrain, to err, if need be, rather by refraining than by blighting the true impulse of another? For if his plan be mistaken, his impulse is true. There is a way of conserving that impulse while helping to modify the plan. I have found that those who wish to work are glad to be helped to work wisely if they feel that your criticism is of a constructive and synthetic nature. It is sympathy which conserves solidarity in autonomy.

J. C. KEIGHTLEY.

## **“THE BHAGAVAD GÎTÂ” IN PRACTICAL LIFE.**

JULIA W. L. KEIGHTLEY

{1 of 9}

In giving the thoughts of a western thinker upon this great spiritual poem of the past, no learned disquisition will be attempted. The writer is not versed in Sanskrit, has no historical equipment and has but begun to browse in the fields of philosophy. For readers requiring these things there are many other works upon the subject, of which the most helpful are probably the translation of the *Gîtâ* by J. Cockburn Thomson (said to have been preferred to other translations by H.P.B.), the translation edited by William Q. Judge, the invaluable Notes by Subba Row, and those admirable and clear-cut essays on Karma, by Charles Johnston, which have recently appeared in *The Metaphysical Magazine* under the title, “Karma in the *Upanishads*.” To all of these the writer, like many another student, owes a lasting debt.

But the aspect of the Book of Devotion<sup>1</sup> with which it is here proposed to deal, is quite other. It is remote from learning and history: and yet it has to do with the object of all history, the human heart.

All over the world to-day is felt a great stress and strain. Everywhere a cry goes up for light, for hope, for freedom. Among the thousands starving for want of bread are hundreds in each land starving for spiritual food. This deep-seated want has brought to the Theosophical Society the larger part of its members, and among these a great, an increasing proportion, have found in this Book of Devotion that food long sought for mind and heart and soul. Among those who have such cause to bless the inspired work is the writer, and just because this hunger was felt and was here assuaged, the thought has come to offer to comrades of like mind, perhaps, those thoughts which the reading of the *Gîtâ* has evoked. The articles profess naught, and are only the fragmentary rays which one mind has caught of the divine reflection: are what one heart has heard, has leaned upon and offers to all hearts inclined to pause a moment over these echoes of a distant, an eternal song.

What we most need to-day is a practical religion. A something we can carry about with us all day long, and carry very close to the heart. A something to rise with and to lie down with: a something to work and live and buy and sell and act and think and finally die by: a plain, practicable, enduring rule which has the assent of the mind and the fervor of the heart to its mandates; a something which has such a quality of the Eternal Light that it illumines all the dark corners at any time, place or season, reaching from hell to heaven, embracing yet transcending both. Such a religion must indeed become the binding power in a life and be followed, because to follow is a necessity of the nature. Such an intimate friend and helper should a man's religion be to him. It is the most priceless thing in the world — because it leads to an ideal which in time becomes the Self — and being so costly, it is to be had only for a price: that price is the whole man. Yes; the whole man must be set upon this point — that he will obtain this spiritual knowledge — and being so set, he obtains it in exchange for himself: but the two become one in the Self.

In the first chapter of the *Gîtâ* we have a portrayal of our own condition when first we set upon our task, self-imposed, of search for spiritual light. We have material existence (*Dhritarâshtra*) blind and ruled by contention and ambition in the person of

its offspring, Duryodhana, who is the leader of the Kurus, the earlier and more material faculties of man, those first evolved, while Arjuna leads the Pandavas, the later (younger) and more spiritual princes. Arjuna himself being mystically begotten by the Fire-God, Indra, through a virgin mother, Kuntî. Taking Arjuna as the human monad, it appears not a little significant that this Arjuna of divine origin is still a younger relative of the material Kurus, is allied to them by a birth tie, and that his means of combatting these passions and earth qualities consist in his bow, Gândîva (that tense "bow" which is the Aum), a gift of the fiery Indra, and his chariot vehicle of motion, which is conducted by Krishna as the charioteer, Krishna being an incarnation of Vishnu the Preserver. I have somewhere read that it was customary for such charioteers to sing to those whom they conducted to battle; Krishna is then plainly the Logos with the ever-resounding song, and that which really fights with Arjuna, as with each one of us, is "the army of the Voice."

So passing along the same arc of existence we find ourselves, like the man Arjuna, confronted with our material connections and desires, with all related things of that line which, pressing upon us, demand the sacrifice of our nobler nature. For mark that Arjuna had not called down this war. The hosts of materiality threatened his existence in the land of his birthright: embodied ambition and contention demanded his exile and arose to compel it. Arjuna must then either fly from that land where the Law has placed him, that land where his heirship and his duty lie, or he must fight. Of tender heart, as becomes a youth and one desirous of spiritual enlightenment. Arjuna shrinks from opening the fight. Open it he must, for the hosts which threaten his expulsion still do not make bold attack upon the field. Is it not ever the same? At once, when man desires to become in very truth a man and lay aside the animal forever, has he not to combat, not only his own lower traits, but also those of all about him and all the forms of established material existence? Every condition makes against him. Were the appeal to his reason alone, or were threats alone employed, either or both combined he can endure. But listen to the arguments; relationship, caste, tribal and national duty, the "sin of oppression of friends," of enjoyment of a form of pleasure which those friends cannot share — have we not now and again heard some of these? Have we not now and again, like Arjuna, let fall the tense and God-given bow, and sat down in the chariot with tremor and fever in every vein? The flying of arrows had begun; the divine bow was strung and ready; the array of enemies was drawn in firm line and horrid uproar filled the air; the conditions of warfare on a material plane were all present. Arjuna was ready, his very bow was raised: why did he, so firmly bent upon looking his antagonists in the face, why did he fall back and give way? Was it not because he paused to argue the matter? It would seem so. He did not go steadily forward into the fight, but moved by the fact that his relatives (and his lower nature, of which these are the type in the poem) opposed his course, he allowed his compassion to weaken him, his firm resolve gave place to a temporizing policy and to argument with his inner self. Is it not thus that the first objection comes upon us all? Even his religion condemned him, and closing his objections with this painful thought, Arjuna longed for death — himself unresisting — at the hands of his beloved enemies, rather than endure the deeper mental pain. Have we not known this hour? "Would that they would themselves put an end to me rather than force on me this dreadful war." Has not such been our selfish cry? Rather than endure the pain we would that theirs were the sin — that they should slay us while we resisted not. Oh, human vanity, thou well-nigh eternal tempter, how closely art thou coiled within the heart! Taking the form of virtue, pleasing man with an image of himself as innocent of attack, as full of compassion and love, too kind, too true to fight those near and dear even for the preservation of his manhood's heirship — who has not tasted the sweet temptation of this hour and in virtuous self-appreciation found a solace and an excuse? Who has not,

like Arjuna, let fall the bow, a victim to self-righteousness, self-esteem and disguised vanity? Who has not forgotten, in the whirl of conflicting emotions, that if we rise, we raise all others with us, that it is not our part to help others to prolong a life of materiality and selfishness — not even when those others are our nearest and our dearest? Who has not forgotten, in floods of selfish sorrow, that in all Nature there is but one thing worth doing: that thing — to find our own Self or to help others to find theirs, and it is the same? Yet it is well for us if, like Arjuna, even while we grieve, we still hold converse with Krishna, the divine charioteer.

O Arjuna, thou of human birth and divine conception; thou man, thou brother, thou very self of me; O thou, myself, when once resolve toward the holy war is thine, take no long survey of the field, give over the interior debate, cozen thyself with specious pleas no more, forbid that foolish grieving shall slacken the tense bow which is thy concentrated soul, but stand and looking to Krishna plunge into the battle: thy God is with thee.

JULIA W. L. KEIGHTLEY.

(*To be continued.*)

## NOTE

1. {The “Book of Devotion” is a subtitle to the *Bhagavad Gîtâ*.}

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## “THE BHAGAVAD GÎTÂ” IN PRACTICAL LIFE.

JULIA W. L. KEIGHTLEY

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(*Continued from p. 4.*)

The despondency of Arjuna has, however, another aspect, if we take Arjuna as a type of man in all ages and periods. We come at last to the same human complexion, but it varies at different times and under the action of various karmic agencies. Where one laments, another is found rejoicing, and the obstacle which crushes the one is a zest and a stimulus to his fellow. The *Gîtâ*, dealing as it does with the human unit, applies to every type, exhibits human nature in all phases of action and evolution, moved by every motive known to the human heart. In the pages of the sacred book each one may find himself, and not only his transitory self, but the wider interpretation thereof, a clue to something more divine, to a more interior nature. We expect — if the book be sacred in any true sense — to be met by a suggestion of that in ourselves of which we are dimly conscious, the radiant shape of our hopes and dreams. The *Gîtâ* should not merely exhibit man facing his destiny with despair in his eyes. Any writer of moderate eloquence can move us at this point, and we ourselves have shed luxurious tears for ourselves. The *Gîtâ* fulfils our expectations. It meets us, as it were, at the bridge of our nature and even while showing it as it now is, shows it also in transit to a diviner life. Man evolving, man in actual movement, and not man crystallized, is the subject of its song.

Over and above those numerous aspects into which we may read ourselves and the common lot of our especial type, will always be found an aspect applicable to all

men, one universal, one dealing with the higher possibilities, the more interior nature, and it is in this aspect that we find the clue to our own wider field of Being. This aspect is paramount in the despondency of Arjuna. Above everything else, when all else is done, all other meanings found by each and applied to his individual case, in final analysis Arjuna stands for man at the bridge, man about to pass from very human to very human-divine.

At this point there is one respect in which mankind never varies. When the human mind, weary at last of the unending material phantasmagoria, turns from the seen and the senses, from the tireless oscillations of pleasure and pain to seek something deeper, something more quiet, some peace a hint of which has flown past upon the air, there is then one step which all must take alike, one mental attitude into which all must fall. That soul which turns irrevocably to the interior paths of life does so because the pain of the world has moved it to the depths of its being. Before this point is reached the minds of men play to and fro before the small old path; they come and go: they play at becoming occultists, at entering the hidden ways of the soul. But not after this point; that, once reached, is final, because it has been reached, not by the mind, but by the soul. The inner heart has awakened, its beat is established. The soul has faced its own depths and at the profoundest point has learned that the Whole is itself; that it feels pain or pleasure because it is bound up in the common human heritage; a man left for a lifetime to complete solitude would neither seek for joy nor flee from sorrow. Living among his fellows, life after life, he finds that his every act and thought are related to some other human being; he comes at last to cease to suffer as an animal, unheeding the pain of others, knowing nothing of the ethical bearings of pleasure and grief. We find the nobler animals, the more highly evolved, and some which have had close contact with man for several generations, showing sympathy with the pain of their own kind and even dumbly entreating the aid of man for that pain. Sympathy, in its essence, is the memory — or the experience through the imagination — of a similar suffering. When the human mind has worked through all the forms of joy and sorrow, there comes a life and a moment when the pain of the manifested world is massed before its view. Moved to an infinite compassion, forgetful of its personal lot, it goes out in a flood of tenderness and sorrow for the pain which no man can assuage or end. It is unable to endure the sight; it cries out for power to aid, for understanding of the problem, for right knowledge of right action. Then, and then only, the man resolves to become more than a man, for in that becoming lies his only means of helping. The anguish of a world in travail has torn him out of himself. His tears are given to the great sum of sorrow; his mind acknowledges its own inadequacy; the great heart of pity wakes within him; he feels, rather than knows, that to abide in that pitiful yearning is to give some help, he knows not what, he only knows that this is Love, and Love is all too rarely given. Even while he sinks in grief and in his despondency thinks he can do no more, yet the impersonality of his lament has called the attention of the spirit; the Divine stoops to him, It communes with his awakened soul in that unspoken language which alone upholds the heart.

There is that of the higher life in the despondency of Arjuna, that he grieves but little for himself. Yet is he still unwise, still purely human, in that he grieves at all. But grief for all that lives is of another pole of force from that enfeebling, enervating emission of self-pity which renders slack (in time to paralyze) the sphere of man. Pity for another's woe tends not downward, is not inactive nor unfruitful; there is hope at the heart of it; will is the core of it; it seeks to help, it *yearns*, even while no means of helping are descried; it calls aloud to Life and Time: it has a voice that heavens must hear and answer. Such pity, tense and vibrant, hath power to summon that sacred order of Being which is the consecrated ministrant of the world. Its hierarchs hear and

answer, pointing the way from helpless sorrow to an ever-increasing helpfulness and joy in service.

The man who has once reached this point enters the holy war never to draw back again. He may fail. He may hesitate. He may receive a mortal wound within the heart and life after life may find him the prisoner of that wound, weakened or stunned by it, fearing to venture into the combat or indulging in foolish strife which is not the holy war; but still, in one or another way, he gives battle. He must do so; aspiration has become a law of his nature; he cannot free himself from that upward tendency; he has entered the stream and must pass onward with its current into that wider life whose trend is to the shoreless sea.

It is in this sense, I take it, that a wise writer has said that the “abyss” lay behind Arjuna. It is that abyss which separates man, the animal, from godlike man. It would seem to be a mental abyss. The mind would appear to have undergone some alchemy, some mysterious melting and fusing and recombining which has thrown out the most personal dross. Once this has happened, the man *cannot* return to the animal, just as he cannot return to the vegetable or the mineral; the gates of a kingdom, of a realm of Nature, have closed behind him; he must onward in the eternal procession of soul. Only the soul, only that divine spark whose very essence is harmony, can thus respond to the pain of the material world, a pain which is the absence of harmony, a responsive sorrow which is compassion’s self. We should not always be the thralls of pain could we but realize that it has no real existence; pain is only the absence of harmony.

This point of compassion is one to which all minds must come at last — *at last*. It is a far cry for some of us. In eastern writings it is typified as the loosing of the knot of the heart, and it is spoken of as a secret very difficult to know. Difficult though it be, it is yet to be done, and as everyone can hasten (or retard) his own evolution, we can bring about this point for ourselves. Each time a personal pang is felt we can ask ourselves: “To what does this suffering correspond in the wider experience of the world? Hath anyone suffered thus before me? Have any tears been shed here by another?” Soon there rises before us the unestimated, the awful sum of misery. We are appalled at its greatness. Before this flood our puny griefs go down and in their stead we come to see the world freighted with anguish, Nature herself in horrid travail, the Mind of the world giving birth to false conceptions, all stages of the universe awaiting man as saviour and deliverer; that man, son of gods, which all men may become. It is a manhood truly divine in that no one is shut out from it except by his own conscious determination. No trap is laid; all Nature lips the secret; every age hints at it; an inner harmony incessantly repeats it; every silence is broken by the song of it and the bibles of every race cry out:

“Arise, Arjuna! Thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory, when once thou shalt have said, ‘Thy will be done.’”

JULIA W. L. KEIGHTLEY.

*(To be continued.)*

## “THE BHAGAVAD GÎTÂ” IN PRACTICAL LIFE.

JULIA W. L. KEIGHTLEY

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(Continued from p. 24.)

To dwell yet a moment more upon the despondency of Arjuna would not appear to be unprofitable, since mankind at the present day stands at just this point which the opening chapter of the *Gîtâ* depicts, whether consciously or unconsciously to the mind. Not all are prepared to enter the holy war. Not all, but comparatively few, have heard of that war for man's redemption from himself; fewer still are they who feel Compassion's tide beating within the breast. And yet the race as a whole is being forced forward to this point by the resistless sweep of cyclic energy and cyclic law. The race, as a whole, is upon its trial; it is, as a whole, involving Manas or mind from the soul of the world, and mark that the true mind-principle comes from the *World-Soul*, not from itself; it is not intellect; it is *soul-mind*, born of the harmonious æther; it is a heart-force, is Compassion's youngest, sweetest child. When man has drawn this force into himself, when his sphere has taken it up, he then proceeds to evolve it, to express it himself in mental action, and as his desire and his will are, so is that expression; he evolves the mind-energy as materialistic intellect, the hardened offspring of Matter and Time; or he evolves it again as the tender mind-soul still, enriched and developed by its passage through human experience. Selfless, it was involved by him; selfless or selfish will he evolve it; pure it entered, in what state shall it go forth?

Now the race knows, as a whole, the struggle with material existence in one or another form; not one who tries to look even a little way beyond materiality but feels its hosts arise to veil his sight, to bar his way, to contend with him for the right of individual self-conscious and masterful existence. They or his awakening mind-soul must go; space is not wide or deep enough for both.

Although Arjuna sunk in his chariot, letting fall his bow, saying that he should not fight, none the less was his reaction sure. We all feel, at the first reading of this chapter, that Arjuna's declaration goes for naught, that he will arise and carry on the war. Whence this interior assurance? It breathes through the spirit of the tale with an inimitable skill, but many of us might miss an aroma so delicate as this. We feel, beneath the despair of Arjuna, an under-current of fixed intention; we recognize the advent of the hour of destiny. Is it not because we see ourselves in Arjuna? The hero nears the point whence he must onward, and we, nearing that point with the whole of our race, have a prescience of it; we know that we cannot evade the onward march of life. The learned Subba Row has indicated that one of the names of Arjuna — the name Nara — signifies man at the present period of evolution. This accounts for our instinctive comprehension of Arjuna's attitude; like germs are in our own minds. How wonderful this book, which, written so long ago, still prophesies as of old and keeps step with us on the daily march, whispering ever an immortal hope.

The chariot appears to typify the mind, rather than the body of man. The body is indeed the field of war, the arena wherein contending forces drive, where man, the Thinker, wrestles with materialistic hosts. But mind is that which moves abroad over life, testing all experience and meeting all opposition. Yes, mind is the vehicle by means of which man rides on to meet the ancient, the familiar foe; it is in that fount of action

that he rejoices, or sinks him in despair. And as it is in the very nature of mental action that it shall react, we have the secret of our belief that Arjuna will arise. It is a belief really rooted in our own experience, which allows us to tenderly smile with Krishna at the temporary dejection of man, whether another or ourselves.

Thus patience with our own reactions is by implication shown to be supremely necessary. Why meet with less than patience an evanescent mood? Impatience will but prolong, irritation will but inflame it; wait on with patient time; the driven mind will inevitably turn upon its course. These reactions of ours may be treated, not as drawbacks, but as a means to a more interior communion. It was only when Arjuna's body ceased from action and when mental action had, through despondency, a temporary lull, that the man's heart turned to Krishna for advice and consolation. It is a precious yet a daily truth, and one which daily escapes us, that back of brain-energy lies heart-force, and that when the former is exhausted the still fine voice of the latter makes its music heard. Action and reaction have equal place in Nature and hence in ourselves; we, spirits plunged in Nature, garbed in her essences, girt with her powers, able, yet oft reluctant, to be free. The despondency which to some extent falls upon us when we cease from action need not be a hindrance. It is weary Nature's hint that her allotted task is done, that the moment for a more intense, interior action has come. In the life of a man this is typified when middle age sets in, when the man should act less and think the more. Up to then body was growing by means of external activity: the hour of mind has come and, naturally, the activities of the body are lessened. If we yield readily to this pause of the mind no despondency is felt. We imagine that mind finds rest in sleep, and needs that rest alone. Not so; *brain* rests in sleep, not mind; that the thinker still thinks on a thousand proofs have shown. There is a limit to mental action; brain limits it in man; in cosmos there is a limit to the field of mental energy; "thus far and no further shalt thou come and here shall thy proud waves be stayed,"<sup>1</sup> is written of it also; only under a change of energy, only as mind-soul, can it pass to higher regions, to pause again before the mysterious portals of Spirit. So we find mind seeking the rest it requires, and dejection is its hint to us that we should suffer the mind to repose, while we enter upon meditation, however briefly, using thus a silent power greater than that which flows through the brain, bringing it to the refreshment of the mind. This divine power has its climax with a Master-Spirit; these, thus — "*indrawn*," gather in an instant of time the deep refreshment of a silent century.

Why should not the brain-mind feel dejection? It believes only in the efficacy of material action. It sees the enemies arrayed, the difficulties surging nearer; the "sin of oppression of friends" is plain in sight; no external way opens outward, and it abandons hope. Arjuna then retreats within. His brain-mind gives pause, and in the lull the silent Thinker speaks.

The war must first of all be waged with that brain-mind, that thing which we cannot exterminate for it is ourselves — as Arjuna truly saw, calling all these difficulties family and his race: it is all kinds of Karma; it is a congeries of lower selves held in concrete form by the brain-mind under the false title of "Myself." This foe within the gates we cannot abandon, we must uplift it. Wherefore let us be patient with this part of our nature in daily life, gently leading its poor aspirations above the things of self, pointing out to it the beauty of deathless things, the joys of the Eternal. Patience then. Patience with thyself first of all; not sloth, not complacency, but patience that sees the folly and unwisdom, yet consoles and waits. Patience such as this with thyself first of all, there where impatience is often but a wounded vanity that thou art not a stronger thing than this thou suddenly seest. If thou hast not such compassion for that which thou seest and knowest, how canst thou have patience with the brother thou knowest not? Uplift thy mind, feed it with hopes.

Inspire thyself. What man can inspire thee? Draw the diviner breaths deep within thyself, and poisoning thy soul upon these, all Nature stilled within thee, that soul shall plume her wings — the wings of meditation — for the flight into still holier airs.

JULIA W. L. KEIGHTLEY.

(*To be continued.*)

## NOTE

1. {Job 38:10-11.}

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## “THE BHAGAVAD GÎTÂ” IN PRACTICAL LIFE.

JULIA W. L. KEIGHTLEY

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(*Continued from p. 44.*)

The second chapter of *The Bhagavad Gîtâ* is approached with a feeling of impotence on the part of the individual who would fain portray it, epitome of wondrous wisdom and help to mankind. It is not to be spoken about, but to be felt; above all, to be lived. It is better so; everyone finds himself in it and himself drinks as he can at the spring. The science of the soul is there; the science of right living; there, too, the heart of all faiths. From whatever standpoint we approach it, we are presently lifted out of ourselves by its harmonious grandeur, and yet there is a dear note of homelike things, a remembered touch from out those heavenly mansions of the soul where once we journeyed with gods. Krishna, we are shown, “tenderly smiles” at the dejection of Arjuna. What depth of love and trust serene are here displayed. Nothing of so-called cold philosophy; only the tenderness which knows our better self to be steadfast in triumph, which smiles, in the name of that deeper insight, above our dejection. Krishna has both the seeing eye and the calling heart. It must be true — so cries our human heart responsive — it must be very truth that the crucified Light yearns over me, longs to manifest in me, waits, asking for my love.

What, then, holds us back from giving that love in measure so ample that every thought is permeated with its sunshine? What restrains us from unbarring the door of the heart to that Light? Why send we not forth streams of devotion to call down the waiting Radiance? What impedes the union of the Light and the heart? Arjuna gives the names of our jailers: they are Fear and Grief. Fear for all our lower selves and interests, for just as each one of us has his lower and his higher self, so can each love in others the lesser or the greater. It is for us to choose what we will contact in one another, and we have touch with the lower phase of our friends only when we fear, just as that which fears is the weaker and the lower in man. The high soul knows no fear of loss, disaster, death, ruin of the world, for well it knows that it can never lose its own. Many a thought of the brain-mind, due to education, custom, or the thought-vibrations about us, come between our hearts and this clearer vision of the Soul. When we begin to argue, to marshal images of loss and sorrow within the mind, we may know that we are doing the Dweller’s work for it. The powers of darkness have found an ally and a helper in us and cease from troubling that we may the better do their destructive work

in ourselves. This interior process by which we produce an interior result which we call fear — or grief — is one both curious and occult. The images of desolation are evoked by us, pictures of supposed future losses to ensue upon some given action, and then their long array defiles before the soul. Now that soul, spectator of Matter, and Life-in-Matter, from which it seeks to learn, that it may recognize itself — that soul has a mirror, the mind. It looks into the mind for a clear, true reflect of life. But man steps in and by the deliberate action of his will throws false images upon the mirror: these false images bewilder the soul. A numbness comes over the heart; its interaction with the soul is paralyzed.

“When the perfect man employs his mind, it is a mirror. It conducts nothing and anticipates nothing; it responds to what is before it but does not retain it. Thus he is able to deal successfully with all things and injures none.”<sup>1</sup>

Arjuna graphically describes the action of grief upon the nature in the words, “grief, which drieth up my faculties.”<sup>2</sup> The action of that diffusive force which we call grief is similar to that which follows upon the over-watering of plants. The natural nourishment of the earth and water is flooded away from the roots and the plant rots and dies. In another edition the idea is given as “this anguish which withers up thy senses,”<sup>2</sup> and Arjuna says “my heart is weighed down with the vice of faintness,” as hearts will be when not buoyed up by the energies of faith and courage. A world of instruction regarding man’s use of his own mental forces is conveyed by these simple words, to which meditation discovers many a helpful meaning. These energies, all powerful in their action, are not to be frittered away. The evolution of energy is a spiritual act; misuse or waste of energy a sin against the spirit. Wherefore let it be our endeavor to follow the course outlined by Kwang-Sze:

“When we rest in what the time requires and manifest that submission, neither joy nor sorrow can find entrance to the mind.”<sup>3</sup>

“No selfish joy or sorrow,” is the meaning of the Sage. When we rest in Truth we are that Truth itself. We are at peace, a peace higher than joy, deeper than sorrow; it is a bliss above our fondest dreams. To this exalted condition Krishna has reference when he tells Arjuna that his dejection is “Svarga closing,” literally, “non-Svargam:” it shuts the door of heaven; the celestial joys are assembled, but man, deploring, weeps without and will not lift the bars. How abject are such tears!

In *Light on the Path* the same truth is alluded to:

“Before the eye can see, it must be incapable of tears.”

It puts in poetical language the occult truism that an outburst of personal grief disturbs for a time the interior conditions, so that we can neither employ sight or hearing uncolored and unshaken. What an output of energy goes to our tears. In the mere physical plane all may feel the contraction in the nervous and astral centers, the explosion following; the very moisture of life bursts forth and runs to waste. Nor can the mind use clear discernment in life when that life is shaken and distorted by personal grief. Such grief contracts the whole of life to the one center — I — and looks within that microscopic eddy, exaggerating all it sees. For mind is indeed the retina of the soul, upon which images of life are cast, and, like the physical eye, may make an elusive report. Or it may report truly, qualifying what it sees and relating that to the vast Whole. Yet, just as Wisdom hath a higher eye in man, so there is that which is higher than the mental view, and that, the vision of faith and love, is at the very bottom of the heart always. Deny the tender presences. They are there, nestling close, often weighed down by care and doubt, but to be discovered by the man who desires to discover them. Does anyone disbelieve this? Let him ask himself why we remember best the joys of life. Were we to remember the details of past sorrows as keenly we could not go on, despair would destroy our powers. That mysterious thing which we

call our past, smiles more or less to our remembrance; the edge of sorrow is blunted in memory, but that of joy is ever more keen. Krishna, the “warrior eternal and sure,”<sup>4</sup> discerns these presences, and, tenderly smiling upon downcast man, prepares to send a heaven-born voice which shall summon them forth. Man is made for joy!

Why are they ever in the heart of man, these potencies which he names Hope, Trust, Love, because he does not know their god-like names? Is it not because that heart is a spark of the Mother-Heart, great Nature’s pulsing sun, and thus shares in all her gifts and potencies? Ah! study thine own nature; thou shalt find them ever recurrent no matter how oft thou hast denied them. Hate! a sudden instant blots it out and it is Love. Doubt! some swift revulsion overturns the mind and Hope, the immortal, smiles thine anguish down. Fear, if thou canst; thy swelling heart forbids, and in an unexpected hour its tides of strength uprise, thy puny mind-erectations are level with the dust that stirs about thy feet, and the world sings, for thee. Thou canst not wholly bar thy heart. It hears the Mother calling to all her children and every heart-spark leaps in answer. Give o’er denial. Confine the rebel mind. Seek! seek! The heart wills to be heard — and it *is* heard.

Arise, ye magic powers! Ye sun-breaths, warm our hearts and lend them on to conquest over self. The universe is Love, for it awaits all beings. All, all are summoned home, to be at one with Life and Light; to end the day of separation. The “day Be-With-Us”<sup>5</sup> is ever at hand, when man, in the dawn of the divine reünion, shall see mankind as the manifested Self, and in that Self — the All.

*Whatever may be apprehended by the mind, whatever may be perceived by the senses, whatever may be discerned by the intellect, all is but a form of Thee. I am of Thee, upheld by Thee. Thou art my creator and to Thee I fly for refuge.*<sup>6</sup>

JULIA W. L. KEIGHTLEY.

(*To be continued.*)

## NOTES

1. {*The Writings of Kwang-Dzŕe*, Book VII, Part I, Section VII, Verse 6.}
2. {*Bhagavad Gîtâ*, Chapter 2.}
3. {*The Writings of Chuang Tzu* (*Zhuangzi*, *Kwang-tse*) tr. by Legge) Chapter 6, Verse 9.}
4. {“The Warrior Eternal and Sure,” Che-Yew Tsang, *The Path*, Vol. X, 1895-1896.}
5. {Day-Be-With-Us = This refers to the time when humans have transcended the realm of phenomena and have attained oneness with the universal ego. “...in the East it was called the Day after Mahamanvantara, or the “Day-Be-With-Us.” Then everything becomes one, all individualities are merged into one, yet each knowing itself, a mysterious teaching indeed” *The Collected Writings of H. P. Blavatsky*, H. P. Blavatsky, Vol. X, p. 405.}
6. {*The Vishnu Purana*, Horace Hayman Wilson, Trans., Chapter IV, p. 29.}

## **“THE BHAGAVAD GÎTÂ” IN PRACTICAL LIFE.**

JULIA W. L. KEIGHTLEY

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(Continued from p. 65.)

Krishna, as we have seen, desires to aid and encourage Arjuna. He therefore proceeds to instruct his ward in the art of Thought, which is the art of Living. In the book the fact is set forth as the art of Warfare, but that and to live are one and the same thing when Man, standing between the hosts of Spirit and those of Material Desire, decides to advance towards the Eternal.

It is worthy of more than passing consideration, this fact that Krishna at once begins to tell Arjuna how to think, and hence how to live. The Lord does not bid Man to become an ascetic; nor to separate himself from his fellows; nor to evade or set aside the duties of his immediate place; nor to mortify the flesh by any system of food or of life. No; He inculcates right thinking, a system of thought based upon the real nature of the Universe, for such interior attention and thinking will in time affect the very brain, will alter — not its substance, but the mode, the convolutions of that substance, making it the vehicle of finer forces, the radiator of higher powers.

Broadly stated, the whole sum of this {second} chapter is the method of storing and using the spiritual thought energies. Read the chapter with care, and it is evident that a mere man of business would do his work better, would save wear and tear, coming always freshly to the daily problems, if he had his mind under the perfect control described, so that he could turn it away from every deed once done, taking no further care for the result once he had done his best in any point of detail, never wasting energy in doubt, anxiety, or nervous dread, sure of himself and calm in woe or weal. There have been such men, and one or two names occur now to the writer's mind, veritable Colossi among their fellows, who only failed when age fretted through the splendid armor of their calm. When the motive for such mental training is set higher, when the leakages of energy are avoided in order to store that Life force for diviner uses, then the results take effect on more interior planes of Being, and the results are more swift and more powerful, because they do take effect in Substance more dynamic.

The result of too great brain wear and tear, perpetual debate, worry, anxiety, anger, fear, and — subtle pigmy — the small but deadly foe, “FUSS,” is to depress the Life currents by persistently applied lower vibrations, and this devitalizes the inner man as well. In Will and Hope arise, as from a fontal source, the true springs of our Being, and flesh, blood, nerve fluid, brain, as well as life currents and mind, are invigorated by those heavenly streams.

It may be well to compare editions in dealing with this chapter in detail, for often two translators throw more light upon the subject than one alone.

Arjuna is told that: “Thou grieveest for those that may not be lamented while thy sentiments are those of the expounders of the letter of the law.” Another edition puts this more clearly: “Thou hast grieved for those who need not be grieved for, but thou utterest words of wisdom.” Arjuna has used judgment, he has also uttered partial truths, as when he says his ancestors should be respected by him, or when he says that he cannot destroy his friends. But his seeming wisdom has missed the more profound

wisdom, for he shows most respect and more true helpfulness to his ancestors in endeavoring himself to perfect his nature; he cannot kill his friends, for his kinship is with the immortal souls, not with the outer bodies. This does not mean that a man shall go forth to kill, for while he is in the body as well as when he is out of it he has a duty towards the Deity, not to consciously, deliberately destroy a vehicle of the human, intelligent soul. The “war” and the “killing” are typical, and also we find that Arjuna is instructed to fight, but nothing is said as to killing, beyond the broad fact that the Soul is all, that it kills not nor is it killed.

In one edition at hand it says:— “As the lord of this mortal frame experienceth therein infancy, childhood, and old age, so in future incarnations will it meet the same.” Here we have the doctrine of Re-incarnation put forward at the very opening as affecting the entire argument. It certainly changed the whole point of view. Given that teaching, and we must unravel the entire fabric of our Thought, weaving another of closer texture, fashioning a garment direct from Mother-Substance. The man who determines to study Life, to rely upon and to learn of that unapproachable teacher, cannot read the first letter of Nature’s alphabet until he knows that he, the man himself, is a Soul; and a Soul whose very being is freedom; not a thing of matter, but a beam of the sun, a meteor that comes and goes, a law that chooses and rejects, that experiences and assimilates turn-about, and whose starry essence is compounded of Love and Will.

Another edition has: “As the soul *in* this body undergoes the changes of childhood, prime and age....” This is a useful gloss, for whereas we had the soul as “Lord of the mortal frame,” a ruler and maker, we now find that this Lord is also seated within the bodily frame itself; still a third edition confirms this: “As the Dweller in the body seeketh in the body childhood, youth, and old age, so passeth he on to another body; the well-balanced grieveth not thereat.” This brings out clearly the point of balance. A later verse repeats that point: “Balanced in pain and pleasure — tranquil.”

It is a point of deepest value, for Balance or Harmony is the true nature, the true life of the Soul. In the *Voice of the Silence* we have “Charity and love immortal” as the first key, and “Harmony in word and act” (*i.e.*, harmony with the Law, acceptance of the whole Karmic sound of Life) as the second key, and also we are told that Harmony is Alaya’s self. Little by little light shines in upon the mind, and we find that to tread the path is to sink down, down within the turbid mind and life’s perturbed waters to the deeper, the essential nature of the Soul. It *is* Love; it *is* Charity; it *is* Harmony; it *is* Freedom. Why? Because that star which we call the Soul is still a thing of substance, the starry essence has its attributes, and these are they. It is Love because it goeth forth, expanding with the light of the spiritual sun towards the entire universe. It is Charity because it knoweth the three energies or principles that are in Nature, and that these act, often blindly, and not the liberated human Soul. It is Harmony because every atom of that starry essence moves with and in the Great Breath — there where no dissonance can be heard. It is Freedom, unbound by delusion, able to fulfil its own high nature, able to choose the Above or the Below because of that energy by which it is “self-loved from within.” It is Justice because it cannot act contrary — in its purest state — to the universal spiritual action nor against the law of the acting and re-acting Breath. This spark, this flame that is thyself, oh man! Wilt thou choose or depart from that? “The unreal hath no being; the real never ceaseth to be; the truth about both has been perceived by the Seers of the Essence of things.” This gloss reminds us of those lines of the *Secret Doctrine*: “The Initial Existence in the first twilight of the Maha-Manvantara (after the Maha-Pralaya that follows every age of Brahmâ) is a CONSCIOUS SPIRITUAL QUALITY. In the manifested WORLDS (solar systems) it is, in its OBJECTIVE SUBJECTIVITY, like the film from a Divine Breath to the gaze of the entranced seer....

It is Substance to our spiritual sight. It cannot be called so by men in their WAKING STATE; therefore they have named it in their ignorance “God-Spirit.” (Vol. I, p. 288, old edition.) The entire extract should be studied with care. The Soul is an Energy, a Breath; but it is also a Substance, a Light. The endeavor to realize that man is that Soul will bring in time a wider, truer concept of the whole scheme of Being. We cannot live wisely or well upon false postulates.

Other glosses are:— “Those who discern the truth discern the true end” (of the existent and non-existent).

“By those who see the truth and look into the principles of things the ultimate characteristic of these both is seen.” (Truth, the ultimate Essence and ultimate characteristic, are shown to be the same thing — viz., “a conscious Spiritual quality” an essence of the Breath; the ultimate Soul.)

A wise hint this. Be not governed by the apparent nature of things. Look at the ultimate nature. As — this Joy; is it born of the Eternal; hath it root in the spiritual; or is it a passing gladness for an ephemeral thing? This Grief — does it sorrow divinely as for some obscuration of the Self, some loss of hold upon the Divine by some bewildered human heart? This Anger; what a harsh constrictive energy; this Perturbation, how its chopping, fretting tide drives back the large harmonious vibrations of the Mother Soul. Let us look at these things, analyze them, and gently put them back from us, not thralls of Pain or Pleasure, but artificers of divine things, creators by will of the universal gladness, pilgrims of the path of heavenly Joy. Fear not, oh! fear not to rejoice divinely. Life is a song. The Path is only sorrow to the man of flesh and desire, who struggles as he goes. To the pure in heart that path is one of profound delight. See the joy of a good and happy child; what innocent mirth; what merry trust; what whole-souled generosity what spontaneous love. In that candid eye, that clear brow, see as in a dim mirror that greater thing which the pure Soul in thyself is — and shall be — a Joy Incarnate.

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## **“THE BHAGAVAD GÎTÂ” IN PRACTICAL LIFE.**

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(Continued from p. 84.)

The Holy Lord then continues to exhort Arjuna to remain steadfast in the belief that the re-incarnating Ego is the only real man, incorruptible and inexhaustible. The splendid imagery and profound reasoning flow on in stately measure, yet are simple as the simple truth itself. The duty of man is to this indwelling Spirit; he is a favored warrior called to war at this period of his destiny. Should he fail in this, his universal duty, mankind will know him as one who deserted his post and his trust in the human army; the hosts of spiritual being, “generals of the army,” will know that the base fear of material results drove him back. He will be one who came down the stream of human life to a certain point of evolution, and then, refusing the duty to which the law and life had brought him, neglectful and oblivious of that spiritual help which has been his, which has brought him thus far, ungrateful, undutiful, afraid to lose his little self, too timorous to trust life itself, he will have retired, an affrighted animal-man, into the

background of human progress. He is Man. He is Spirit. The Lord is himself; he is That; *let him trust!*

The paramount necessity of trust is thus set forth at the very outset. Can man not trust to life in its full flowing, its love, its law? Can he not resign the phantasms of the mind for the wider experience of actual living? The ample opportunity, the timely changes, the onward course of the eternal stream; can he not trust these? The inner Lord; can he not trust that prompting? The indestructible, the indivisible, the universal, the immovable; can he not for these resign his little fragment of mind? That pigmy mind which hawks about its merits; which niggles for results and rewards; debates, barter, wrangles — and for what? For its own place and precedence in Nature. Will he, for that inconsiderable place, resign his share in the Universal Mind? Will he prefer the drop to the stream?

Does he perchance say that he knows naught of these things? That no assurance of their reality is his, and such assurance he must have before he parts with that firm hold which he now has upon the visible, the actual and real? Then let him endeavor to touch or define this so-called actual and real, and it melts from his grasp; it dissolves before the gaze of the mind. To its minutest sub-division, matter is proved shifting and unstable. Far within his own consciousness is the only stable reality. Bid him go in search of that before the sliding sands on which he builds shall have swallowed him and his despair.

Do we say that there are none whom we can trust? No friend? No teacher? No guide? Accept the fact. Bereft of these all, are we yet bereft? See life in ruins at our feet, and shall the heart's high courage crumble too? Not so! The heart of man deceived, betrayed, outraged, abandoned, self-immolated even, is still a god-like thing and has a god's own power to fall back upon itself, building a newer and a better world. These cheats are well away! These idols, once so loved, what have they not swallowed up; what finer essences of our hearts have not been expressed before them in wasted blood and tears? But the true love we gave — that has gone forth to the margins of the world, to bless somewhat, somewhere. In the world of souls we can never lose our own. And that which was not ours; that fickle cheat we garlanded and praised; that child of time, that image of the dust; is it not well away, oh, grieving heart? Is it not well away; and what is not well with thee? Thou hast thyself, whose might thou dost not grasp. Yet is it dimly felt, seeing, as thou dost, those vernal returns of the heart's hope; seeing its buoyant reaction, its upward trend, its lift and lilt and love. There, deep within, inaudible as a sound, but as a power most audible to the mind, is that consciousness which is its own and only proof. Trust that and go forth into the universe living and working, careless of gathering, careless of garnering, as ready to go as to come, as ready to loose as to bind, as ready to resign as to take, and over all the star of thy strong heart. Know that great Nature does not love a whiner and a trembler, but to him who is careless of getting and holding, *there* do her endless bounties thickly fall.

Do we know what trust is? I think not. Some fashion of believing we take it to be, and a thing which we may have or may not have. We do not know this power. It is an energy to be engendered by the will, and is then a force so compelling that it lifts its possessor beyond mere mountains and day stars to a place of knowledge and peace. In our poor terms we say we have, or have not, trust. It comes not so. No powers come to the timid, the reluctant, and the doubtful. Powers are things of light and fire. They must be sought, pursued, taken by assault, and held. Do we think Nature, who loves to have her thralls, will suffer us to hold undisturbed a power so great and so occult as trust? Having that, we are in time her master; all her hosts conspire to steal our trust away. But listening to the low call of intuition, let us grasp this power called trust, and,

wrestling greatly, let us keep it for our own. Oh, trust; *trust*; TRUST; thou art mover of the world.

Side by side with this necessary quality is that other, which immovably regards both pleasure and pain. Call it calm, balance, even-mindedness, what we will; it is an interior adjustment to all circumstance, and permits the maintenance of harmony within.

It is possible to misunderstand the teaching at this point. Unless the mortal dross be utterly purged away and states unimagined by us be attained, it does not seem possible to regard pleasure and pain, as they present themselves to our consciousness, as being the same. Hence it seems that we are to meet either or both with equal heart. We are not, it would seem, expected to feel them alike; we are expected to meet them without moving from our course. It is evident, to take even one step away from mere gross selfishness, that the pain of a fellow-being cannot be the same to us as his happiness — however brief — may be; and especially if we are to “feel for all that lives.” So that it must be, in the first place, the personal aspect of pain and pleasure, our own pain and pleasure, toward which we are to exercise equal-mindedness. In the second place, while to our present consciousness a great difference between them presents itself, it is at the same time possible to disregard them as influences, as results, not seeking or avoiding either, using both and abandoning both, becoming, each in his own degree, like that host “which foresaw, yet chose.”

In a later chapter of the book we find Krishna saying:

“The pleasures which arise from the feelings are the wombs of future pains.” This is so self-evident that the loss or departure of a pleasure causes pain, that probably everyone will grant the fact. If we love a pleasure for itself, as sensation, or as final result, the truism is apparent. But if we take it as so much experience; if we test it as a gift of life, as somewhat to be wisely used and having an inner meaning, then, indeed, it becomes evident that the departure of the pleasure causes no pain. We shall have foreseen this; we shall have found that thorn, and, being forewarned, we shall have plucked it out. What is left is pure experience — a thornless rose if we offer it upon the altar of the Lord of Life.

It is a fact in human nature that we are loath to analyze either pain or pleasure, yet we do not shrink from them equally. We go but a short way in the test of pain, and, behold! we have conjured up the monster and it bears us away. The imagination is paralyzed, the energies undermined by the mere contemplation of pain. Need this be so? Why not give it another name, another aspect? Call it experience; hath it then no fruit? If we have harvested anything at all from it, is it not also a fitting gift for the altar? Candidly, I do not believe that one *thinking* human being can be found who would willingly relinquish at his life's end all that he has learned from his sorrows, or those sorrows themselves, if he had the power to live his life over again without them. There are sorrows dearer than pleasure, it is true, springing from the loss of deeper joys, and to obliterate the one would bring oblivion to the other. But there is more than this to the question. The imagination recoils from the image of a life wherein pleasure was the only chord, the unique light. Instinctively we perceive that here is something grotesque; something lower than the pure animal, to whom some forms of pain are known. If we look deeper, shall we not find in this recoil of the soul a clear pointing to the fact that we are sharers of the universal life, while to know pleasure only must perforce cut us off from the whole of that life and its advance? Think of a life bereft of toil, effort, the spur of necessity, the travail of thought, the share in the dear common human life. What manner of grotesque monster is this? It is unthinkable.

Since pain, then, is necessary, we must re-adjust our ideas of it. Is it not, perhaps, true that what we call pain is really only *effort*, is the condition of life and growth in any

direction; a condition which is only made discordant and painful by that selfishness which resists, which would refuse to share the world-experience, and would cling to a known and pleasurable state? Well for us it is that we are not taken at our word and left to starve amid a monotony of pleasure, like the king's son covered with beaten gold who died — as we should — from obstructed circulation. Gladly embrace the noble truth that life takes but to give, gives but to take, and each substitution is more ample than the last. If I lose a friend, I come nearer to the true ideal of friendship; but when I abandon that personal ideal and pine only to befriend all beings, I fall back upon myself and go by leaps and bounds towards that Self which brooks no half lover, but will have a man's whole soul in order to give that back to the universe in wise and wide work. Life never robs us. In that exchange man is always the gainer. But it demands the heart of trust.

It is incredible that we — each one of us — should with one accord demand as by right divine to be the exempts of pain. Some deeper meaning must exist. Is it that the joyful soul within sings of that right divine of gods on godlike planes of being, and the false self appropriates the tune? This is true, but is there no more to it? Can it be that this self really clings to pain and the idea of pain with its attendant train of self-pity, self-relaxation, self-distrust, self-perception — luxurious wantons, all? How if there be this morbid strain of liking to feel one's self exceptional, ill-used; to be preoccupied with one's self; in fine, to feel and feel and feel? How if we cling to the well-known note, the accustomed image of martyr and saint, and how if we love to gaze upon ourselves and must find ourselves worthy of attention as Knights of the Order of Pain? "No man ever stated his griefs as lightly as he might." Were we to be without this panorama of personal pain, could our attention be long withheld from the living spectacle of universal anguish? By my faith in nature humanized by compassion I believe we could not long be diverted from the suffering of the world, and that the false self, striving to block up the many avenues to the universal consciousness, throws out these sustained lures of personal pain. Put the image by! It is not by isolation, but by gladly sharing the common destiny that thou shalt become a molder of fate herself.

A friend has reminded me that we take our pain too timidly. Let us freely admit that. Where lies the dormant hero-impulse to do, to dare, and to bear? The specter of pain appears, and man turns away his gaze as from some ghastly specter. Or he sinks plaintive and unnerved upon the grim form, embracing it as a something all his own. In either case he accepts this strange visitant as *pain*. Was it thus self-announced? How if it be not that, but a herald of some royal advent? Call the bright roll of patience, courage, trust, serenity, resignation, hope, and all the lovely progeny of heroic pain! Who would not father these? Yet thy patience slept the sleep of the unborn until pain called it forth and tried its strength. Thy courage was a thing of dreams until the instant a danger called it, full armed, from thy brain. The accost of pain demands a hero. Take thou his armed hand; smile boldly in his eyes, give him brave cheer within thy tented heart, for thou shalt find in him thy wisest Counsellor, thy world-wide Comrade, the great Revealer, whose final name is peace.

JULIA W. L. KEIGHTLEY.

*(To be continued.)*

## **“THE BHAGAVAD GÎTÂ” IN PRACTICAL LIFE.**

JULIA W. L. KEIGHTLEY

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(Continued from p. 105.)

At first sight the statement that peace is a resultant of pain may appear strange, even revolting, to some minds. To such, the idea may seem to savor of the pernicious attractions of self-martyrdom and self-immolation: that torture of the self which is one of the strangest of the many forms of personal vanity. To desire martyrdom for its own sake; to intoxicate the brain with the subtle image of one's moral heroism — this is but one step from that fanaticism which rushes towards suffering and burdens which form no part of our own duty and which were never awarded to us by that destiny which we call the Law. To a mind thus rendered drunk by its own greatness no distinction of duty is possible. It embraces hard and distasteful tasks for the sake of embracing them, and in the hope of thus demonstrating its own heroism to itself. Self-torment, self-immolation, are often but other names for self-intrusion into places and conditions where we had no business to go: a thrusting of one's self, led by the most insidious form of vanity into a path where Karma never intended we should tread: a path of pain we have forced and made our own.

Such pain does not bring peace. It is a state of war. It is as necessary to be just to one's self as to any other, for all are equal in the balance of that Law which “is no respecter of persons.” In the pursuance of our duty; we shall need no pain; and this is just and right, for Karma brought us there. Such pain is outweighed by a keen and ever-increasing delight, the pure joy of service, and is indeed the swiftest of the peace-bringers. Upon the points of motive and duty then the whole question turns.

Our motives are obscure. To us as much — and sometimes more — as to any other. We can only endeavor to fathom them, reading them often by the future light thrown upon them by our reactions. That is, we imagine ourselves to be acting unselfishly in some work. The work is a success, but does not turn out as we intended. Or someone else has the credit and we are set aside. Or the work fails. We then feel pain, annoyance, disappointment, and, as by a search-light, the soul reveals to us that our motive was not pure. Or we imagine it to be our duty to expose some wrong, and to do it at the cost of some pain to ourselves. We do expose it, and the wrong is found to be no wrong. Or the world believes us not. Or we fail and instead of turning then to other work we persist in striving to get a verdict against the offence or the offender. Failing still, we harden into a place and a state of being where we persist in the futile effort, and it has now become an effort to vindicate our own judgment, to demonstrate our own rightful courage, our martyr stand. Well indeed is it for us then if the Law permits that our heart shall shine out and show us our own error. It costs much pain. Yet hath the contrary course a greater anguish still. Our motives are indeed obscure. But a high courage, a sincere desire to serve, may bring light to the riddle little by little and in due season.

The pain that ends in peace is that which the Law appoints, and the peace is to be seized and confirmed at any moment.

If we look but a little way into this subject we see that physical pain, for example, when it is removed, leaves with the sufferer a sense of peace. Such a sense of peace is

lacking in the presence of actual joy. The peace results from contrast. This is only another way of saying that Nature then works with us, pointing out that the removal of discord brings peace, and not the mere presence of pleasure. In other words, discordant conditions of mind or of body are productive of pain because they are opposed to the main course of universal Nature. When they are removed, Nature takes her unobstructed way and peace prevails.

Turning now to the mental and moral sources of pain, we find them to be identical. I sin against the inner light and my moral being is torn. I cling to my forms of belief, whether in religion, in friendship, in love, in what not else; the false erection crumbles and I grieve. Why? Is it not because "I" have lost something? But I have not. Nothing is lost. The false mirage has vanished, that is all. I may arise and pursue my journey unimpeded by the cheat.

Or I lose, apparently the true and truly loved. Have I lost them? Are they not mine ever in the realm of soul? Would I keep them back from the well-earned rest, the deep arcana of spiritual assimilation? The heart, convicted once again of the sin of self-seeking, even in the purest love, sighs as it makes its answer. Well, in that sigh it is nearer the Real than it perhaps thinks.

"If I suffer, it is self that suffers, not I. That is an awful doctrine and too hard except for the few. But it is God's truth. By asserting it as true, with or without the acceptance of the brain; by affirming with quiet persistence that this is fact whether one cares to accept it or not, the mind in time becomes impressed with the idea, works on it, digests it. That done, one rises superior to the suffering. An old story! And with it goes another, that those who suffer would do well to wander through the streets of their own city and find those who suffer with them from the same cause. They would soon find that their compassion for the pain of others, and their efforts to relieve it, would melt their own grief into a fame of love of a universal and divine nature — once they forgot themselves in the greater pain around them."

These words indicate still another facet of the shining truth that pain brings peace. For see what deep peace comes when once we merge ourselves into the endless compassion which reaches out to the whole world and yearns to serve those agents of the Law who only live by it and their compassion for the worlds where pain is known. It is the pain inseparable from life and from our lives as we have fashioned them, which, rightly borne, brings peace. Shall we either fear or love it? Need it be either sought, as by the fanatic, or avoided, as by the epicure? Not so, standing upon that middle ground which is our own duty, we, masters of ourselves, need not fear the accost of pain. Looking steadfastly upon it, we find it in every instance to arise from some concept of our own possessions, our own rights, something sequestered from Nature. We yield up these mental possessions, and no longer shut out from the Boundless, we enter its tides in their flowing and the sweetness of peace is ours. It may not last. Again and again we enter the state of war. But the peace is within us, we remember it, we acclaim it, we, heirs of hope, we expect it; its leaven works within us; again and again we enter the state of peace also, until we learn that it is always to be found there where we lay down the personal will and the personal image. And then indeed we know that this pain we have met, accosted, accepted, have calmly housed awhile, was indeed the peace-bringer because it was the truth-bearer: it ceased to be pain to our sight and became a great white peace when we yielded up our self-will to Divine Will, and ceased to oppose at heart the onward march of Nature and Soul.

JULIA W. L. KEIGHTLEY.

*(To be continued.)*

## **“THE BHAGAVAD GÎTÂ” IN PRACTICAL LIFE.**

JULIA W. L. KEIGHTLEY

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(Continued from p. 123.)

We have seen that pain and pleasure are reactions, one of another, and we now find Krishna emphasizing that fact in this sentence:

“Be free from the pairs of opposites.”

It is advice greatly needed by every student of life. Not one in a thousand is able to tread a middle path. We fly from pole to pole; extremists for the most part, we hate or love; we desire or repel; we act or react. There is all too little of sitting calmly by; too little moderation of mind; too rarely do we attain an attitude of suspended judgment: we are all too prone to crystallize. With us, brotherhood degenerates into sentimentality; avoidance of condemnation into direct encouragement to the evil-doer; our hope is so impetuous that it becomes a fear; our calm degenerates into indifference, our unselfishness into a blatant and self-advertised charity. We are not “constant in the quality of Sattva;” we are not content with knowing the truth.

How, then, shall we avoid these extremes, which we are led into by the very nature of mind itself? For the human mind has that tangential quality which only the “quality of Sattva,” the knowledge of the True, can control.

The answer is given in a few brief words of a potency so marvelous, so wide-reaching, that could we at once attain to their full meaning and realization, we should transcend the higher heavens and stand, godlike, above.

“Let, then, the motive for action be in the action itself, and not in the event. Do not be incited to actions by the hope of their reward, nor let thy life be spent in inaction. Firmly persisting in Yoga perform thy duty, oh, despiser of wealth, and laying aside all desire for any benefit to thyself from inaction, make the event equal to thee, whether it be success or failure. Equal-mindedness is called Yoga.”

Here is the final recipe for wisdom and happiness. Do we even approach to the faintest realization of its meaning? Have we any conception of what it would be, to-day, in the very marrow of practical life, to ask ourselves, before every action, before every thought, even: “Is it my duty thus to act? Is it my duty thus to think?” Can we imagine what it would be to put every deed, every idea, to this touch-stone, and never to let the image of possible *result* enter the mind at all? What a blessed relief even an hour of such living and thinking would be! How life would be simplified, the congested mind relieved, the engorged faculties released and intuition set free. He who is thus “mentally devoted dismisses alike successful and unsuccessful results, being beyond them.” He is out of the region in which Karma operates, and is one with the vast sweep of Nature’s laws. Action and reaction have no bonds for him who never acts for self; he goes to that “eternal blissful abode which is free from all disease and untouched by troubles;” that abode which is the peace that passes all understanding. He is indifferent there to doctrines, past or to come; he contemplates all, desiring none, appropriating naught. The endless panorama of life defiles before his gaze: he sees life soundly for he sees it whole: he is at rest.

The tendency of the mind to crystallize, to attach itself to forms and formulae, is the source of most of our woes. We begin a work, for example, something praiseworthy in itself. Little by little we identify ourselves with the work; the next step is soon taken and we identify the work with ourselves. Our methods, our department, our plans, soon become of paramount importance; we manifest zeal, competition, rivalry; we struggle to make our department the best, or to carry out our own methods; or we dread the rivalry of someone else; or we shrink from new methods, from change, from taking up some new detail, place or plan. We have gradually — and in most instances unconsciously — formulated a creed in regard to our work, and we are happy in proportion as we lose ourselves in that work, its excitement, its absorption of our minds. Take the work away. Deprived of that, are we still contented, happy? We are not. We long to do, to do, and it becomes clear to the candid mind that what we loved most about our work was that it deadened self-consciousness. It narcotised for a time that terrible and unsettled mental condition, that pressure of a dual consciousness which drives many to drink or to narcotics. It was not our duty that we loved in our work, nor the work for its own sake, but only the relief from our own mental hells, the one-pointedness which this work afforded to our restless brains. Why, then, should we not seek this one-pointedness in all things and for its own sake, and by seeing the Self in all things and all as the Self and offering up all results to the Lord of Life, escape from the eternal unrest of our present mental conditions? Even the wise man can be carried away, we are told, by the forces of personal desire when these invade his heart. By remaining in the fixed attitude of mental devotion to the true Self we attain to the possession of spiritual knowledge. We then find a statement which compels attention:

“He who attendeth to the inclination of the senses, in them hath a concern; from this concern is created passion, from passion anger, from anger is produced delusion, from delusion a loss of the memory, from the loss of memory loss of discrimination, and from loss of discrimination loss of all!”

That is where we stand to-day. We have lost all.

Many students ask why we do not remember our past incarnations. The answer is here. We have desired to hear, to see, to touch, to taste, on all the planes, until deprivation of any of our objects has at first concerned, then tried, annoyed, determined us, and the fancy has become a passion; we have conjured up Will, the great motor, and now the fancy is a passion, a bent of the mind and nature, the will to attain, to possess. Great Nature thwarts this will at some point where it crosses her larger purposes, and anger results. We do not necessarily fly into a rage. By “anger” it appears that the obstinate determination to carry our personal point is meant, as well as the interior irritation which opposition perforce engenders. For if one will be crossed by another current of will, friction must result. This friction, this struggle of force against force, produces a harsh, strident, disruptive vibration which corresponds, on the plane of force, to that explosive action upon the mental plane which is known as anger. Such a force rends the mental atmosphere of man: it confuses, irritates, congests and confounds; the soul no longer looks upon a clear and mirror-like mind, but that mind reflects distorted images; shapes of bewilderment and folly flit across the magic glass; delusion results, false mental concepts, false memories, false recollections, and now we no longer remember our high origin, our diviner life; and now we judge falsely because we remember wrongly; the faculty of discrimination has no longer an abode with us, and all, all is lost of our diviner heritage. Repeat this process from life to life, and the wonder is that we aspire and yearn at all. If anyone doubts the reality of this process, he has but to watch the natural growth and progress of any desire in himself, and, provided it be thwarted persistently, he will see in little that which, on a larger scale, has robbed and orphaned the race.

“He who sees Krishna everywhere equally dwelling, he seeth.” How calmly fall these words upon the fevered brain! How gracious their benediction! We thirst for peace. It is here, within our reach, knocking at the door of the heart, pleading to enter. Only live the life; only say “thy will be done;” only resist not the Law but be reconciled with thy brother-man and lay thy gift upon the altar; only take duty for thy guiding-star and heed not any result — *is it too hard for thee?* It is without doubt too hard for *thee*, but THOU ART THAT. IT is ever there, conscious and wise; calm, patient and compassionate. Oh, believe that thou art indeed and in very truth that eternal boundless One — and what is too hard for thee? On Krishna call, and fight on, fight out the field! There is not an hour, not an act of daily life, to which this counsel does not apply.

JULIA W. L. KEIGHTLEY.

(*To be continued.*)

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## “THE BHAGAVAD GÎTÂ” IN PRACTICAL LIFE.

JULIA W. L. KEIGHTLEY

{9 of 9}

(*Continued from p. 144.*)

The third chapter of *The Bhagavad Gîtâ* deals with the right performance of action, this right performance being looked upon as true devotion. Arjuna, being at the point where a man desires to do his duty, asks whether knowledge is indeed “superior to the practice of deeds,” as he has understood Krishna to say. No mistake more natural than this. The idea of knowledge at first absorbs the mind of the student of spiritual things, and most come but slowly to a realization of the fact that true knowledge is being, that we can never truly be said to know a truth until we have thoroughly lived it. The truth must be manifest in us, realized in our own persons. Krishna then replies that there are indeed two modes of devotion, the one being the “exercise of reason in contemplation,” and the other Yoga, or “devotion in the performance of action.” Here the key-note is struck; devotion is shown to be practical action.

It is noteworthy that in the very beginning of his statement to Arjuna, the blessed Lord strikes the most human of all chords — he refers to man’s need of happiness. For at once we are shown that man cannot find happiness in inaction. The reason is given. Nature is against it. The “qualities which spring from Nature” impel to action. Only when man has penetrated behind the veil of Nature does he rise above the influence of the qualities: he then sees these qualities, these three great orders or divisions of force, moving in the ocean of being above which his supreme consciousness has soared.

We can, to some extent, picture the qualities to ourselves as three great orders of vibration and consciousness, of which one, Tamas, is inertia; the second, Rajas, the driving force; and the third, Sattva, equilibrium or balance, the other pole of inertia. Between these two poles plays Rajas, the driving energy, in one sense a path from one to the other. Inertia may be converted to equilibrium by means of the action of energy. Balance would become stagnation were it not for that same energetic action. The three,

interacting, compel to action the universe composed of Nature's substance. But the Self being "distinct from them" (the qualities) and above Nature, man may find eternal peace in the harborage of the Self.

Another reason, an ethical one, is given in favor of devotion through the right performance of action. "The journey of thy mortal frame cannot be accomplished by inaction." To those who regard the body as dust to be cast aside, this teaching must sound strange. But the man who knows that the physical and astral bodies are built up of elemental lives — or life atoms, if the term be preferred — recognizes a duty towards those lives upon which his thoughts leave an impress, a stamp almost indelible, lives which mirror his acts. They are the monads of Leibnitz, "every monad a mirror of the universe," and in the case of man that universe is the sphere to which they belong. They are the skandhas, the bearers of Karma. Under the play of human energy they give up the pictures of the past, the forces locked within them, and are, in short, agents of Karma, bearers of the destiny man has provided for himself. To evolve every atom of his chosen habitation, to transmute these locked-up forces into higher energies, is a part of the duty of man. Inaction would inhibit the interaction of these life atoms, and the choice of good or evil continually offered by that interaction would be lost to "the lives" and to man.

We next find the comprehensive statement that "actions performed other than as sacrifice unto God make the actor bound by action." Why is this?

We have just seen that action, in regard to the three qualities, proceeds in a never-ending circle. At first sight man would appear to be bound in that, as Ixion was bound upon the wheel. But this is not so. He is bound while he acts from the basis of Nature. Let him act from the consciousness of the Self, the Lord above Nature, and he is no longer bound. For the Self is free, and only the Self. Nature is a secondary product and is not free from the action of her qualities. But the man who acts with the whole of Nature, that is, with Nature guided by law, already approaches freedom; he has cast aside the shackles of the personal self. Not until he has become one with Maha-Atma — the supreme Spirit — can his freedom be called perfect; but still, the lower self once sufficiently cast aside to allow him to act with Nature, he may be said to draw near to the Self. In thus acting with Nature he sacrifices, as Nature herself does, to divine law. It should not be forgotten that Nature "exists for the purposes of soul" hence her action is sacrifice. The same is true of man; when he exists only to fulfil the law and resists not the effects of those causes which he himself set in motion, then he also fulfils the purpose of soul (which purpose is evolution), and has resigned "the whole world" to gain that purified soul which is his true Self.

Krishna then makes the statement which has puzzled so many readers of the sacred book, and in which we seem to discern a store-house of hidden occult truths. "Beings are nourished by food, food is produced by rain, rain comes from sacrifice and sacrifice is performed by action. Know that action comes from the Supreme Spirit who is one; wherefore the all-pervading Spirit is at all times present in the sacrifice."

In *The Voice of the Silence* occurs a verse which throws some light upon the lines just quoted. "Desire nothing. Chafe not at Karma nor at Nature's changeless laws. But struggle only with the personal, the transitory, the evanescent and the perishable. Help Nature and work on with her ..."

And then how will Nature regard the man who follows this behest? "Nature will regard thee as one of her creators and make obeisance."

Not as a helper, but as "*one of her creators.*" It seems strange, does it not, until we remember that "action comes from the Supreme Spirit who is one?" How if the Great Breath breathes through all action, action being a necessity for the evolution of Nature and Soul: and how if man, in abandoning all personal desire in action, in acting only as

“sacrifice” to the Supreme, has really left action to that Supreme Spirit? The Karma at which he shall not chafe is the whole round of action and reaction; he accepts it all, doing only his duty in every act and resigning all possible results to Krishna, who is “present in the sacrifice” as the Mover, the Breath. That Breath is creative. When man has thus sacrificed his personal desires to the necessary round of action, he works with that creative Breath, and being so regarded by Nature she “shows the means and the way” to him.

But the man who delights in gratifying his passions “does not cause this wheel thus already set in motion to continue revolving.”

In a well-worn copy of the *Gîtâ*, used for many years by our late beloved chief, Mr. Judge, I found this note, quoted from memory: “This wheel is the Cycle of All, and it is the place and nature of man, in Cosmos, to assist in the revolution of the Cycle of All.” I have heard this spoken of as “the human cycle,” and have supposed this to mean that the whole of the great sub-division of time here indicated as “the Cycle of All” is the “period of choice” for the present human race. Be this as it may, we see that discord is introduced into the action of the great harmonious vibration by the sinful desires of man, whose personal energy and will introduce, as it were, a cross series of waves which mar the even sweep of the currents of the Breath.

The simile of rain and sacrifice reminds us that the emanations of the earth are cast up into the atmosphere and descend in the form of rain. In air is to be found every component of the earth, water, fire; the gases, known and unknown, the mysterious sun-force of the alchemist, all are there. We have been told that the thought of man affects these emanations, as it affects every convulsion of Nature, and all at once we see a new meaning in the simile of the rain and the sacrifice. Mr. Judge has hinted in one of his books that the Ego may be bound by certain kinds of food. Certainly the life-essence enters the human body by means of food. May we not find reason to believe that it descends in rain? Many a hint in alchemical works points in this direction. “Rain comes from sacrifice,” which “sacrifice is performed by action.” What kind of action? The action of thought? The action of the One Life, “at all times present in the sacrifice?” Here is matter for much meditation. Even on a cursory reading we see the interaction between Nature and man, and the fact that there is such interaction proves to us the importance of every thought and action, when each must be for or against evolution.

Reasons are then given for action as opposed to inaction. Krishna, full of tenderness for mortals, shows the boundless scope of universal love when he declares that all these creatures would perish were he to cease to act, to breathe forth. The wise man is he who knows that “the qualities act only in the qualities,” that is, that the qualities or three forces are the actors in Nature; he attributes all this action to the qualities, and by conceiving the Self as distinct from them, as a consciousness above and apart from them, even though in a mystical sense “present in the sacrifice,” he comes in time to unite himself with that Self. Meanwhile he seeks “for that which is homogenous with his own nature.” That is to say he recognizes that all his present surroundings are the karmic outcome of his own nature; his own desires and acts brought him where he stands, and his conditions are, in fact, what he most desired, for they are the immediate results of his desire and choice. Hence he accepts them all and tries to work them out by doing his duty in each as it rises, neither liking nor disliking them. Even if he should perish in the performance of his duty, he has fulfilled the law. His return to the scene of action will find him further on the path.

Arjuna then asks what instigates man to offend, and he is told that “lust instigates him.” We must not narrow the meaning of the word “lust,” for it is “passion, sprung from the quality of Rajas.” That is to say, desire, the product of the driving energy of

Nature. There is help to be found in the direction of a constant recollection of this truth. If man could only cease to identify himself with his desires, much sin would be at an end. *The Voice of the Silence* warns us:

“If thou wouldst cross the first hall safely, let not thy mind mistake the fires of lust that burn therein for the sunlight of life.”<sup>1</sup>

In other words, this desire, this driving force, is not the true life-force, the universal essence. Although the fire of desire burns in the mind, that mind which is the lord (“rajah”) of the senses, “the Thought-Producer,” the “great Slayer of the Real,” yet man shall know that this desire is the Hall of Ignorance. Its empire is wide. It rules, when it rages, “the senses and organs, the thinking principle” even to Buddhi, here called “the discriminating principle,” does its fatal power extend. “The Lord of the body,” or the Lord *in* the body, the Ego, is deluded when desire “surrounds” the discriminating principle; when the “holy seat” of Buddhi, the white light of wisdom, is surrounded by the raging desire-flames and the smoke of passion and sin. That light cannot manifest at the sacred place so long as the grosser flames rage there.

It is a well-known fact in human nature that desire ends with possession, and the mind of man passes on to new conquests, new desires. This fact should be the means of liberation, for it proves that man does not *himself* desire anything; the Rajas fire burns, that is all. Once convinced of this, once satisfied that that desire is never appeased when its apparent object is attained, but continues unabated, man would surely cease to be the dupe of desire. He would grasp the fact so cunningly concealed by Nature, that he in truth does not desire, but that desire — the driving energy — operates in the substance of his sphere. Once he can begin to put an end to the mental identification of himself with this desire, this quality of Nature, he is in the position of one who, link by link, strikes off his chains. It is this identification of himself with Nature’s quality which has forged and ever rivets his chain. Once let him realize that he has an antagonist; once let his mind glimpse the truth that liberation is possible, that his own real interest is not with this desire, but is on the other side, and already he has taken the first step towards freedom. Then he wonders why he did not earlier discern this truth; for instance, when he saw that the gratification of his various desires neither assuaged desire itself, nor yet contented him; that he was not happy; why did he not then find a hint of the truth? Desire never gratified any one of us; we are never permanently happy; why? We conceive the desired object strongly and singly; we give no thought to the consequences it entails. But it never comes singly; it brings in its train a throng of unimagined conditions and consequences, most of them reactions of that initial action, desire. We have thought perhaps of the pleasing consequences, and not of their polar opposites, their shadows. We forgot what Krishna later tells Arjuna, “the pleasures which spring from the emotions are the wombs of future pain.” The very nature of action implies reaction and that to its polar opposite. Why then have we been so blinded? Is it not because the personality, seeking to assure itself of its power, its life, borrowing even the hope of immortality whispered by the spirit to the soul, drives us onward to gratify its own thirst for sensation, to employ its own driving force, to accrete strength and consciousness around itself; it conceals from us, as in a blinding glare of life, that other side, that calm light which would reveal truth to the mind. It would appear, from this point of view, that the personality is an entity working for itself and opposed to the progress of the inner man. What if that be so? What if the personality be a congeries of elemental lives, all driven onward by desire, until some higher unifying force appears from above or from within to guide and train them towards a wider plan? Then the personality, under the influence of Tamas, ignorance or inertia, uses this driving force which it finds within its component parts, as a “will to live,” a will for itself. Every part evolves this will, and each is “for itself.” Can we wonder that man is torn asunder? But he can unify himself by the strength of the

higher will, once he catches a glimpse of Sattva. In that calm radiance he contemplates the real nature of desire, and knows that he is not that; that even Sattva is but a light to be used by him, a temporary aid, and that he himself is one with that Ego which is “He, greater than Buddhi,” for the divine Thinker is greater than his thought. Krishna states this truth very clearly and frequently, that the real man is the Ego, for if we look to that Light as something separate from ourselves we can never merge ourselves into it. Hence Arjuna is ever the bowman because he must never loose his hold of the bow, that saving weapon, that tense instrument which is his constant thought, “I am That.” This is the never-ending thought of the manifested universe; it is the Aum, the eternal vibration chanted forth by cosmos evermore. It is the “great bird” between whose wings he shall rest when he has given up the personal life, divided and separative as that life ever is, torn, tempest-tossed and complex as it looks to his weary mind when he comes to loose his clutch upon its lures to live the life. May thy bow, Arjuna, hit that shining mark!

JULIA W. L. KEIGHTLEY.

(*To be continued.*)

{Continuation not found.}

## NOTES

1. {*The Voice of the Silence*, H. P. Blavatsky, p. 6.}

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*The Wonder-Light, and Other Tales* – 1890, pp. 46-59.

## BUBBLES OF THE BREATH.

MRS. J. CAMPBELL VER PLANCK

“The air has bubbles as the water hath,  
And these are of them.”

Pit-a-pat fell the rain on the gabled roof of “Hideaway.” Pit-a-pat on the low, wide porches, on the overhanging branches and broad leaves. It was a wee houselet, a shelter in the hillside forest; it sat like a dark red fungus at the foot of a tall tree. The branches shaded it here, and there opened to let in the view of the slim, fair, peaceful valley girdled by hills of every delicate color-tone. To this resting place came Uncle John when the world roared too loud and too long, bringing Carlo with him. It was all of wood inside and out, lined with polished wood as a woodpecker’s nest is; the crackling wood fire cast its flickering shadows on the shining walls; it had a look as if it had grown there of itself; as Carlo said, it was “the most comfablest place.” Everyone and everything seemed to think so; the pealing thunders of Uncle John’s organ had no terrors for the birds or butterflies that sometimes dashed through it, nor for Juno, the burly St. Bernard dog, dozing under the table. Maude with her kittens, Blondin and Brunette, lolled in their sheepskin rug, pretending it was a savage lair; Brunette, as usual, taking her dinner of fresh mother-milk, and Blondin the Bold gravely chasing a wasp entangled in the rug. Not a sound was heard except sounds of water, the rain taps and the gurgles of the stream falling into the marble basin from the outside spring in its unchecked flow. Uncle John lay back in his steamer-chair, a book on his knee and a pipe in his mouth; except for the puffs of smoke you would have thought him asleep.

In a little alcove, just big enough for the organ and its stool, but not big enough for anything more, sat Carlo, swinging his dangling legs and marching his fingers over the organ keys, while he pensively watched the swoop of dark clouds over the hills and the races of rain-drops over the panes. Presently he clambered down; stealing on tiptoe into the room, he squatted down under the sage-green umbrella of the lamp, looking like Puck under a toadstool, wistfully watching for his friend and comrade to awaken. Perhaps Uncle John saw the weary little face from under his half-closed eyelids, as he had a way of doing; he gave a kind of grunt, a signal well known to Carlo, who said, very gently and without moving:

“May you be ’sturbed, Uncle?”

The Uncle answered by another question. “A rainy day is a long day, isn’t it, old man?”

“N-o-o, not ’xactly. But the kits-cats won’t play with the bird anymore.” The “bird” was a queer mass of cotton and feathers, dangling from a line passed through a ring in the roof, causing the cats to make mad leaps after it, tumbling and rolling, to Carlo’s delight; even Juno did not disdain to play with the bird. To-day they had all had enough of it. Maude got up and stretched herself. She trotted to the stationary washstand, on which she jumped, pawed the leaden plug into the basin, patted about until she had fitted it into the hole, and then demurely watched the water filling the basin until she thought it was full enough for a drink. This taken, she sprang to the window-sill and began to wash her face with her paws. Carlo ran to remove the plug.

“Naughty pussy!” said he. “Some day when we’re not here, all the water will run over. Why don’t you know enough to pull the plug out again?”

“If she could speak, she would probably say that she knows more than most cats already, his Uncle answered. Time enough for her to do that when she gets to be a boy.

“Oh! Uncle. Will she *ever*?” and Carlo opened his eyes very wide.

“Did you never hear of Reincarnation, my boy?” asked his Uncle, looking at the book he held. The book had this big word on its back, where books wear their names.

“What is it? A game?”

“That’s a capital idea, my boy; we’ll make it a game. You will understand better so.” Rising, he stretched his tall form, fastened the girdle of his yellow dressing-coat about him, and ran his fingers through his fluffy blonde hair. “Rainy days make me go to sleep all over,” he smiled, while Carlo watched him intentl. Going over to the oaken table under the book-case, he took from a hammered brass tray a clay pipe and an earthen bowl gaily painted with Japanese flowers. Into the bowl he poured hot water from a big brown jug upon the stove, and, taking a bit of soap, began to make strong suds. While Carlo looked on, Blondin suddenly caught the wasp, with a squeal as it stung his tongue, bit it, carried it in pride to Brunette, and said to her in cat language:

“You can’t catch a thing like that, Brunette. You’re only a girl.”

“Pooh!” Brunette answered in the same way, “what’s the good? You can’t eat it,” and waddled to her Mother to get some more dinner.

“I know, Uncle,” Carlo called out. “It’s soap-bubbles. That’s prime!” Taking the clay pipe, he danced about impatiently.

“We are going to do more than blow bubbles; we are going to talk about them.”

With a sigh of immense satisfaction, the child climbed on to a chair. Of all his pleasures, he valued most a talk with his Uncle.

“How I wish Mr. Bert was here,” he said, alluding to a chum of his Uncle’s whom too he loved.

“You can see if you remember what I tell you well enough to tell him,” answered the other.

Carlo wriggled with joy. Next to hearing a story, he dearly loved to tell one, even to the kittens if no other hearer was at hand.

"Now, blow me a big bubble," the Uncle went on to say, and soon a bright globe was rounding itself from the pipe and was tossed off into air, with another and another to follow it. Blondin ran up and slapped one with his paw; the look of astonishment on his stupid, innocent little face when it disappeared was most ridiculous, and made the bubble makers shout with laughter, while puss snapped at one with her huge jaws, and looked so sheepish and silly when it vanished, Carlo called out in glee:

"Where's they gone, you poor old am's" (his word for animals); where's they gone?"

"That's just what I ask you, Carlo, said his Uncle. "Where have they gone to?"

"Why; into nothing, I s'pose."

"Do you remember my telling you once that there was not a spot in the world where nothing was?"

"Well, then, into air — isn't it?"

"Let us see. I am very much interested in bubbles, because they are just like people."

"Oh! come now, Uncle. People isn't so round and fat and all colors."

"How do you know?" What did you tell me that brown seed was, the one you were planting yesterday?"

"It was a pansy seed. It's goin' to be one of them beautiful gold and purple flowers with pussy-cat faces, you know."

"Why, that flower is not one bit like that brown seed, Carlo," said his Uncle, with half-shut eyes and his quizzical smile. Carlo looked at him in quick understanding.

"You caught me that time," he laughed. "Tell me how bubbles are like people, while I blow the best one you ever saw."

"You know, child, how often I tell you not to judge of what a thing is like in its real self by what you see of it outside. About the bubbles: very wise men say that every person has about him a body of a rare kind of air, sometimes called ether. It surrounds him just as air surrounds the earth or the moon. Every thing, too, has just such a ball or sphere of air around it and belonging to it. Colors are said to run through that sphere of air, changing as the person's thoughts or breath changes. So to people who see this, man would seem to be in the center of a bubble with ever-changing hues."

"Does everybody see it?"

"Not all people, for all eyes are not the same. Many persons do. Don't you remember telling me about a wonderful Light you saw one night?" Carlo nodded. "You saw something like that, then. But there is something even more interesting in bubbles and men. What do you think it is?"

Carlo watched a bubble bursting in the air.

"Is it that they both dies?" he asked.

"A good guess. But I do not think they either of them *die* exactly. I think they only change. Let us see. What makes the bubble? Come; tell me and I'll match you with what makes a man."

"Soap," said Carlo.

"Body," said his Uncle.

"Water," said Carlo.

Uncle John matched that by saying "Soul."

"No more," said Carlo.

"Oh, yes. One thing more." Carlo shook his puzzled head. "Stir your brains now. A very important thing. What makes the bubble, after all? What do you put into it?"

“Breath!” shouted Carlo gaily.

“Exactly,” his Uncle assented. “I’ll match that with Spirit.”

“What is spirit, Uncle?”

“Spirit is the Great Breath of God. See — we have soap, water, and breath. And body, soul, and spirit. Soap makes the bubble hold together. The water would not hold alone. You can’t blow pure water into a bubble. Bubbles such as you sometimes see on the edge of running water have gas in them, made from decaying slime or plants; it acts as the soap does. Just so the soul, the light which is the mind or Thinker of men, needs a body to hold it or it cannot act in this world at all. But if air is not blown into the bubble in some way, then no shape is formed. And Spirit is the Great Breath of Life. It is in the body; and also it is outside of the body. Without that Breath the soul could not live and think at all, and without the body it could not live in this particular kind of a world.”

“But bubbles burst, Uncle.”

“And men die.”

“Yes; I heard a man sayin’ that once when Mamma took me to church. He was up in a big box lookin’ down on the peoples. I wished it was me, up there. Say, Uncle; what is it, anyhow, *to die*? Get planted like the flowers, don’t you? I fink to die is bein’ snuffed out like a candle, just this-a-way.” He tossed a bubble on the shining maple floor and stamped on it with his foot. “Gone! Then there’s no more Carlo; no more Uncle,” he said.

“How do you know that? What is that spot on the floor?”

Carlo looked at it. “Just a drop of water left from the bubble.”

Then it is not all gone. That drop of water thrown off from it is like our cast-off body which is put into the earth. The drop disappears, swallowed up by the boards and the air; so our bodies sink into earth and air again. I saw some spray from the bubble fall back into the bowl, from the air, when it burst. How about that? I will tell you. The soul goes back to the World-Soul, the Wonder-Light. It stays there for a time. And the breath; where is that?”

“In the air,” said Carlo.

“And so the Spirit Breath is in the Great Breath. Is that all?”

“I ’spose it is,” the child answered.

“Then you do not wish to blow bubbles anymore?”

“Oh, yes I do!”

“And suppose the Great Breath too goes on making more of the bubbles called men? That would make many men. But suppose one is made again with the same spirit and the same soul, what then?”

“Oh! Why then, Uncle, why then — yes — they’d have to come back again here, wouldn’t they, if the Great Breath said so?”

“Of course they would. That is called Reincarnation, that coming back of soul and spirit into a new body. Now let us see what you do. You blew breath into the bubble and confined it there; air and water were held in that form, as in a prison, by the soap. When their motion got too strong for the bubble, it broke. When the soul wears out the body, the body dies. The heaviest part of the bubble, soap and water, fell on the floor. So the gross lower part of the soul dies with the body. Some fine spray blew off into the air and back into the bowl; so the fine part of the soul, the Thinker, goes into the World-Soul, and there the Breath is always moving. The human soul waits there awhile. And now tell me what you did after breathing your breath out.”

“I breafead more in.”

“So the Great Breath does. It is drawn in and Out. It breathes out and into forms; that is life. It is breathed in again, and out of the forms or bodies of men and things; that is death. Death is only a change; the soul still lives, in another state or condition, until it is breathed into another body again. The soul is the real man. It never dies. See; you draw the water and soap up again from the place where the spray fell in and you blow another bubble. It is the same water, mixed with other soap, blown by the same breath. So when the body dies, or changes into earth and lime and flowers, it is seen that even bodies do not die; *nothing ever dies*; they only change into new forms of life, they become bodies for other things, for the ant or the wheat or the fruit tree growing from the soil. The soul rests awhile, out of the body, in a peaceful, beautiful kind of happiness called heaven. Heaven is not a place; it is a condition of joy and rest. After a while, spirit in its wisdom breathes again into the soul-sphere all the glowing colors of life. The soul moves and draws together a new body, just as that spray drew new soap and water to itself, and the motion of the Breath in it helps to round out a new form. So the soul of every man comes back again and again, and this, as I said, is Reincarnation, or coming back again into a new form. Spirit is the companion of soul.”

“Why does soul come back?”

“To learn more and more, so that at last it may have such a pure, wise heart-star that the Christ-Light may be born in it.”

“But where is *I*? Where’s Carlo, Uncle John?”

“That part of you which goes into the Breath, that fine part, your Thinker, as you call it, is the real Carlo. It never dies.”

“And was my Thinker in a great many little boys?”

“Yes; it has passed through many bodies. The soul, as the Wonder-Light showed you, passes into stones, plants, animals, and then into men.”

“Goodness! Was my Thinker in all those bodies?”

“I believe so.”

“Well, then, just you tell me why my Thinker don’t *r’member* something about it. Now I’ve caught you, haven’t I?” Carlo laughed roguishly, showing all his pretty teeth in his red mouth like a cherry. His Uncle smiled, throwing one arm about him.

“Do you forget your Remember Game, Carlo? Aha! now I’ve caught you! Sometimes your Thinker does remember something about all the past, you see. But I think it remembers all the time, but you and your brain are too busy to listen. When your brain and body sleep, the soul, the Thinker, does not sleep. Often you remember what it saw, and you call it a dream. It reflects all the world as that mass of bubbles in the bowl reflects the room; see the little images there. Because you sleep, the Thinker does not sleep. So in daytime while your brains are busy with the outside world, they do not hear the low voice of the soul. Now dip your pipe *deep* into the water.”

Carlo did as he was told. But he could blow no bubble; the soapy water fell back into the bowl without taking shape.

“See,” his Uncle continued, “there is too much heavy matter there; your breath cannot blow it. So it is if the soul thinks too much of the body and mixes too much in the body and bodily pleasures, such as eating, drinking, and so on. The breath cannot inform the soul then, and, after a time, body and soul disperse, mix with their own elements, and do not return. That is only when a man has been horribly wicked. But for the most part, the Thinker passes through many forms till perfection of heart-light is reached. You are Carlo now. Last time you may have been a beggar, and next time you may be a king. So it is with us all. We all came from the Great Breath, the mover. We all go back to it and come forth again. We are brothers; men, animals, plants, rocks, creatures of the elements, all come from the World-Soul. Each has passed through the

river of life the same way; each will go out and return again, so each should be kind to every other. You may change places, next time, with the boy to whom you are unkind to-day.”

“Oh, Uncle! I was cross with Juno yesterday. I hit her. Have I got to go back and be a dog next time?”

Carlo’s eyes grew bigger and darker. He looked as if he would like to cry.

“No indeed, my boy. Did you ever see a river flow backward! The river of life never stops, turns around and flows the other way. Souls come up into life from the lowest lives on to the highest; the river flows onward; your soul will not again go through the bodies it has left behind or take on lower forms of life. Yet be kind to all things as well as to people. If you are unkind you may hurt their lives, and your own heart-star cannot become pure and great. That star called the soul enters all bodies, knows and conquers all bodies, until it becomes splendidly pure and wise. Men are only the bubbles of the world. But souls that become pure spirit are eternal, immortal; they are like God.”

“I fink it’s beautiful. Ess; I do!” the child said slowly. “Re-carnations. I’ll tell it all to Mr. Bert when he comes in. Maude is so smart. Will she be a baby boy next time?”

The Uncle smiled. I do not think so. The animals are a long way off from men yet. And there are wiser animals than cats. Some learned men say that the elephant is the wisest of animals and has the most mind, so that the last time a soul is in an animal body, it is in that of an elephant. I do not know how true that is.”

“Oh, Maude!” exclaimed the boy, “you’ll be an elephant like Mr. Barnum’s next time. What fun that will be! Won’t she be s’prised? She’s so cute and little now. Wouldn’t it be awful for her if she came up again only a dandelion?” He hugged the cat in sympathy.

“Remember what I told you, Carlo. The law is that all things, as they come out of the Great Breath, shall go upward, shall improve. The unseen God made that law. The animal will not be a plant again, nor the plant a stone. Some animals are wiser in many things than some men are. They obey the laws of nature better than we do. The animals are true to their own nature, but men are not always true to theirs; they do not always listen to the voice of the soul, the conscience whispering in us when we do wrong. For those who do listen, a great future is in store; there is nowhere any stop on this long journey: they go on to greater lives, on to other worlds. At last, no longer mere bubbles of the Breath, they enter that Great Breath itself; they are all one with it and in great peace.”

“That’s splendid! I’ll try to be good and go on with you, Uncle.”

As he spoke, the door opened and a young man entered. Carlo ran to him.

“Here you are, Mr. Bert,” he cried, “Come in; I’ll tell you about some three-carnations — not the kind you have in your buttonhole. You think you’re a man, Mr. Bert. You aren’t any such a thing. You’re only a bubble, what the Great Breath has blown. If you’re good, you’ll get back to God’s house some day. God’s house is the Great, Great Breath.”

The two men smiled at each other over the dear little curly head. Both thought the same thing: “May we three always meet in the long journey.” Carlo, as if he felt their thoughts, said as he climbed up on to Mr. Bert’s shoulders:

“But you both must go along with me. God’s house wouldn’t be home without my friends.”

## THE BULB.

J.N.

There was a small bulb in the garden that engaged the attention of God.

“Grow!” said God.

And the bulb, with a leap of joy, shot shining green leaves like a crown. It rested there in the summer light and air,— content.

“Grow!” said the Lord to the bulb as it rested contentedly upon the summer warmth of the garden. (For He saw that its hour had come.)

The spirit of the bulb felt a pang of disturbance at the word of God; it was languid with the summer beauty and the pride of its own unfolding, the stage of greenness and growth that was so gracious. But it knew the Voice of God in the garden and moved upward. There were pangs, and it trembled; then began the miracle of bud and leaf and flower, of coronal and sweet perfume. The wonder accomplished itself; *there* rested the pride of the garden, beloved of all; of bee and butterfly, of child and man.

(But the wise old gardener, pausing, looked and said:

“ ’Tis a young bulb yet; aye, but a youngish bulb: there will be more to do, anon.”)

Thereafter came autumn winds and rain, despoiling the flower:

“Grow!” said God.

But the storm was so loud that the spirit of the bulb heeded Him not. (Yet did the merciful Lord aid the bulb to accomplish its destiny.)

Mourning, and unaware of God, the life-spirit withdrew into the shining green leaves; autumn bit them; they died.

Mourning, the life-spirit withdrew into the stem, straight and strong, wind defying. The frost gnawed the stem; winter froze it; it withered away.

Mourning, the life-spirit of the bulb withdrew into the root, the bulb. There at the very center it sat, grieving, chilled and alone.

“Grow!” whispered God, very tender and low.

Then out spoke the flower-spirit, murmuring:

“How sayest Thou, Maker of me? Here sit I, cold, dark, alone, mocked at, trodden over by all manner of creeping, peering things. The under world witnesseth my despoiling and my shame. Dost Thou, too, make a mock, oh! King?”

It thundered in the garden as God said:

“GROW!”

And the bulb, sitting in darkness, felt a prayer contritely breathed from the spirit in its heart:

“How, then, Lord of the garden and of me, *shall* I grow?”

A soft cool quietness closed over the bulb. Oh! so dark. Oh! so still. Oh! so sweet, was it there. The small thing lay enfolded in the hand of God. And as it lay there willingly, forgetting its vanished glory, singing its little song of cheerful, patient contentment, the tenderest Voice whispered to the spirit of the bulb:

“There be many ways of growth. But the greatest is to lie quietly in the hand of God.”

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Summer came again. The flower-spirit poured its life through stem and leaf into the white splendor of the lily, and all men and things hailed it the Queen of the garden, the flower whose garnered fragrance was dearest and best.

But the wise old gardener mused over it and said:

“Aye; the bulb that has stored up all this glory in the hard winter time, must have lain long under the hand of God.”

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The world over, to-day, there are souls deeply mourning, because God has asked them to grow!

J.N.

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*The Theosophical Quarterly* – April 1907, Vol. 4, p. 298.

## CALM.

J.N.

Do thou make daily search for Calm.

Upon this Calm all the virtues attend. Faith, Love, Courage, Endurance, Patience, Trust, Fidelity; all these are the children and handmaids of Calm.

Calm is the instrument of the Gods; it contains within itself all the powers, as music is contained within the lute. Attune thy lute; the Gods shall discourse upon it. But thou shalt thyself be master of thine instrument.

This Calm is not a fixed and rigid coldness; it is the cool, quiet freshness of an eternal springtide; it has its root deep in a region of unfailing Peace.

He who is master of this Calm moves upon the bosom of Time as a wave moves upon the ocean — rising, falling, merging and emerging; now visible in Time, but ever enduring invisibly in the Eternal.

Into this consciousness comes no joy or sorrow in relation to the things and divisions of Separateness; no emotion or sentiment in respect of the appearances or illusions of self; no supineness and no passivity: mirage has no place in the world of Calm.

As the disciple enters this region of Calm, its Gates close behind him, admitting no sounds from the outer worlds. From this place of rest and stillness — once he has truly entered into it — there is no egress save through its further portals that open inward, into the Peace Everlasting. And when the disciple has reached this condition, his Spirit dwells between the wings of the resounding AUM forever, no matter how its instrument may be at work in the outer worlds.

Make then unremitting search for thine own Calm.

J.N.

## CARLO'S GAME.

J. CAMPBELL VER PLANCK

As the One Fire, after it has entered the world, though one, becomes different according to what it burns, thus the One Self within all things becomes different according to whatever it enters, but it exists apart.<sup>1</sup>

Carlo was playing a favorite game, although you would not have supposed him to be playing at all. He was lying flat upon his back, his small heels planted against a pine tree trunk, his dreamy little face upturned to the blue sky glimmering between the boughs. This game he called "My Remember Game," and so he told his Uncle John who came up and asked what he was doing there.

"Playin' my Remember Game, Uncle John," he said. "Come an' lie down this a way, Sir, an' maybe you'll remember too."

Uncle John glanced at the feet vigorously tattooing the tree trunk, and inquired, "Why do you put your feet on the tree, Carlo; is it a part of the game?"

"Put 'em there 'cause I feel the tree tickle me. Somethin' inside that tree runs up and I feel it makin' me shiver. I call that the tree's blood. Papa calls it nonsense. What do you call it, Uncle?"

"I think it must be what you call the tree's blood, Carlo, but I have a different name. I call it the life force."

"An' which's the best name?"

"Well; let us see. Why do you call it the tree's blood?"

Giving his curly mane a toss, Carlo rolled over and bit a mouthful of sorrel grass in delight. He felt sure he should win in this game of reasons, with Uncle John. They often played thus, looking into the reasons of things and trying to find out the "Why." He laughed aloud in his pleasure.

"Guess I'm goin' to beat you, Sir. I've got a awful good 'Why.' When I cut my finger, other day, blood runned out. Everybody in the whole world calls it blood. An' when I cut the tree, a yellow stickiness runned out; so I called *it* blood. It must be a runnin' there, an' I bet it's what tickles my feet."

His feet were covered with yellow moccasins, bead embroidered.

"Is wearing moccasins part of the game?" inquired Uncle John.

"No. Least, I think not. But it tickles more through them than my shoes."

"I shouldn't wonder if that were really so. You gave me a right good reason, Carlo Boy. Now I owe you mine. You said the tree's blood, which is called sap or resin by most people, ran out when you cut the tree, didn't you?"

"Well it didn't 'xactly *run*, but it kinder comed out, that a way. 'Trees are slower than people in everything, isn't they?"

"They are, my Boy; they are. A tree is never in a hurry. We might take some good lessons from trees. And I see you've been taking some. Always, when you see anything, try to see something else like it in some other part of the world and in yourself, and then you'll understand better. To do that is called Comparison, or Analogy."

Carlo yawned.

"I don't fink I care about those big words, Uncle," he said. "I don't fink I do. But all the boys allays looks around to see what will explain things to them 'when peoples is too busy.'"

"Explain is the word, Carlo."

"I don't care for them words," said the child with some impatience. "You know what *fings* I mean; any old word will do when you know the fings. An' you aint gived me your reason yet. Did I beat you; is mine the best?"

"My reason is this. When your blood runs, or the sap moves, do you think the blood and the running are one, or two? Do you think the sap and the moving are the same thing, or two things?"

Carlo considered. "I dunno," he slowly said.

"You saw an engine moving yesterday. Was that two things, or one?" "Two," he shouted joyously, kicking his heels in the air. "Two!"

In his exuberance he rolled upon his Uncle, now seated on the grass beside him, and began to pommel him lightly with his fists.

"Why two, Carlo?"

"Because steam made it go. I seen it. I seen the engineer too."

"Anything more?"

"You bet I did. I saw a fire, a red one. I fink Papa said it made the steam."

"Then there were four things, old man. The engine is like the tree. The steam is like the sap. The moving that comes from the sap and from the steam, that is what makes both run, and makes your blood run. That is Force. In living things it is life force. All things have their own kind of force, don't you see; but all are different ways in which Force shows itself. Force puts on many masks, as the clown did in the circus yesterday, but behind the masks is always the same one moving them all. Tree's life and engine's life and boy's life don't run the same way. The tree, the engine, the boy don't move alike either. But Force, the hidden Mover, is the same in itself. It moves you, me, the world, the ants and flowers; our ways are different, but the Mover is the same."

Carlo breathed hard. He was interested. He knew and loved his Uncle's ways; generally he understood them. When he didn't he used to say: "I don't understand, Uncle, but I love you." Then the Uncle would answer, "That does just as well; it's the same thing. Love will bring the understanding bye and bye." So Carlo got to speaking of his "understanding" and his "love-understanding." He said now: "I know what you mean with my love-understandin', Uncle. Just that a way. An' does all the Motion, does that Mover come from fire, everywhere?"

"Yes; that Mover is Fire; different kinds of fire. Some kinds we see with our eyes, and some with our minds —"

"Our Thinkers" — Carlo interrupted.

"Yes; and some with our understanding."

"And some only with our love-understandin's."

"Some only that way just now. But I told you that love will bring truth after a while. There is really only One Fire, but when it enters the sun, the air, coal, or a man, it looks different, it has different ways. Forty-nine ways, the wise men say."

"Forty-Nine! Is that more than a thousand?" asked Carlo, whose kilts and curls had never yet been inside a schoolroom. He was learning things outside. The world was his object lesson, and his Uncle the skillful teacher. With a pleased little chuckle he asked now: "Did you forget the engineer, Unky? Did you?"

"By no means, my boy. That engineer is very important. He can run the train up, or down, or off the track to destruction. You and I can run our engines where we please, always according to the laws of Motion. A man can run his body as he pleases,

make it a good instrument to help the world, or he can do a great deal of harm, but he can only follow the ways of the hidden Mover. His ways are patterns for ours. And we must have good fires in these engines of ours; the right fuel is a good will. Isn't that so?"

"May be so," answered the boy, rubbing his curls. "You telled me never to say I was sure when I hadn't tried it. Carlo aint tried that yet. I guess I don't know that about lots of fires, but I want to know where's the tree's engines. Has it got a Thinker like ours?"

"Not like ours, but a Thinker of its own kind."

Carlo sat up suddenly. "What fun! Did you *ever* see a tree's Thinker?"

"No. Nor did I ever see your soul, or mine, (Thinkers as you call them). Nothing else has a Thinker like men. But one great Thinker is at work in us all. Everything lives, acts, goes on. That is life, and life is thought. Everything that moves has thought of its own kind. To think is to be."

"An' flowers an' nuts an' leaves is the tree's thoughts, I know. My Remember Game told me so."

"Is that so? Do tell me about your game, little one. What else does it say?"

"It says —." The bright eyes filled with tears. "Promise me you won't tell Papa, nor any laughin' people. Promise."

"I do promise."

"Well," said a small and solemn voice, "my Game Remember says my beauty Mamma aint dead at all. No! She isn't. *True!* Aren't you glad, Uncle John? She was your Sister, you know."

"Indeed I am glad, Carlo. She was, and is, my dear Sister. I always hoped she was not really dead. In fact, I don't think I ever believed she was."

Carlo caught his uncle's bearded face in his two plump hands and squeezed it, looking eagerly in his eyes for an instant, then with a soft sigh of satisfaction he kissed his friend, "You aint laughin like the rest does," he explained. "I wonder they want to laugh at childrens; it makes em look awful ugly."

"Tell me more about your game, Carlo."

"I jess lie down an' look straight ahead at the sky, 'cause I aint really lookin' at nothin' you know. Then fings comes a sailin,' a sailin' with music, right spang frou' my mind. A many fings. But you have to keep so still. If you jump about, an' say 'Oh! no, Oh! no,' then it all stops: all them sky ships sails home again."

"What news do your ships bring you, Boy?"

"Such stories about fings. Funny fings that Carlo used to be. Nice fings too. Sometimes fairies; not often. Sometimes they makes me understand what the birds say when they sing; an' when squirrels chatters, too."

"And is that all?"

"Uncle John, you allays inter-rumps at the bestest part. My Game Remember says Mamma is round me like the air. It says she's a comin' back to me some-eres else. It says I'll be her Mamma, an she'll be my little boy; bet I'll be good to her when she's a he. It says we were once two butterflies; two little baby deers in a forest too. It says we used to fly in the air; the one that loved God best could go fastest. To-day it said we was beautiful lights, an' God was a big Light that lit us all up and made us feel like a good long heaven shining. An' — an' — I disremember more now. You lie down here an' play my Game Remember, Uncle John. I call it that 'cause I fink it remines me of somefings I knew when I knew lots more than these old grown-ups do. It makes me feel werry big in here." He struck his breast with his hands. "Play it an' tell me if it says true."

“I have played it; I think it says true, on the whole,” the Uncle answered, smiling at the boy’s excitement and delight.

“Hurrah! But say; how could I be all those fings some other time?”

“Do you remember what I told you about the One Fire, and all its ways?”

“Ess” — said Carlo.

“That Fire never dies. It lives forever in a darkness of its own. It comes out of that Darkness; it goes back into that Darkness. You have seen our earth fire do that. The One Fire is the Father of all Fires, the Father of Lights. It goes into a form. It comes out, and the form falls to pieces, like the wood which is ashes when the fire has left it. That Fire goes into many, many forms, in very many ways. Each form, in dying, gives life to something else. Cinders and ashes make food that is good for grass and flowers. The acorn dies, and from its grave springs a tree. Some dead forms give birth to worms that creep, and some to winged things. Some worms die, and butterflies arise to kiss the flowers. Some germs ferment, and little children are born. So you see there is no Death; there is only another kind of life, another form from broken forms. But always the One Fire in its many ways and lesser fires gives life and motion to worlds of forms. There are shapes of air, shapes of light, shapes of fire, just as there are more solid shapes, and all are always melting away into one another like the pictures of your kaleidoscope. What makes them move and change so? The hidden Mover in the lesser fires that are the souls of men.”

“I see! I know! Them little fires is the children of the great Fire, the Fire with a Thinker as big as the world. Now I know why Mamma teachd me to say ‘Our Father’; she wanted me to fink about that good Fire what makes all these splendid things. It’s a great Light; far, far away an’ everywhere too; my Game Remember says so. It loves me. I heard it a sayin’ ‘Come, Carlo; let us make errybody werry happy an’ we’ll shine forever an’ ever.’ It just *loves* to shine. Uncle John.”<sup>22</sup>

The boy’s voice fell. The sun was about to disappear in the west. Birds twittered in the trees. Carlo’s eyes followed his Uncle’s; he clapped his hands.

“See the red fire that sun makes. Is the sun one of the ways of God? Then I fink he’s goin’ down to that One Fire, to say that the world is werry well. The great Fire will be glad to know that; I fink it must like us werry well to take trouble to make such a many fings. An’ I fink that God is here too, an’ everywhere. He’s the hiding Mover, Uncle John; he’s life, if he never dies. I feel him movin’ in me, now. He burns me; he loves me; he moves me. My Game Remember says that’s God.”

Uncle John’s lips did not move, yet he was saying:

“Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.”<sup>23</sup>

J. CAMPBELL VER PLANCK.

## NOTES

1. {*Katha Upanishad*, Fifth Valli.}
2. The speeches of Carlo have been made by the author by various other children from time to time, and are, in substance and imagery, facts.
3. {Matthew 5:8:3.}

## A CHILD'S VIEW OF THEOSOPHY. UNSIGNED {PROBABLY JULIA VER PLANCK}

The following is quaint enough to reprint. We regret that we cannot acknowledge its source, but the friend who sent it did not add the name of the journal from which it was clipped.

### “A CHILD'S VIEW OF THEOSOPHY.

“ ‘Grandma, I like Fosfy.’

“ ‘Fosfy, Joe, what's that? a new game?

“ ‘No, I don't think it is *zackly* a game, but uncle John called it moonshine, and aunt Ethel is always talking about it, you know.’

“ ‘Oh yes, you mean Theosophy. Well, why do you like it, my dear?’

“ ‘See, gran., there is not rightly *time* now to get things done. When I ask uncle why he didn't go and hunt bears and tigers, he always says he had something else to do. When I wanted him to take me to the circus the other night, he said, ‘Got no time, my boy. There is not enough time, my boy.’ There never seems enough time here, gran. And I wants lots of time. I want first to be a learned man, like you say father was. Then I want to be a coachman, like Thomas. It's so jolly when he lets me hold the reins. Then, though of course I like to be a boy best, I should like to be a girl sometimes. Girls get the best of it at parties. All the fellows wanted to dance with Mary Nelson the other night, and got her ices and cake, and she looked so pretty; boys don't look pretty, do they, grandma?’

“ ‘But what has all this to do with Theosophy?’

“ ‘Oh, don't you see, aunt Ethel say you never *really* die: you only go for a good long, ever so long sleep, and have jolly dreams, so you don't *seem* asleep — and then, when you quite rested, you wake up and begin again, just as you do in the morning, only you can begin something quite fresh every time you have been into the diving-can.’

“ ‘Diving-can?’

“ ‘Yes, that is what she calls it. Queer isn't it? But is it not awfully jolly? I'll have time to be a hunter, and a soldier, and a coachman, and a girl, yes, I think I would like to ride in a circus — and when I am sick of one thing I'll go into the diving-can and wake up somebody else. I think Fosfy prime.’ ”

## CORRESPONDENCE.

J. CAMPBELL VER PLANCK, F.T.S.

Oct. 27th, 1887.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE PATH:

DEAR SIR:— In view of the recent able articles in "*Lucifer*" apropos of the early significations of that title, your readers may be interested in a couple of extracts touching upon the more occult phase of the subject, to which Madame Blavatsky merely adverts for the moment by saying: "Whether this can explain anything is left to the reader's sagacity."<sup>1</sup>

In the writings of Eliphas Levi this further explanation is found:

"There is in Nature a force which never dies, and this force *perpetually transforms all beings in order to preserve them.*

"This force is the Reason, or the Word, of Nature.

"There exists also in man a force analogous to that of Nature, and this force is the Reason or the Word of man.

"The Word of man is the expression of his will, directed by his Reason.

"This Word is all powerful when it is reasonable, for it is then analogous to the Word of God himself.

"By his Word, man may become conqueror of life, and can triumph over death.

"The entire life of man is only the parturition or the miscarriage of his Word: Human beings who die without having understood and formulated the Word of Reason, died without eternal hope.

"The terrible and just force which perpetually destroys all these abortions, has been named Samaël by the Hebrews; Satan by the Orientals; and by the Latins, *Lucifer*."

Jacob Behmen, in his *Threefold Life of Man*, speaks of Lucifer in a chapter in which he declares in opening: "Our philosophers, in the schools of the third principle, of this world, do not understand; but the theosophers of the school of *Pentecost* understand it well."

"Consider the Center of the Earth, which God hath created by his Word even of the Center of the Deep Eternity, out of the Darkness, out of the Center of the desirous will, but not out of any *separate place*, but out of the space and depth, so far as the Word hath yielded itself unto the *Ether*; there hath the Centre been everywhere, and is so now, and remaineth so in Eternity for it hath been so from Eternity.

"And we understand by the Word (*Schuff* which signifieth created) a separation of the essences, in the center, in the sour matrix: and therefore there is also such great diversity in the spirits, as there is great diversity in the will of the essences. ... And we give you highly to understand, the heavy fall of *Lucifer*; which was that he put his will back again into the matrix of the fire, in the Centre, and turned away from the will of the Eternal Mind, which tended only to the heart of God; ... and therefore he was thrust back also (into the darkness, into the anguishing mind) in the sinking down of death." (Elsewhere called the "corporeity of darkness," the weight sinking down below fire and cooling to matter.)

"But to satisfy the high enquiring mind, and to fill its apprehension concerning what moved *Lucifer* to this, we offer the matrix of the Genetrix to be considered; and there you find all the forms which can be found in the whole Nature.

“And as we have shown you already, concerning the seven forms of the *Center* of the Eternal Nature, where every form is a several well-spring of Nature; in like manner out of every form, out of every well-spring, go forth spirits.

“And the uppermost Principal Dominion proceedeth from the Head Source, which is a cause of the multiplicity therein, as the mind is a cause of the senses, (or various thoughts) and we entreat you to consider the matrix earnestly, wherein you shall quickly know the conceived Will of *Lucifer*, what it is in its original; how the creature hath imagined into the *matrix*, and suffered itself to be withheld there; and yet God created all Spirits in the Light.

“For we cannot know any otherwise than that Lucifer was created in the fourth form of the *matrix*; for there stand the anger and the love in opposition, and this is the strife and overcoming; where the *light overcometh* and holdeth the darkness captive. The fourth form is in the midst of the seven forms, and *may turn* itself to the three in the anger, or to the three in the Love of God, and is severally drawn and desired by each of the three.”

By “anger” he says he means the “Fire life,” and by “Love” the “Light life,” of that original Substance which orientalists call the Astral Light, or Akasa. So this striving force, which “may turn” either way, shows us the contraries necessary to manifestation. Levi also says:

“When all was light, the light was nowhere: it filled the bosom of God, who was about to beget it.

“And when He said: Let there be Light! He permitted night to repel the light, and the universe sprang from chaos.

“The negation of the angel,<sup>2</sup> who being born, refused to be enslaved, established the equilibrium of the World, and the movement of the spheres began.”

It seems that the Editors of *Lucifer* have done well to name their magazine after this Principle militant, which institutes in matter that strife of contraries which we call “Life,” and so ensures to all the opportunity of evolution and Real Being. Perhaps Mercury, the Separator, the St. Michael who conquered Lucifer, and whom Behmen calls “Noise, Sound, Mercurie,” is not a stranger to the mystic significance of Om.

Yours Truly,

J. CAMPBELL VER PLANCK, F.T.S.

## NOTES

1. “History of a Planet.” {*Lucifer*, September 1887, H. P. Blavatsky.}
2. Referring to a previous legend of Lucifer, the Light Bearer, given in the magazine so named.

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*The Irish Theosophist* – June 1896, Vol. 4, pp. 176-178.

## DEVOTION.

JULIA W. L. KEIGHTLEY

(An address delivered at the Convention, New York. 1896.)<sup>1</sup>

This subject is one most difficult to deal with, for that devotion of which I am asked to speak is silent; it has no words at all. It is the union of the mind and heart and working hand in a single, fixed aim, the unit of work directed to an ideal unity. To take an illustration from modern science, I will refer to the latest discovery — or rediscovery,

as I prefer to call it — of a truth well known to the alchemists. It has recently been found that a solid cylinder of lead may be so made as to contain at one end a certain amount of gold. This tube is then exposed to a moderate warmth, of a degree which is maintained at a fixed and unvarying point, and after a time a number of the particles of the gold will be found to have removed themselves to the other end of the solid lead cylinder, showing that an interchange of particles has taken place between the gold and the lead. Now the steady and unchanging warmth which has fostered this interchange may be likened to that glow of devotion whereby the mind is enabled to fuse and blend itself with the whole of Nature, for, of a truth, devotion is the atmosphere of the soul. It is that voiceless spiritual aspiration which breathes through every act and thought and ensouls the leaden, materialistic days, is a thing which we cannot demonstrate except as we are that thing itself. Viewing it thus, as a finer and more universal force embodied in man, for his use or his rejection, we may ask ourselves to what object such devotion would be most naturally applied.

You have heard to-night, from another speaker, Madame Blavatsky's definition of Theosophy. Let me quote another definition from our late most beloved and honored teacher, William Q. Judge. "The Theosophical Movement," said Mr. Judge, "is a cry of the soul." Every Theosophist who is also a student will tell you that true devotion is directed to the needs of the soul, that final fact underlying the whole of Nature. For it is an open secret, and yet a secret so deeply embedded in material life that few men and women discover it, that we have no real needs at all except the needs of the soul. Do you doubt it? Tell me, then, who is satisfied? Who is at peace with himself? Where, in our civilization, is the happy man? Only there where the knower of the soul is found. Knowing that, martyrs have died in bliss with every material need denied and all the physical frame racked by torture or by want. Ignorant of that, whatever we have, we want still more. Have we love, we want ever more and more love. Have we wealth or power or learning, then we crave still more of these until satiety drives us to some other form of mental food for the restless mind. Why are we never satisfied? Is it not because the soul within will have none of this material food? It languishes for the divine life and breath, for the touch of the Spirit, the Liberator, the free Force freely playing. The imprisoned soul looks out from behind the eyes of men to-day as from the dim and anguished gaze of some poor, tortured brute, with a dumb appeal most pitiful to behold. It turns from all these things you offer it and drives you on and on as sharers of its suffering and unrest until you shall learn to know the food, the breath it craves. For you are immortal; I have no proof to offer you: you are gods *and you know it*. The proof is within you.

There is in a book dear to us all from childhood, a parable which speaks to the heart. I refer to that tale in the Bible where Christ bends over the tomb of the dead friend and touchingly cries to that friend: "Lazarus! awake! awake!" Let us not conceive of this parable according to the dead letter of it. Jesus the Christ was an Adept. Better than others he knew that there is no "death" in any point of universal space. Less than any other was he likely to gather back the elements of the human form from the embrace of the cycle of disintegration when that had set in. He was not one to recapture a soul set free. The tale, to my mind, bears a larger meaning. Then, as now, the scientist bent above accumulated details and missed the essential fact. Then, as now, the artist gave form after form of beauty to the world's enraptured gaze, while fairer and still fairer visions fled before his inner eye and evaded his hand. Then, as now, the sculptor cast his tools away and carved his most sublime conceptions from that stuff that dreams are made of. Then, as now, the musician, haunted by sounds ærial, embodied sweet melodies only to find that finer and more elusive harmonies would not be conjured forth from the airy chambers of the brain. The slaves of pleasure and the slaves of labor vainly chased contentment, for then, as now,

realization was nowhere to be found except in knowledge of the soul. So in our parable we see the Christ-Light stooping to the tomb of material life, the tomb of form and matter, and in a charmed stillness calling to the hidden sleeper within: “Awake! awake!” The spirit calls; the sleeper hears. He stirs. He rises, and from the prison of the body there emerges — what? The form of flesh? No! Think you the Christ-Light befriends that thing compounded of grosser elements alone? No! The rainbow-hued hope of humanity, Psyche emerges, the free, the deathless, the imperial soul. It is an act of devotion, of magic; you can each perform it. In yourselves evoke the soul!

JULIA W. L. KEIGHTLEY.

## NOTE

1. {“Second Annual Convention T.S.{I.}A.: First Day, Morning Session, April 26th.” *The Theosophical Forum*, April 1896, p. 187. “...Mrs. Julia Campbell Keightley of Philadelphia spoke on ‘Devotion’...”}

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*The Path* – March 1888, Vol. 2, pp. 365-370.

## EAST AND WEST. JASPER NIEMAND, F.T.S.

When Shakespeare wrote “Comparisons are odious,”<sup>1</sup> his rare art condensed into those three words a signal truth. Each person, plane, or thing has its own conditions of Being, which temporarily subserve universal conditions, and any comparison can only establish the difference between them. This difference is ephemeral and deceptive. To examine it is wise. For in examining we learn something of the *modus operandi* of Nature. But to insist upon the difference, to dwell upon it, to “point a moral and adorn a tale”<sup>2</sup> with it, is folly, since we accustom ourselves to regard it as a finality, whereas it is only a means. We invest this brief effect with the authority of a cause, losing sight of the fact that the terminus of differentiation is the higher Unity. These contrasts reveal only the workings of the Real Essence, while veiling that Reality itself.

Many theosophists — and others, for the matter of that — have contracted a habit of comparing the East with the West to the disadvantage of the former. A smaller number, while they also emphasize this contrast, reverse the decision, awarding the place of honor among nations to India. The merits of either civilization are often discussed with such heat that the amenities of all civilization are forgotten. Seeds of jealousy are thus sown, and the impartial observer finds his friend on the right exclaiming;— “How is it possible for a sane man to compare a stagnant civilization like that of India with the affluent vigor of American life;” — and his friend on the left retorting;— “Every thinking man knows that the wealth of life consists in its results and not in its action; in this view India stands first.” The question is never solved as between these disputants, since it remains a matter of opinion. On that plane you cannot solve it at all. Its decision must depend upon your own conception of the evolutionary goal. If that goal is the efflorescence of material life, then indeed the East lies prostrate, and the West may flaunt it from her colossal throne. But if the end and aim of Law is the unfoldment of spiritual life; if stars are swung on high and worlds are moved in space in order that the Divine-Human may run its course and attain perfection, then indeed the East has stood and stands nearer that goal than our present western race can well conceive. She alone has in later years borne Great Souls<sup>3</sup> and has reserved silent places for their habitation.

This only holds good in a given period of Time. The case is not so sharply put by Nature. The distinction "East and West" is not of her making; it bears the stamp of man. Nature has evolved but one nation. Its name is Humanity. In this department as in all others she has planned interchange, co-operation, action and reaction. We see this exemplified in families. The children differ much, and the wise Mother, while fostering their affection on the ground of relationship, takes care to strengthen the bond by making the gifts of one child supply the deficiencies of the other. The boy is to protect his sister, and she to reciprocate with painstaking love. So in physical nature, members of a type interact, and each type has a relationship and a meaning, whether hidden or evident, in the life of every other type. Isolation is not the intention of Nature. Where she has decreed the survival of the fittest, the occultist knows well that the inherent energy of souls provides this birthright for every soul that truly wills.

It is otherwise with man. He wrests and divides facts up to suit theories, and his distinctions are often arbitrary. When we consider the art of the potter, the weaver, the artisan in gold or other metals, of the painter, the decorator, the architect, we find that India has long surpassed us in all these things, consigning marvels of beauty to the dusky splendor of her temples and her tombs. The learning of her pundits is as profound as it is world-renowned. It is then chiefly in her social, industrial, and political institutions, in all the rivalry and competition which this ambitious age has agreed to call "Life," that India falls behind our western ideals. Are we then so happy in this fevered West of ours, and is happiness the chief aim of man or is it not? In China, where the statistics of the past year do not show as many murders among her teeming population as in the single State of New York during the same period; in Tibet, where crime is almost unknown; in Egypt, Japan, and India where real contentment feeds upon itself and upon little else, we are taught that man may be serene and that mind may control matter without our splendid appanage of Life at all. The thought will arise; which nation is the greater, she who must grasp all material possessions, or she who is content to Be? Western nations have breasted the roaring surf of action to be thrown back upon the sands exhausted, dying out at last with

The Glory that was Greece  
And the grandeur that was Rome,<sup>4</sup>

while those of the East arose far back of history and still survive. In India there are now specimens of the first races, as well as the present one to which we belong. She has not changed, but, like the bounteous earth, has given always to her ruling conqueror. Many successive waves of invasion have rolled over her, but she, instead of being altered, has herself changed the habits and beliefs of her conquerors. The present English invasion has not lasted long enough to show this effect. But it will be seen. Already fruits are appearing in the wonderful rise of investigation of Indian literature, and through this English channel a deep effect has been made upon English speaking people in their religious ideas. Nor has she been truly conquered, because from her greatest to her least institution she is always herself; her development has been from within, and she resists the imprint of all races but her own. All our so-called discoveries, I care not what, are replicas or variations; to the Orient belonged the first mold, and she took it from nature. Our inventors and innovators deny this in good faith. They are ignorant of the achievements of the East; her records are unread by them, her parables and metaphors unsolved, her inscriptions undeciphered, and her scientific tabulation of obscure powers and forces of man and nature are strongly withheld by her own hand. Enough has been shown and "discovered" to prove this

statement generally true, and modern learning, which already hails her as mother of all languages, will in course of time unveil the least details of her knowledge.

Such points I should not myself insist upon, because I do not deem them vital. As I said before, we are limited to a moment of Time. We are not yet overlooking the Past from the summits of Futurity and recognizing them as one. In this present moment the important question is not so much what we were or shall be, but what we are. *Now* is the pregnant instant, and the West possesses it, while the East waits and watches from afar. The cyclic impulse is now with us, and not with her. Guardian in chief of the secret doctrine, well-spring of all the great religions, she has now deposited in the West the precious seed gathered by her in remote harvests. The West gives the soil, and richer soil was never precipitated in the crucible of Time. Above and within our seething life, what protean energies have their ebb and flow! In their midst the seed first decays; then, touched by their glowing vigor, it leaps anew to life.

It has been said by men wise in the knowledge of the Eternal, that the end of nature is to provide fruition for the soul.<sup>5</sup> She does this through the mind, whose office as ministrant is to present pleasure upon pleasure, gift upon gift, experience upon experience to the monarch within; he accepts them one by one, tests and casts them away. When the material treasury is at last exhausted, the King finds that he, and not his officer, is the ruler, and that his real wealth lies within himself. Through this phase the West is now passing; our gorgeous tissue of life is woven for the enjoyment of the awakening soul. Already in more advanced individuals of the race, that soul has begun to discriminate, to turn from the outer to the inner life, and the tremendous activity and momentum of our civilization are urging on this crisis.

Those who have found the priceless pearl shining softly within their lives are bewildered at the sight. Telling the tale to other men they are pitied or derided, and they learn to work on in silence, striving to break through to this inner light, watching with longing eyes for some comrade who knows the way. It is here that the Eastern science meets them, teaching the application of this new knowledge, its unfoldment and its possibilities. She is like the nurse who helps the woman in travail, who cares for her new born babe. The hour comes when the nurse is not needed in that life but passes to others, just as the child in time outgrows the sweet fountains of his mother's breast, and his need of her is only a memory to his manhood. She does not stand lower in his eyes for all that. Even so the universe is no longer needed by God, and in its turn passes away.

There is then, no cause for pride, for jealousy, or for any comparison whatsoever in this matter. Theosophists who believe in Reincarnation can easily see that their particular country does not in reality belong specially to them, since they may have been Hindus in their last previous birth, and those spirits now inhabiting Hindu bodies were quite as likely, in *their* last incarnation, owners of European or American tenements of clay; and both, in long anterior times, may have trod the cities of ancient Egypt or Chaldea. It is quite as narrow for the Brahman to talk of his glorious Aryavarta as it is for the American or Englishman to claim for the West the first beginning of civilization, light, or progress. There is neither right nor priority. Truth is not enclosed within the boundaries of physical geography. It is not found within any boundaries at all; it is the Boundless. It is neither ours nor India's. It is not even Humanity's, but Humanity is Truth. Let us then become this Truth. To become it, we must leave idle distinctions aside. As children, we once lived in our toys. A noble boy yesterday showed me a drawer full of his most cherished playthings. He was keeping them, he said, so as to have a lot when he should be grown up, for he had noticed that his parents had now no toys to play with: he supposed they had broken all theirs in their childhood, and, while pitying them, he resolved not to be caught in that sad plight! How much we resemble this little fellow: we think we can never dispense with

the baubles of the mind. When we slip away from all these involved ideas, these ingenious mechanisms, these traps which Nature sets to detain unripe souls from her secrets; when we stride out under the heavens resolved to Be, we find that Truth is not divided off into town lots, but is everywhere: it is not purchasable stock held by limited companies, but is to be had freely for the seeking. Since to seek it is to acknowledge that we have not found it yet, we must be presently in error upon some points, and most probably those to which our tastes or prejudices have most strongly attached themselves, because their ferment disturbs the nature and clouds that inner mirror which alone can reflect Truth, but to whose glass we so often hold up Error. We have forgotten that Truth which once we knew. It is ourselves; it is within us. Our elder brothers have reminded us of our common birthright; they have given a portion of it back to us. They do not ask us to adopt it, but to adapt it. They proclaim our right to revive this knowledge. We have snatched the blazing beacon from their hands, and we will pass it on. Perhaps, in our turn, we may restore it to the East. The tasks of future cycles are not ours. This present moment we may read. We may see that only in our narrow purview does any distinction exist between us; we may see that we are inextricably interlinked. Our interests and our future are one and the same: our possessions we exchange; shall we not exchange hearts?

Though brothers, we play different parts in the universal scheme. Inheritors and future custodians, we cannot refuse to acknowledge the pioneers of Truth. If there be any reality in evolutionary law, this ancient race must have developed the rare blossoms of human perfection before our own. A mighty, though unseen, current of spiritual energy flows from them to us, and it is urged onward by higher spheres from which they receive it. Shall we cut ourselves off in thought from this sacred influx? Shall we like spendthrifts, cast our inheritance away and stand beggared before the just demands of races yet to be? Shall we not rather endeavor to fit ourselves to replenish that living tribute which Nature pays to the Eternal? All that comes to us being already our own in the Law, shall we not receive this seed with grateful souls and make it bear a thousandfold in the fields of the West. Ah! blot me out that word! There is neither East nor West; neither above nor below; neither distinction nor difference. There is only the Whole; we are part of its organic life, and there is none greater than we save *He who has no Name*.

JASPER NIEMAND, F.T.S.

## NOTES

1. {"Much Ado About Nothing," William Shakespeare. As found: "Comparisons are odious."}
2. {"The Variety of Human Wishes," Samuel Johnson. As found: "To point a moral, or adorn a tale."}
3. Mahâtmas — Great Souls.
4. {"To Helen," Edgar Allan Poe.}
5. See {*Yoga Aphorisms of*} *Patanjali*, Page 164.

## EXTRACTS FROM A CHILD'S LETTER.

UNSIGNED {PROBABLY JULIA KEIGHTLEY}

Mr. Editor, Uncle —— wants me to tell you what kind of a book I'd like the best to have you send us children, and so I'll just tell you the best I can.

First of all you see I like picture-books. I don't like books that haven't any pictures, do you? I like those pictures of Æ.'s,<sup>1</sup> they look so shiney and like sunshine, don't you think so? And Uncle —— has told me lots of things about what the sun does, and all about the fire. Fire is very nice, isn't it? Uncle —— and I have good times when nobody else is around about the fire. You see we have an open fire in our house, and Uncle —— puts out the light and then we amuse ourselves. We make houses and cities and faeries in the fire, and, oh, such wonderful things we see there! So tell us some fire stories and sun stories, I like them so much.

I'd like to know those children Æ. talks about. I wish they'd write me a letter — do you think they would? I wish you'd ask them. They could write to me, or you could write for them or get Æ. to write to me. Wouldn't that be fun — and then some day we'd meet each other and explain all about how nice it was.

Uncle —— tells me awfully nice stories about things he calls history. We always pretend we are going to Egypt when he is going to tell me a story of history about Egypt, then you see we understand all about it when we get there, and see just what was going on then, and this is so nice because you know it's about real people. Uncle —— says we used to live in Egypt a very long time ago, and that's the reason we can pretend to be there so easily when we tell stories about those places. Uncle —— and I sit in a big chair and go in our minds all over the world this way. I'd like this, too, in that book.

I would like to have a great many things explained, and I think you will tell us all about everything if you just write a book and take us children to all the places like Uncle —— and I go in our minds. We learn about the stars, and all about the faeries and caverns in the earth, and about all on top of the earth when we think this way, and that's the kind of a story book we'd like, Uncle —— and I; and we have such fun doing this that we'd like seeing the way other people do it, and go in our minds to places that they go to, and see what they see.

I like to draw pictures. Could you send us some pictures that we could draw and send to you, you could show us how to do them right, Uncle —— and I have such fun drawing pictures in the sand. We make wonderful houses and animals and birds in the sand. I don't know how to draw pictures very well, you know, but Uncle —— does them for me, and we call them ours.

Don't let anybody send us a book that hasn't any pictures, and that tells us to be good all the time, and talks about things we children don't want, and about how to bring us up. Give my love to everybody from Uncle —— and from me. Some day I'd like to play with you.

Your loving little friend.

### NOTE

1. {Æ. = or A. E., the initials under which author George William Russell (1867-1935) wrote. He took the pseudonym from a proofreader's query to him about his earlier pseudonym, "Æon."}

## THE FIRE-SELF.<sup>1</sup>

JASPER NIEMAND

I hung from the horns of the moon and the name of the Fire-Self was whispered to me.

(The Fire-Self, the Sage, the Instructor,<sup>2</sup> whose awakener is the memory of man.)

The name of the Fire-Self was whispered from afar; I dropped from the moon<sup>3</sup> the better to hear; dropped, though the moon grew big with desire to detain me.<sup>4</sup>

Into the darkness I fell;<sup>5</sup> icy the rushing breath that bore me to the mouth of the cavern deep and small, the abode whence the Fire-Self springs.”<sup>6</sup>

(Forth leaps the Fire-Glory,<sup>7</sup> the one, devouring the man who awaits It.)

That Self came not forth: by many a name I called It.

Called till the echoes were silent,<sup>8</sup> replete with sound and the rejection thereof.

Not a god whose name could conjure it up, the Fire-Self, whispered by the memory of Man.

Memory, when I questioned, upbraided me, saying:

“Is not Fire the devourer of all; of men, gods, powers, even of the worlds in space:

“How has It dealt with the moon, the mother-world from which we fell:

“Has not her light paled before It; how then callest thou upon It by a name:

“Are we not one, I, thou, and It: namest thou *That-Which-Is* by a sound?

“I alone am its forerunner. I, Thought, in the stillness reflect It. Hold forth to Itself Its own image, thyself; abandoner of gods and of names.”

(So hotly burned memory within me; memory, the servant of the flaming one.)

“Come,” I cried; “Come forth, *Myself*; I alone can receive and maintain Thee.”

Thought blazed up as a sudden torch, blazed long, discovering the darkness.

Thrice at the mouth of the cave I called; the third time that Self sprang upon me.

The Fire-Self blazed throughout my being: the man lay in dust and ashes.

In vain the moon poured her chill rays upon his body; the Fire-Self licked them up as it ran: a new man leaped from the scintillant river.

A man without form, without name; a fiery spark in the blazing ocean. In effulgent brightness They walked the skies together. They looked upon the Unutterable.

Said the Flame to the spark: “Let us forth into the Beyond.” They knew the omnipotent Darkness; together They became one with That. Together they issued forth from That; the Fire and the Spark as one Self, calmed and quenched with Knowledge.

At the mouth of the cave They parted. (They who can never be dissevered. They who can never be dissociated. Rulers in two worlds are They, each in his own, linked by a tense and living cord of Thought, the cord silvered<sup>9</sup> by the conquered moon, the gift giver.)

“Ere They parted, the Fire restored to the man-spark his form: man returned to the Fire-Self a part of Its Knowledge.

“Give me,” I cried, “Thy chief secret at parting; let it go with me into the land without substance, where form is the only wisdom.”

It fled, but I fled after; I laid my soul against Its fiery vesture.

“Unto me be it given to know Thee as Thou art. Give me Thy name that I may call Thee again; in Thee is my only real Life; a god<sup>10</sup> am I, now I know It.”

The Fire-Self upreared, a gigantic pillar: the Devourer of worlds rose before me.<sup>11</sup> The Flame found a voice that was soundless,<sup>12</sup> mightier than the uproar of waters.

“If thou wouldst be Self of Myself, answer me this,” said that voice.

“When is the Fire-Self greater than great? Speak aright and abide with Me forever.”

“It is greatest when It leads Its sparks forth into the Silence and becomes the One Wisdom,” I answered.

The Fire-Self receded, thrusting me forth as spent lava is spued from the volcano.

“Greatest am I” — spake the Glory, remonstrant, “when Man, the spark struck from myself, spends my Wisdom in the service of his fellows.”

“Better is it,” said the Fire-Self, “to give the heart knowledge to the hungry and the thirsty, than to over-run with Me the azure fields of Light.” When thou ridest thus, man art thou no more: That thou art from Which the heart of man set forth.

“But when thou bringest back the Memory thereof, when thou spendest that Life for thy fellows, That thou art to which I shall return; thou art thyself the goal called ‘Great Compassion.’ to reach that goal I spend myself upon the worlds in space. Great is Wisdom, but greater is the use thereof. Be thou my outrunner; attain that Consciousness and the use thereof for Me. Call upon me then and I obey thee: My doors open only when the heart of man beats against them, calling in the name of its fellow man.”

JASPER NIEMAND.

## NOTES

1. See *Voice of the Silence*, {H. P. Blavatsky,} page 76, notes 23-24.

2. Sometimes called “the *Presence*” by occultists. “For when the *Presence* is upon him, he knows more than others suspect or divine.” — (Unpublished MSS. through H.P.B.)

3. “... destroy thy lunar body...” — (*Voice of the Silence*, p. 11.)

4. “Desire nothing.” — (*Voice of the Silence*, pp. 13-14.)

5. “... the twilight that precedes the valley of true light...” — (*Voice*, p. 4).

6. See 1 Kings ch. 19, v. 11-13, where “the Lord” was not in the rushing whirlwind, or in the earthquake or the fire, but was in the still small voice.” — Compare throughout this article with the *Voice of the Silence*, pp. 9, 11, 19, and on the One Master. Also *Upanishads*, “... the Ancient within who is difficult to see .... hidden in the cave...” “... the Self ... smaller than small, greater than great, hidden in the *heart* of the creature.” “The way lies through the heart.”

7. Compare Ezekiel chap. 43; v. 2-6.

8. *Voice of the Silence*, {H. P. Blavatsky,} p. 10. The sounds “die and are heard no more.”

9. “Or ever the silver cord be loosed or the golden bowl be broken.” — Ecclesiastes ch. 12, v. 6. Occultists understand “the *golden bowl*” (the “cup”) in an especial sense. The “conquered” astral — a higher body of astral (starry) substance. See also “Soma juice on Mount Meru.”

10. “... before the mystic power can make a god of thee...” — (*Voice*, p. 12.)

11. “The Self of Matter and the SELF of Spirit can never meet.” — (*Voice*, p. 12.) Hence the worlds of form disappear.

12. The Voice of the Silence; the heart consciousness.

## “THE FIRST STONE.”

JULIA W. L. KEIGHTLEY

*He lifted up himself and said unto them;*

*‘He that is without sin among you, let him first cast a stone at her.’*

— St. John Ch. viii, v.7.

In all diviner history there is no incident which comes nearer to the heart of the sinner than this one.

Comes it as close to the heart of the “good man?” I think not. The “good” (self-styled) have often praised it in my hearing, and upright minds have called it “touching” that Jesus should have stooped thus to the sinner; yet it would seem that the incident has not come so near, has not laid a touch so tender upon the heart that the virtuous have cried out: I, even I, Lord, am the greater sinner in that I exalt myself; forgive thou *me!*

When we refrain from casting stones, how often do we not invest ourselves with merit, in that we refrained? How often in the solitude of the soul, has it come to us to consider that first stone and the right to cast it?

Who, by Divine Law, possesses that right? Only the sinless; that is to say, only he who is made perfect through Compassion: he who will never use that right because his very nature forbids it, he alone may use it. If the Christ-Light judge, the judgment is true, yet it adds: “Ye judge after the flesh; I judge no man.” While the sins of the flesh, the body, alone are sins to our generations, the Christ demands absolute spotlessness of no man: it is not written; he that hath *never* sinned, let him cast the first stone, but on the contrary, the divine permission is given to him who is now without sin. Matchless Compassion, which having passed on through a universe of sin and sorrow to perfection, refrains from casting the cruel stones of upbraiding, anger and scorn at the sinner, because — what is the reason? Because to do so were to forfeit Compassion’s self, the very crown and forefront of perfected Being.

And we, casters of stones; what of us? What of our right, whether exercised or foregone with self-applause? Where do we stand? We stand in the shadows amidst which a faint reflected light pales and wanes, and the deepest of these shadows impinging thickly upon the light is that poisoned shade cast by our self-esteem.

Yes, we esteem ourselves. We take up the balance, saying: Of course I am not perfect. I have done wrong. Even often, I may have done wrong (evil is too strong a word). Thou, Lord, knowest my peculiar difficulties. Here I fell perhaps; but there I stood; thou knowest. On the whole the record is not altogether bad. But I sinned not as this one did; so far as that other fell, I fell not.

And the Lords of Compassion look down; they grieve for that man whose heart has never whispered: *I fall with every sin my brothers sin.*

They know, the sinless Lords, that until a man has become the just man made perfect, he continually shares in the sinning of the whole world. Not as a sentiment. As a fact. A hard, unrelenting fact; the stone Fate casts at us who put it into Fate’s hand. These sins which touch our home, our family, our nation, our era; which defile Life for us all; how come we into contact with these effects if we were not sharers of the

remote causes? Did we not assist in setting the causes into motion, we who are now sufferers from their repetition in other forms? This must be true, if justice and law reign, otherwise we are the victims of chances blinder than ourselves.

Consider that if one half of us were indeed sinless, the other half would cease from sinning under the impulsion of those spiritual potencies of which perfected men are the generators and distributors. The erring ones would be wrapped in an atmosphere so benignant that they, peace enfolded, would cease to sin. Each one of us, sinners all, has that atmosphere within his reach. Yet many of us prefer to reach for the stone instead. Pitiful spectacle! Man, self-weighed, and self-excused; Man with all the sins of ages passed in Matter thickly encrusted on his sphere; Man, confining his gaze to the limits of to-day shocked at the sin of another, a sin, perhaps, to which he felt no urgent tempting (or has he overcome it and hardened in the pride of Victory?); Man, the disinherited, adjudges pardon to himself and a stone to his fellow sufferer. At the rebuke of the Christ, this man that each one of us is, turns not to the sinner to lift and aid the erring one; no, we go out, forgetting that in turning from the sinner we have turned from the Christ-Light also. But these two are left together.

Two poles of Being. And the one has instant power to purify and uplift the other.

If in the parable the sinful woman typifies the passive, inactive, material part of us, are we not again brought face to face with the saying: "Inaction in a deed of mercy becomes an action in a deadly sin?"<sup>1</sup>

Before we take the stone in our hands, or use aught which that stone represents, were it not wise; were it not according to our beloved repute for fair dealing; were it not eminently respectable and conformable to all the marks of the beast of Self-Esteem that we examine our own position for any possible weak point in it? Weak points have a way of revealing themselves under the touch of Time; were it not well to anticipate that ruthless hand and the jeers of the adversary, and, discoverers of our own feebleness, to become, perchance, our own saviours?

The weakness of our position in regard to condemnation of others would appear to come primarily from an erroneous conception of Time. To-day I stand for Virtue; thou for Sin. In this view, one life is all.

Notwithstanding that view, when the Lords of Compassion look down upon the soul of a man, they see the long series of lives which blossomed from that soul according to its will and its desires; a living chain, link upon link, each link intertwined and every link a life. To us, this present life stands as a separate thing, cut off from the Great Life, a solitary sub-division of Time, and in it we are virtuous (fairly so) or sinning (not too deeply for our own pardon); not sinning, at least, by any of the sins especially condemned by our own era. But to those heavenly Lords this life is a to-day in which sin's energy may be momentarily exhausted in us, while yesterday and other days, lives in the long human life-period, may be full of sin. He whom we judge to-day for this life's sin, may have been virtuous in lives where we herded with the foulest swarms of matter and our self-complacency with its smooth face portends a degrading return to that materiality incarnate if we destroy it not.

There is ground for reflection in the fact that the only class Jesus persistently condemned were those proud pharisees, hypocrites, those who thanked God that they were not as other men were; and take it as history, or take it as parable, this points to a stable truth in one's nature. When Christ judged, his judgment was true, "for I am not alone [in it?], but I and the Father that sent me."<sup>2</sup> Not a mystical or spiritual thinker ever lived who did not insist upon the occult fact that meekness opens the doors of the kingdom; that pride and the Christ-Light are never found together. If we look ever so briefly into things unseen but might we find that this must be so, that the forcible compression, the hardening of Thought and Thought-ether around an image of our

own greatness must prevent the passage of forces more divine. The very convolutions of the brain are altered and refuse passage to “the fires” — and so the Light and the “Father” are shut out. Wretched men, imprisoned thus from the Great Vibration!

Ah, yes! I have heard of a convict who escaped; he amended and hid his life. He attained to wealth, repute and was conspicuous for his virtue. Also for a “healthy” dislike of all “morbid sentiment in dealing with the criminal classes. Hard horse sense is what they need; they made their bed, let them lie on it.” At his death he was found out and men wondered, and condemned this specialized hatred; you and I perhaps among them; you and I who, sinning not this life (perhaps), condemn those who are now exhausting the lower energies we earlier worked out and must again work out: let us pray that the strongest tide of that future retributive hour may not be our present self-acceptance.

I believe that in the sight of the Lords of Mercy we all wear much the same likeness.

If a man believes that we reap what we sow, can he cast the stone? Knows he not that it will rebound upon his own life course, deadlier for the deadly intent with which he cast it?

If a man believes in re-incarnation, dare he cast the stone? Oh! by all the sins of the long, long past, No! By those sins which have brought us where we stand to-day, ignorant, limited, fettered, diseased in body and mind; slaves to the outer senses, prisoners, from the interior senses, orphaned of the Light; by our abject condition to-day, No! Poor fools, poor sport of Destiny; shall we lift our feeble hands for the first stone? If we had the right to cast it; if we had lifted ourselves from the mud where we stand — and it was our duty to have done that — then we would now be able to stand alone with the sinner, uplifting him with a wise compassion. We prefer instead to go out from the Christ.

Little children, little children; look for the Light and cease groping for stones. By that Light, I believe that a great sinner may oftentimes be one in whom the human soul has entered into labor pangs of the new birth! Yes; I believe that sin may be the last fermentation of the human nature mightily working toward clarification and that he whom I condemn may be about to drink the new wine of the Kingdom. There are those to whom the Christ has descended even while men stoned them for “ascertained facts.”

And do we say that the Divine uses only pure vehicles? Yet is Spirit invariably linked to matter, atom for atom, in the manifested worlds, and in that does its eternal work. We forgot that the Divine sees not as we see them, our poor fractions of separated Time, but hears the ever-sounding Now. We forgot — did we not know it? — that *I am holier than thou* is written on the inner side of the gates of hell where self is the gate-keeper. We say, in this forgetfulness, that our Elder Brothers, the perfected ones, would not use such a man, would not do thus and so, implying that we know the whole of divine Law and have shared the counsel of Perfection. And then, last and blindest folly, we say that if the Masters would do such a thing as this or that, we, even we, would turn from them. Be it so. We do turn from them. Often. Yet they wait. Ages long is their patient waiting.

One would suppose it inconceivable to all but devils and maniacs that we, who know absolutely nothing of the most ordinary facts in Nature, and the Soul, should first admit the possibility of wise and perfect Beings and then expect them to judge by our small code and blinded vision. Yet we do not find it so difficult to believe that they might use *us* as agents, or cover *us* with pardon. If any one amongst us or apart from us manifest the binding power and harmony of the Over-Soul, we have got to admit that It judges not as we judge but descends where it lists.

These thoughts are not apologies for sin; not apologies for any man or woman or agency of the Divine Breath. Those who with me believe that we have some forgotten share in every sin of which we hear, will understand this. As Life liveth! I believe that the condemned are so far purer than their self-instituted judges, that the Light, the Searcher of hearts, alone can enter into understanding of them. Our self-purification is futile, It alone purifies.

In all this is naught against civic law and order. It adjures us all alike to refrain from the interior mental attitude of condemnation — even of ourselves. It would but light a taper in the night, that we may avoid the stones we have cast, the abysses these have dug, the barriers builded of them, shutting us from the living Day. Thinking of these, my heart, refrain from the first stone. Draw apart from the turmoil, the fever and the pain. See the great Self in all, and, mingling with its harmonies, see that all tend towards that Self by paths as diverse as the minds of men, but tending to, deriving from, a single point; THE HEART. And, on that Heart reposing, find it to be — thine own!

JULIA W. L. KEIGHTLEY

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Before man, the lowest immortal, can find the true Master, he must lose Him; that loss is pure gain. To lose Him thus, is to find Him indeed.

This should be known: the disciple who finds Him on the plane of the senses has objectivized his Karma: he loses the Master after a higher fashion.

When he speaks through the soul, the ignorant disciple says, “it is I myself;” he rejoices to be so wise.

Know that there is only the ONE SELF, THE MASTER, and lose thyself also to find Him who is never found until He has been lost.

When He is lost to every sense then the One Flame arises, pure as before the beginnings of worlds.

This thou shalt never know: thou art IT.<sup>3</sup>

## NOTES

1. {*The Voice of the Silence*, H. P. Blavatsky, p. 31.}

2. {John 8:16.}

3. {These paragraphs are not in *The Path* article, but *are* in the book following the chapter.}

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*The Path* – January 1890, Vol. 4, pp. 301-305.

*The Wonder-Light, and Other Tales* – 1890, pp. 11-18.

## FOHAT’S PLAYGROUND.<sup>1</sup>

J. CAMPBELL VER PLANCK

(A CHILD’S STORY.)

Little Carlo stood alone in the empty nursery. It was twilight of the last day of the year, and stars came leaping one by one into the cold skies. Carlo watched them, a small dark figure outlined by the fading firelight, his black kilts and blouse making him look

thin and pale. Over his whole dainty person, as he leaned, slight and lonely, against the window frame, there was that pathetic and indefinable look which every woman knows to be that of a motherless child.<sup>2</sup> It overshadowed the little figure, giving it a gravity beyond its years, that smote the heart of "Uncle John," who at that moment entered the nursery. Carlo turned round with a shout of joy.

"Come here to the fire, you small elf, you," said his Uncle, folding him in what Carlo called "the bear's hug."

"No, no. You come to the window, Uncle, I want to show you something. Say, do you see that there black spot up there? Now you watch, and, I bet you, you'll see a star pop in there, and then move, and more too. All them others did it, just that way. Somebody must be a going round scratching places with a match, and making stars just that-a-way. What fun he must be having. Don't you think so, Uncle John?"

"I do indeed," said his Uncle, promptly.

Carlo gave a squeal of delight To find an Uncle, a grown-up person, who says you're right and goes on to tell you more about it,— a grown-up who makes all your fun seem real and true instead of saying "Hush," or telling you something so tiresome that you don't want to know, and cant *cant*, CANT understand — why; what a New Year's present an Uncle like that is to a boy! Carlo adored his Uncle John; his favorite playfellow, his best friend. He felt that a new and delightful game or story was coming. He jumped on his Uncle, hung round his waist, wrapped his small legs round the Uncle's strong ones, gave a squeeze and a bite of ecstatic affection, squealed again, dropped to the floor, put his small thumbs in his small blouse pockets, set his chubby legs well apart, and then, in this manly attitude, which was as like his Uncle's as he could make it, he tilted his curly head back and asked:

"Well then Siree Bob, who is he?"

His Uncle smiled. A slow smile, just to tease him. Carlo stamped with impatience and butted his Uncle with his head. This was a free mason's sign. It meant that Carlo wanted to be taken up into those broad arms, but was so big now, he was ashamed to say so. Uncle John lifted the little form, cradled the sunny head upon his shoulder, with a suppressed sigh for the sweet young mother and sister whose soft breast would never know the touch of the beloved body of her child. The sigh was too low for Carlo to catch it. He wriggled joyfully, and again asked:

"Who is it lights them stars?"

"It is Fohat," said Uncle John, impressively.

"Fo-hat," repeated Carlo, pleased with the name. "Who's he?"

"Fohat, my boy, is one of the Great Ones."

Carlo already knew some of his Uncle John's "Great Ones," or Great Powers. He called them "those big fellows," himself. They were his giants and his fairies. He chuckled now at the idea of hearing about another.

"Is he a very big one?" he asked.

"Fohat," said Uncle John, "is one of the greatest of all the Sons of Light, and the heavens are his playground."

"What does he do in 'em, say?" cried Carlo in excitement "Tell us about him, quick."

"The heavens, you see, Carlo, are full of stars, and the worlds are full of atoms. Atoms are tiny sparks that only the Great Ones can see; they shine and they live. But where do the stars and the atoms get their life? From Fohat. He touches them, just as you said; he touches them with his flashing diamond spear; a spark leaps from it to them, and that sets them on fire, they burn and live. All the little atoms are scattered through the fields of the sky at the world's daybreak; there they are, soft and milky, white and sleeping, all huddled together like little chicks under the wings of the mother

hen. The mother hen of the atoms is the Darkness. Then comes great Fohat, winding along like a serpent, hissing as he glides. He comes upon those lazy little atoms, he pours cold light upon them; they jump up and scatter; they run through the sky. He scatters himself and runs after them in many waves of light; he catches up with them; he blows upon them till they are cold and shivering; this hardens them and they shine. When they shine they are glad, they laugh. All at once, from idle little atoms they become stars, they become souls. Fohat has done it for them. When they begin to shine and sparkle, then they begin to understand. They love Fohat; they move along in a starry dance and sing a song that praises him."

"Fohat likes that, I bet you, *I bet you*," said Carlo in his funny way. "But, Uncle, what is that thing you said? What is a soul?"

"A soul is the spark you feel burning in your heart. Don't you feel it right there?" and the Uncle laid his hand on the boy's heart.

Carlo thought a minute. Yes, he felt it. It was a warm spot down in the place where he felt things. When he felt good or when he felt bad, that was where he felt it. He had another name for it, a name most children give it. "That's my Thinker, Uncle John," he said gravely.

"I know; and that's your soul. I have one too."

"And has Fohat got one?"

"Fohat has the biggest spark of all," his Uncle answered. "He has to have, for he has so much work to do."

"What's he do?"

"Oh! He has so many games up in his playground. He can change himself into ever so many things. Sometimes he puts on a cap of fire and wings of light, and acts as herald to the sunbeams; he leads their blazing march and sings songs of the sun; his songs shine, they are as radiant as the sun and moon. When clouds meet with a loud thunder-call in heaven and lightnings spring out, it is Fohat who calls and drives them on; they sweat, and rain falls on the dry earth. Then he loves to make things. He takes some star dust and makes a daisy; then he makes a big world, or a sun, all on the same pattern. When he is tired of that he becomes the great Propellor, and merrily, merrily, he pushes the worlds along."

"He must be awful busy. Don't he never get tired?"

"Never. Fohat can't get tired. You know I told you the Great Ones never get tired, because they haven't got any bodies like ours to get tired. You know that little spark in your heart don't get tired, but it beats right along night and day. The Great Ones are great splendid sparks like that, and they can think too. Besides, how could Fohat get tired, when he is Motion itself?"

"What's that? What's Motion?" said Carlo.

"Motion? Well; when birds fly, or when you run through the air, that's motion."

"Oh! I know that. It goes fast, fast, and wind blows on your face."

"Well; motion is not the bird. It is not Carlo. It is not the wind that blows on you. It is that going-fast; it is the fast-fast's own self," said Uncle John, gazing into Carlo's eyes, to see if the little fellow would understand.

"Going-fast its own self," repeated Carlo. *I fink* I know what you mean. *I fink* I don't *understand* it, Uncle John, but I can *feel* it. Will that do?"

"That will do," said his Uncle, delighted. "I often feel things when I don't understand them. My Thinker feels them. Well, then; when you go fast, fast, fast —"

"Awful fast," interrupted Carlo.

"Then it gets hot, it gets hotter, it bursts into fire, on your face, or like the car axles last summer —"

“Oh! I know, or like when you rubbed them sticks together in camp and the fast-fast rub made warm air (I feelled it), and then smoke, and a fire jumped out.”

“Exactly.” His Uncle, pleased, gave him a hug. “Great and fast going, as big as the world, then fire and light that fills the skies; all that is Fohat.”

“But what’s he do Sundays? Does he have to sit still then?”

“He does just what he does on other days, for to him every day is a Sunday, a day of the sun. And so it ought to be with us too. The great eye of the sun sees us every day; don’t let it see us doing unkind things. At night the moon and the stars keep watch. Let them see our heart spark burning bright and clear, not cloudy with dark smoke made by unkind acts or thoughts. If we are unkind, our heart sparks can’t help to play Fohat’s favorite game.”

“What’s that, Uncle?”

“At dawn, Fohat calls the Sons of Light together. He says that they must bind all the stars and worlds together with diamond threads. Along every thread blow a soft breath of love and a little note of music; that will make those threads strong. Then when the sons of the shadow come along, they cannot break the singing threads and scatter the worlds down into the dark. When this is done, Fohat says; ‘Now all the stars and worlds are harnessed together; come let us join all the atoms and all the heart sparks of men and women and children together with the shining threads, and we will drive them all.’ Then when everything in the whole world is singing and going together, the Sons of Light are glad, they say it is good.”

“But sp’ose something kicks up and rears, Uncle John?”

“If it is a star, they cut it loose, and you see it fall. If it is a man or a child, you see that he doesn’t go with all the rest. He is lonely; he is unhappy. His heart spark is lonely, and it thinks sad, unhappy things. He is cut loose from the shining rays of Fohat. But, my little Carlo, when Fohat comes to light the Christ-spark in a man’s heart with that diamond spear of his, then that man becomes one of the Great Ones, he is one of the Sons of Light.”

“Could Carlo be?” asked the smiling child.

His Uncle whispered: “Yes, he could, if he listens always when Fohat, Son of Light, speaks through the silent speaker in the heart. You do not hear its voice with your ears, but it speaks; it thinks, and you understand.”

“Sometimes it sings in there,” said the boy. “It sings when Carlo loves you.”

“May the Sweet Law bless your golden heart, my Darling. For it *always* sings when we love.”

That night when Carlo fell asleep he was smiling. He had fallen asleep listening to the song of Fohat.

J. CAMPBELL VER PLANCK.

## NOTES

1. Fohat — Cosmic Electricity and more. See *Secret Doctrine*.
2. See PATH for January, 1889.

## THE FORGING OF THE BLADES.

J.

### A VISION.

I was lying in my berth on the ——, at 3:45 one afternoon. The exact time is known to me because I had just timed ——'s departure from the room.

Parting the curtain of the cabin door, the Messenger known to me entered. He drew a portion of the air aside, as it were, and showed me a scene before which all surroundings disappeared. Whether I was in trance or asleep, I cannot say, more than he could who of old saw a vision, "whether in the body or out of the body God knoweth."<sup>1</sup>

In a dark defile of the mountains I stood, with three companions. One was the Messenger. The second I could not see, but by the unity of sensation I knew him to be —— . The third I could not see; he stood behind my right shoulder in the shadow. The Messenger pointed to a small rocky amphitheater below us; on its further side great mountains reared their colossal sides. In the center of this space was a rude forge and in front of it One in flowing Eastern robes, forging a blade, which now He heated and now He hammered upon a stone anvil. I held my breath and leaned forward, for I saw He was a Master of the Lodge. When the blade was done He turned and gazed at the Eastern horizon far away. Red lightnings sprang up and played there, and shadowy hands swiftly arose, one above the rest, all groping confusedly and in a weak blind manner. The Master cast the blade upon the bosom of the sky across the light, and the uppermost hand caught it. Then all sank together below the rim of the horizon.

Again the Master turned Him to the forge, again He made another blade, longer and broader than the other, and mightily He wrought. He lifted Himself from His work, tossing back His head, and looked at the Western sky. A white radiance, like an Aurora Borealis, streamed forth. In this light, very slowly, arose a hand and arm, the arm hairy and bare, the hand knotted and powerful, the fingers closed. The Master cast the blade across the sky: the great hand caught it, brandished it three times in triumph and salutation, then sank with the Aurora below the horizon, firmly gripping the blade. The Master smiled gravely. "An Atlantean hand," He said, and bent again to the forge.

But this time the work was harder and the blade was curved like a crescent moon, two edged and slender. He leaned upon it as He hammered, and it broke. He essayed its elasticity and it cut His hand. His blood fell upon it, sweat stood upon His brow; the blade resisted like a living thing, but still He worked on. Again it shivered; a bit of steel flew up and wounded Him above the heart. At this, from the snow-covered crests of the mountains a bugle rang clearly, sounding the notes of a recall, a retreat. The Master listened. He thought for a moment. I said to the Messenger: "What is that?" He answered: "It is the trumpet of recall."

The Master cast off His outer robes and girded up the inner one. From the ground He took His staff, and traced some characters upon the anvil. Then, laying the blade upon the anvil, He passed over into the shadow of the mountains.

After a brief silence, a youth, pale and slender, came from behind some rocks, looking for some one. Finding the place empty, he ran to and fro for a little somewhat distractedly. But in a moment he saw the anvil and bent over it as one who tries to read a page. "What are those characters?" I asked the Messenger. He pointed his finger

towards the anvil. The characters started out in letters of Astral Light, and I read these words: "Perfect the Blade." The youth read them, too, for he took up the blade. I shivered to see him touch this sharp perversity, and to the Messenger I said: "The blade is broken. It is useless."

"Not so," he replied. "Is not the Master's life force in it? Is not His blood upon it? How can it be other than a living thing? And all that lives has use."

"But how can the pupil use what the Master has failed to use?"

"Speak less rashly. For the Master there is no failure. But what costs too much, what uses too much of His high energies may be abandoned by Him, and may yet be perfected as to lower planes and used upon these by the pupil who serves the Master's Lodge."

Already the youth had begun to revive the fire in the forge and thrust the blade in the flames. I felt an immense compassion for him, and exclaimed to the Messenger; "But without help he cannot perfect the blade."

The Messenger looked at me; his eye was cold and stern. "If you really think so, why do you not go and help him?"

At once I felt his meaning like a flame at my heart; without hesitation I moved down into the valley. We moved as one body, — and I; our unseen companion followed just behind us. We reached the forge. The youth, trying hard to revive the cold fires, looked over his shoulder at us. His sad face was the face of —. And surprised, I in turn looked backward to see what our companion thought of this, and started again; for the unseen one behind us was —, whose face reflected the sadness and pallor of the youth's, who stood beyond. Then we three moved together towards the forge and the damaged blade.....

I again saw the walls of the cabin about me and heard the booming and rush of the sea against the sides of the ship. Of time, as men count time, two minutes had passed away.

J.

## NOTE

1. {2 Corinthians 12:2.}

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*The Nationalist* — May 1889, Sixth Edition, Vol. 1, pp. 209-214.

## THE FUTURE OF NATIONALISM.<sup>1</sup>

J. CAMPBELL VER PLANCK

There is at all times in the world a Power, a mysterious Presence, which no man sees or touches, but which the thinker may discern; its influence is felt by every man and in its train men and institutions alike must follow or be stricken to the dust. A power above all human power,— it is the aggregate of these. It is made up of our life-tendencies bound together by evolutionary law; and, while individuals appear to differ greatly, their aims are blended into one homogeneous whole which we call "the Spirit of the Times." It is the invisible mold into which the centuries are cast. So mighty is the sway of this unseen agency that nothing passes current without its permission; it is the touchstone of all success.

Thus, whenever a new movement or reform claims public attention, there is this test which we formulate for it; we know that its staying power, its probable usefulness,

will be in precise ratio with its nearness, its relation to the Spirit of the Times. That relation, its vitality or its remoteness, determines the life, or what we commonly term the practical success of the movement. A reform, not integrally connected with the dominant tendency of the force expressed in the era of its manifestation, can have no practical result in that era; like the crop of weeds, a mere exuberant foliation of force, it withers in the fierce friction of Life before the time of Harvest.

It is evident that a movement may express the ruling Spirit of the Times, as engendered by man, and yet come too late, a last wave of a turning tide. Again, while based upon a true, because universal, principle, a reform may be too far in advance of the main impulse of Thought to have an immediate outcome. It then appears still-born, but in reality bears the winged seed of the future. In either of these cases, whether of waning or of gathering momentum, the movement is easily seen to be remote from the prevalent average of Thought, and is not mistaken for a normal manifestation of the Spirit of the Age. Mighty as this Goliath is, it has its David. It yields to a Power transcendent which is the cosmic field wherein all forces interchange. This multiform power *per se* we call Energy. It is the first fact with which we have to deal in our conception of the universe. No matter what the plane of its manifestation, the law of its nature is always the same. The ever-shifting forces declare it as flames declare the hidden source of fire. This law is known to us as the correlation of force; the basic principle of transformation of energy which holds good in all regions so far observed; in the ethical as well as in the mechanical, while analogy and reason affirm it of the spiritual. In the intellectual world the successive expressions of mental energy define various periods of Thought, and each becomes in turn the dominant Spirit of its era.

It seems but yesterday that a small seed was silently cast into our midst; one modest seed of thousands sown that year, a living germ, called *Looking Backward*.<sup>2</sup> With amazing speed it took root, sprouted into the lusty shoot of Nationalism, and — a free bloomer — has a blossom in almost every large city, with a tendril or two flung across the ocean. How timely must have been the hour of sowing; how favorable the climate and the soil; how natural that the thinker should proceed to calculate the influences of this radiant nativity! But how does Nationalism stand with the Spirit of the Times? To answer this question we must first ascertain the direction in which that Spirit moves.

Throughout the western world we find, in all departments, a new tendency towards co-operative union. In the finer arts, in Painting, in Sculpture, in Literature, in the Drama, this tendency for union in production is frequently manifest. An extreme form of it is seen in monopolies. A limited and arbitrary working of it is evident in trades-unions. The effort of science is towards evolution. The dream of religion is unity. Diplomacy reaches towards arbitration; international law towards expansion; commerce towards freer trade and a binding, universal language which 200,000 merchants in various countries have already adopted in three years after its invention. Everywhere there is a tendency to unify, to simplify, to minimize friction. In all industrial departments an effort to lop off those superfluous devices by which the stream of exchange is tapped and arrested in order that middlemen and industrial parasites may absorb undue profits. Through co-operation many branches of labor now begin to recognize their force. Such enterprises are successfully conducted in France, Italy, England, the United States, and the Sinaloa Colony, Mexico. This movement is the Spirit of our industrial era. It is the instinctive effort of Labor to obey the *lex parsimonial* everywhere written in Nature, to follow a line of maximum results with a minimum expenditure of capital and force. "*Energy; what it is, and how to save it!*" History will write this down as the motto and working problem of our time.

Now, although this tendency has by no means acquired full momentum, its steady influx, everywhere evident, proves that it lies along the next curve of progress. If we take the scientific point of view, we are confronted with the great re-discovery

before alluded to, viz., the Conservation of Force. Here again the subject of Energy, its behavior and correlations, holds the field. Passing to the devotional aspect of Life we find a widespread dissatisfaction with forms and creeds as such, and a pronounced attempt to investigate, on the one hand, the spirit of religions, as shown by the sending of an eminent Divine as an ambassador (and not as a missionary!) to confer with an oriental church; and, on the other hand, to investigate the inner or psychic nature of man through psychic and mental phenomena, thus assuming Soul to be a higher form of Energy. Look where we will, this attempt to understand forces, to formulate the Energy within men and things, is gaining ground; everywhere the leaven works.

To those who accept this view, the inherent vitality of the Nationalistic movement is clear. The Brotherhood of Humanity is its basic principle; the Nationalization of Industry its material work. If this platform is impartially adhered to, Nationalism must succeed. The Brotherhood of Humanity is larger than Nationalism; it spreads, as a base should spread, far beyond the limits of that word. It implies a common source; soul-identity, or the expansion of One Spiritual Energy into millions of human beings, the omnipresence of one creative Power; and it represents the subjective action of Energy. The Nationalization of Industry has reference to the economic distribution and free development of industrial forces; it represents the objective action of Energy. In the union of these comprehensive phases we find, at the root of Nationalism, the presage of its great future based upon the primary attribute of Energy, just as the wrongs which Nationalism comes to right are based upon a misapprehension and misapplication of this primary attribute. To give it a name we may call it Expansion; it is the mobile substratum in which all cosmic manifestations arise. The mode or method of this attribute is through correlation, or multiplication and distribution. While its quantity is constant, its qualifying nature is always in flux or change, both upon the subjective side of Being, and upon the objective side patterned after the prior manifestation. This is the natural order. The social and industrial methods, which have hitherto obtained, defy it. Nowhere is the departure from natural law more painfully evident than in the life of the laborer of today.

Taking the life of a single man, we may see behind or within him the soul or eternal spark of which he is the manifestation. Through him, the quantum of force which represents his life-sum may be seen working through various correlates to an end, — call it experience, or progressive evolution, whether of the single man or of humanity. The primal Energy is now converted into muscular forces, appears again as mental force in intellectual processes, as psychic energy in his devotional nature, and, like the returning arc uniting earth and heaven, stoops from the heights of personal aspiration to the daily level of human endeavor. For even he who has no hope in his toil beyond the bare support of life works better, when other lives depend upon his own. The noblest chord of Bellamy's symphony is struck in the following sentences: "By what title does the individual claim his particular share?" "What is the basis of allotment?" "His title," replied Dr. Leete, "is his humanity. The basis of his claim is that he is a man."

These brief words contain the germinal statement of all that the present article seeks to prove. They proclaim the identity of Energy. "He is a man," subject to the laws governing human life, the laws of energetic expression in Life. Those laws demand the further expansion, the correlation and transmutation of the life forces. They demand — once energy has its spiritual expression in man — psychic, mental and physical action; the free play of force back and forth over this range; the interchange and action of every phase of power by which alone the expansion of the whole, through experience, is attained. But the present industrial system puts a stop to all this. It ignores the fact that when a man has put his full quantum of force into his work, he has given as much as any other man can or does give. If, in the nature of one, Energy

chiefly takes the form of physical force, while another transmutes it into mental force, that does not affect the fact that in both cases, Energy has been expended to the full amount available to the worker. Each one of us is a center of Energy, and upon the quality, rather than upon the gross quantity of force expended, does our usefulness to others, as well as our evolutionary progress depend. When any given center is in full activity, it can do no more. But it could do more; it could expand to higher correlates of force, it could rise nearer to the great Energetic Source, if its activities were not restricted to the physical plane by present industrial and social conditions. In giving to capital the enormous surplus called "unearned increment," while the wages of human physical force are restricted to a minimum, we attempt to reverse the nature of things. For, note it well, by these restrictions we compel a large body of men and women to confine themselves chiefly to the evolution of physical force. The long hours of labor leave them too weary for mental exercise of any kind. The higher emotions, affections and aspirations, cannot have free play in the uncultivated nature, in a physically exhausted body, in a brain closed to hope, a mind without a vista. The necessary reactions of nature take lower and grosser forms, and undue physical tension craves release in passionial excess, or in the stupor of drink rather than in normal repose. When the individual is strong enough and pure enough to resist these material traps, to what a waste of force is he not subjected in resisting what should not be there, in seeing the falls and sufferings of others, in living his barren, hard life, restricted, at the very best, in every broadening direction! The wage-rate is prohibitory, not of life, for men must live, while Energy *will*s expansion and tenaciously grasps objective life, but of all that real interest in work which constitutes its chief value to the race. The man whose hope is in his work, who sees in it the means whereby he and his may expand their lives, that man looks upon his work as himself, he idealizes it, studies to improve it, to carry it up through higher forms and larger methods beneficial to the world, methods which liberate more energy. Anything less than this stultifies Industry and the worker, institutes a cut-throat competition and sets a barrier to human achievement. Sometimes the mettled activities overleap this, and then we have the monstrous spectacle of monopolies inciting inventors and buying inventions in order to keep up prices by locking useful improvements away from the people. This non-productive production is a prostitution of force, belongs to a series abhorred by Nature, and will end by cursing Invention with sterility. Nor is the working-class the only one injured. The energetic law applies to every plane. Excessive action of one part of an organism causes hypertrophy of that part and atrophy of other organs, resulting in the hideous ferment and outbreak of disease. This is as true applied to masses of men as to the individual. Over-indulgence of one part of the social organism conduces to looseness and weakness of fiber in all.

Most children know what occurs when steam is shut up within a boiler, but society attempts to repress force, careless of the mutterings of the imprisoned giant whose unnatural coercion may make devils of good men, while every now and then the shock of some sharp explosion gives louder warning than the voice of the scientist, or the conclusion of the philosopher, and permits us to hang, or to jail, a few of the victims of our ignorant methods. Brotherhood is none the less admirable for having a verifiable and scientific basis in the nature of Energy, or Unity in Diversity, instead of a purely emotional cause. Freedom, not restriction, is the law of Life, freedom within the wide and ordered reaches of law. This rule we cannot reverse, but it is able to reverse, not our brief systems only, but the race itself, should that race be undermined by the repression of Energy. Elder civilizations have fallen before this law; it is free and we can be so, only as we copy it. All systems, whether of men or of worlds, are based upon the nature of Energy and must stand or fall by that. We may not revolutionize the material tendency that seeks to confine the activities of force. We may know that

the chief obstacle to Nationalism will be found in the personal passions of the human heart which oppose the equal distributions of force and greatly crave personal supremacy. For such desire there is no cure but a firm belief in Newton's first law of Motion, or Force, viz., "Action and reaction are equal and opposite in direction," or, as the Bible puts it: "As ye sow, so shall ye reap." Still, if we seek to do our whole duty, and to elevate our conceptions of that duty by relating it to the just and eternal laws, then the Brotherhood of Humanity may take on visible shape and Law will order the sublime end.

J. CAMPBELL VER PLANCK.

## NOTES

1. {This is one of two articles I found published after Julia's start with theosophy in 1886, outside of a strictly theosophical publication.

H.P.B. had this to say about *Looking Backward* and the Nationalist movement in *H. P. Blavatsky to the American Conventions*, Theosophical University Press, 1979, p. 29:

"... Happily new tendencies are also springing up, working to change the basis of men's daily lives from selfishness to altruism. The Nationalist Movement is an application of Theosophy.\* But remember, all of you, that if Nationalism is an application of Theosophy, it is the latter which must ever stand first in your sight. Theosophy is indeed the life, the indwelling spirit which makes every true reform a vital reality, for Theosophy is Universal Brotherhood, the very foundation as well as the keystone of all movements toward the amelioration of our condition.

"\*[In January 1888 Edward Bellamy published *Looking Backward, 2000-1887*, which envisioned a new order based on human brotherhood and the equality of all men, economically and socially. As a result, Nationalist Clubs were organized first at Boston, Mass., then across the country. These Clubs had the backing of theosophists, who saw in the Nationalist Movement a practical means to further their ideal of universal brotherhood. However, in 1890 when the {Nationalist} Movement linked itself with politics it lost the support of theosophists, and in a few years its momentum had dissipated. See *Edward Bellamy* by Arthur E. Morgan, 1948, pp. 260-75; see also *The Key to Theosophy* by H. P. Blavatsky, pp. 44-5. — K.V.M. {Kirby Van Mater}]"

And this is from *The Key to Theosophy*, pp. 44-45:

"THEO. In order to awaken brotherly feeling among nations we have to assist in the international exchange of useful arts and products, by advice, information, and cooperation with all worthy individuals and associations (provided, however, add the statutes, "that no benefit or percentage shall be taken by the Society or the 'Fellows' for its or their corporate services?"). For instance, to take a practical illustration. The organization of Society, depicted by Edward Bellamy, in his magnificent work "Looking Backwards," admirably represents the Theosophical idea of what should be the first great step towards the full realization of universal brotherhood. The state of things he depicts falls short of perfection, because selfishness still exists and operates in the hearts of men. But in the main, selfishness and individualism have been overcome by the feeling of solidarity and mutual brotherhood; and the scheme of life there

described reduces the causes tending to create and foster selfishness to a minimum.

“ENQ. Then as a Theosophist you will take part in an effort to realize such an ideal?

“THEO. Certainly; and we have proved it by action. Have not you heard of the Nationalist clubs and party which have sprung up in America since the publication of Bellamy’s book? They are now coming prominently to the front, and will do so more and more as time goes on. Well, these clubs and this party were started in the first instance by Theosophists. One of the first, the Nationalist Club of Boston, Mass., has Theosophists for President and Secretary,<sup>3</sup> and the majority of its executive{s} belong to the T.S. In the constitution of all their clubs, and of the party they are forming, the influence of Theosophy and of the Society is plain, for they all take as their basis, their first and fundamental principle, the Brotherhood of Humanity as taught by Theosophy. In their declaration of Principles they state:— “The principle of the Brotherhood of Humanity is one of the eternal truths that govern the world’s progress on lines which distinguish human nature from brute nature.” What can be more Theosophical than this? But it is not enough. What is also needed is to impress men with the idea that, if the root of mankind is *one*, then there must also be one truth which finds expression in all the various religions...”

A complete list of the Nationalist principles from the same volume as Julia’s article above is as follows:

#### DECLARATION OF PRINCIPLES.

The principle of the Brotherhood of Humanity is one of the eternal truths that govern the world’s progress on lines which distinguish human nature from brute nature.

The principle of competition is simply the application of the brutal law of the survival of the strongest and most cunning.

Therefore, so long as competition continues to be the ruling factor in our industrial system, the highest development of the individual cannot be reached, the loftiest aims of humanity cannot be realized.

No truth can avail unless practically applied. Therefore those who seek the welfare of man must endeavor to suppress the system founded on the brute principle of competition and put in its place another based on the nobler principle of association.

But in striving to apply this nobler and wiser principle to the complex conditions of modern life, we advocate no sudden or ill-considered changes; we make no war upon individuals; we do not censure those who have accumulated immense fortunes simply by carrying to a logical end the false principle on which business is now based.

The combinations, trusts and syndicates of which the people at present complain demonstrate the practicability of our basic principle of association. We merely seek to push this principle a little further and have all industries operated in the interest of all by the nation the people organized — the organic unity of the whole people.

The present industrial system proves itself wrong by the immense wrongs it produces: it proves itself absurd by the immense waste of energy and material which is admitted to be its concomitant.

Against this system we raise our protest: for the abolition of the slavery it has wrought and would perpetuate, we pledge our best efforts.}

2. {*Looking Backward, 2000-1887*, Edward Bellamy.}

3. {Arthur F. Devereux (1836-1906), who played a decisive organizing role in the “Nationalist Club” of Boston and was a contributor to *The Nationalist* magazine, was an older brother of Francis Bohun Devereux (February 14, 1849 – Unknown), who was the co-author of several of Julia’s plays. The publication of this article of Julia’s in *The Nationalist* indicates she must certainly have known all the Devereuxes, through the *Nationalist* or the theosophical life, or both. About half of the members in the original Boston Nationalist club were Theosophists.

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*The Irish Theosophist* – February 1897, Vol. 5, pp. 92-93.

## THE FUTURE OF THE T.S.

J.W.L. KEIGHTLEY

Since New Year Day the thought of the Future of the T.S. has been constantly present to my mind, and it has been reflected to me as well from my general correspondence. At least two Branches, one the Aryan of New York, read the chapter upon this subject from the *Key to Theosophy* at the New Year Vigil.

It would appear that the T.S. can only expand with our expansion. Numerical growth is not sufficient. There is no cohesive power in mere numbers. We must expand mentally, as well as through the exercise of the heart sympathy. I am no advocate of ever-ready tides of gush and emotionalism, or the unwise expenditure of energy in superfluous deeds and words. The truest love is the wisest love. The closest sympathy is that which divines the real needs of individuals or of nations, and which know how to help and how not to hinder the fulfilment of those needs. Failing the somewhat rare power to do that, it must at least be able to express itself vitally, to shed the unfolding and revealing ray upon hearts fast scaled to surrounding coldness.

Since so much depends upon our all taking a broader view, it would seem as if a time must come, and as if it were not far off, when Brotherhood would be the sole point of contact demanded by the T.S. As if those who would work for Brotherhood, in any and every way, and not alone, practically among the poor, would have an unquestioned welcome in our midst. Not that study should be neglected or intellect left to go to seed. These too are instruments of the soul. But to the mystic and the esotericist definite teachings would elsewhere be available if desired while the T.S. became, definitely and simply, a bond of Brotherhood, of charity, toleration, and harmonious interchange throughout the world. It would do an enormous moral work if it only taught men to agree to disagree in cordial good will. In the understanding — final and entire — of that single word — Brotherhood — the whole body of Truth is really contained. To help every man, woman, and child with whom we come in contact to think about it and to carry out *their* highest ideas of it, will really be to help them to broaden towards wider conceptions of its meaning, hence toward nobler living. The maintenance of this view in daily life would no doubt break down the fences and barriers which divide life off into separative compartments; differences of race, of creed, of station, and all the terribly insistent mental differences, would be merged in the general trend towards unity, that unity the endeavor to realize Brotherhood. It needs no more. To him who does that the universal doors are opened.

It were perhaps well to think and to meditate more upon the nations than we now do. The Soul has no nation. But that nation in which it incarnates at any given time must karmically affect the body and the mind. Mind being the present great field of contest, to understand the national mind, the national genius, is to have a clue to the unit minds forming the nation. With nations, as with individuals, the first great step is to understand one's self. Thus to turn the thought of each nation towards its own inherent genius, towards the fulfilment, along its own lines of its own highest destiny is a broad field of work. It can be done through the writers and thinkers of each country specifically, but generally through any member of its community. The nations are at present thinking of material power. Can we not awaken the thoughts of moral grandeur, of freedom, of toleration, of spiritual achievement in each? Each has its symbols of unity; each has some half-forgotten lore telling of a diviner state. We shall not fail in this direction if we are guided by that unfailing tact and cordial sympathy which are one aspect of Brotherhood. Let us not preach a doctrinal Brotherhood, nor dictate to them how to be brothers, but let us demonstrate that we feel the reality of the bond, and ask their assistance, on their own lines, in spreading that bond, for thus alone can we awaken national ideals and a national spirit, whose breath is Universal Brotherhood.

J.W.L. KEIGHTLEY.

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*The Path* – January 1896, Vol. 10, pp. 319-321.

## GENERAL PERTINENT OBSERVATIONS.

TWO OBSERVERS {ONE OF THE OBSERVERS WAS PROBABLY  
JULIA KEIGHTLEY}

Last month a mistake was passed by the proof-reader which we must correct. We were made to say that in America we had but little “presentation,” instead of “persecution.” The Society certainly has much presentation, and if the era of persecution ever existed, it has passed away. We are well presented, not only by ourselves, but when a hiatus occurs in that, the newspapers then suddenly begin again about us. The last occasion was the sudden uprising of a Mr. Newton, who was first treasurer of the T.S. He was a spiritualist, left us quite soon, and retained a paper he had no official right to. This was a pledge of secrecy, given because another person was then promising to show wonderful occult performances that never came off. The paper is signed by H.P.B. among others. All this being spread out at length in a great New York daily, attention was once more turned to the Theosophical movement. Every time anything appears in newspapers about the Society or Theosophy members ought, in our opinion, to take advantage of it for a reply by way of explanation.

The great prayer test with dear Colonel Bob Ingersoll<sup>1</sup> as the example, has been occupying the attention of the whole land during December. The Christian Endeavorers,<sup>2</sup> thousands strong, started the prayers and enlisted other people. They offered up multitudes of appeals to God to change the Colonel; but at last accounts he remains the good man he always was, and not converted. Of course the whole thing is ridiculous, but it once more emphasizes the assertion that the civilized world has not escaped from superstition. The massacres of Armenians in Turkish dominions, and the protection of missionaries, would seem to be better subjects for prayer than is Ingersoll. But those affairs in Asia require cannon, soldiers and war ships — prayers won't do. Meanwhile, as we have found in our travels, the people in the country

districts in America go on praying for rain or against it, as they may elect, and the rain-dispenser laughs in his sleeve. We met one minister who said he had almost blundered into prayer for rain that week, but fortunately happened to hear that one of his parishioners wanted to get in his crops first. So the rain-screw was not turned till later. There was no response. These numerous failures are always overlooked.

But there are weak and sensitive persons who can be affected, through the astral and mental planes, by the prayers of many others if directed at them. This is a practice condemned by the Old Testament, for it is a species of sorcery (so called). We have no right to try to impose our will and opinions on others against their wish. Even this prayer test has helped the T.S., as theosophical opinions were asked for by newspapers and published.

On our journeys we have found it to be true, as once was stated in the PATH, that no city in the country is unfit for Theosophy, or is too materialistic, or too full of some "ism" or other to allow of good work. Members often complain in that way. But they are wrong. When they form a branch they are full of enthusiasm, expecting to make a strong impression in the place. But they forget that this is not naturally possible. They also forget that there must be defections in their ranks, and be willing to have reactions. If the workers have patience and work on they will find at last the right result. Some of them think they must be orators, and not being so, they perceive no hope. Oratory is not indispensable. What they need is to have a clear, well defined and well thought out comprehension of as much Theosophy as they can grasp — and that will include all the important doctrines — so as to be able to give it out to others in a simple way. This would do more for the work than all the oratory in the world.

The unconsidered and hastily made proposition was brought before us of hiring some ex-minister to go about and preach Theosophy. This we would strenuously object to, regarding such a policy as pernicious, very hurtful to the movement. No man should be put to work for us who does not fulfil certain requirements. (a) Should be a proved member of the Society, who came in for the sake of Theosophy. (b) Must be ready to take what is called "pot luck," to have nothing whatever in the world, (c) Must be known to be earnest, zealous, devoted. (d) Should have been several years a member. (e) Must thoroughly know and believe in Theosophy, brotherhood, and the need for basing ethics on Theosophy. In fact, the objections to hiring ministers, or mere talkers, or new members, are so numerous as to be overwhelming. We at least hope that no branch will ever waste money in that way.

The desire to be at and about any of our headquarters, say in New York or Boston, Chicago or San Francisco, is probably a natural one. But it would seem that upon that desire should just as naturally follow self-questioning as to one's competency, what fitness one has, what acquirements we can offer, and what such headquarters ought to have. Yet we have met those who wanted to be taken by a T.S. headquarters without being able to offer a single thing in return; in fact, sometimes the candidate is lacking in elementary education. Some conversation resulted in discovering not only that the needful education for doing the best work was absent, but the notion was held that T.S. headquarters required only mediocre talent. What a monstrous ideal! The very best talent, the finest education, should be devoted to such centers. But no, these aspirants want to sit around, and by talking with working Theosophists imagine they are doing great things, while they feel an excitement which they mistake for work. Then they are not willing to do drudgery, such as the work of the offices really is. They would be editors and authors at a rush, occultists indeed. No tedious addressing of envelopes or slaving at lists for them. Oh, for more willing drudges and less captains!

TWO OBSERVERS.

## NOTES

1. {Robert G. Ingersoll (1833-1899), nicknamed “The Great Agnostic.”}
2. {United Society of Christian Endeavor, founded in 1881 by Francis Edward Clark. Members of the society pledged to try to make some useful contribution to the life of the church.}

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*The Path* – March 1889, Vol. 3, pp. 366-370.

## GET YOUR LUGGAGE READY.

J. CAMPBELL VER PLANCK

One night I seemed to see a great and populous country. It teemed with life and wealth, yet no sound, no motion arose from it. It was a petrified land. Rich harvests turned the earth to gold, but no reapers came forth. Fruits of the purple, the rose, and every splendid hue, weighted the orchard boughs, but not a hand was raised to pluck them. The flowers shone unseen; the dead air could not woo forth their perfume. The waters had no song; the birds, no flight; the clouds, no rain; the sun, no beams in that leaden atmosphere. The march of the seasons was arrested. Never was land more fertile, more beautiful. It needed but the heart and hand of man to continue its prosperity. High mountains, too, were there, where the gods abode, hovering so near to men that I cried aloud, to see these divine opportunities neglected or forgotten.

Pondering upon a sight so mournful, I saw that the inhabitants of this country had all a strange kind of mental atrophy which annulled all efforts, frustrated every activity. Surrounded by everything which could secure usefulness, happiness, and the fullest development of their natures, they did not know how to set about securing these ends. Their minds were under a spell. In an intellectual darkness, they were dimly conscious of their wretched condition, and called for someone to come and remove the torpor of their minds, to tell them how they might enter into this splendid Life and possess it. At times they did what work they must, then sank into quiescence again, while the glory of Life seemed to taunt and mock them. In truth it did not do this. These glorious opportunities were there to urge them on, but could not rouse them.

The anguish of this paralyzed and waiting multitude was so great, that I too began to share their pain and their expectancy as I looked on, and I called aloud anxiously, “Will no one come to help them?”

Some unseen person promptly answered me, “Helpers have already set out for this country, which is called ‘The Future.’ ” “Will they soon arrive?” I asked. My informant replied, “Look, and judge for yourself.”

At this I felt impelled to turn around, and saw great masses of clouds breaking open before me, making a rift through which I could look. The view was so misty that I understood, in some mystic way, that I was about to see into the Past. What I perceived was a long railway train starting on a journey to some very distant point. There was great confusion about it. Some of the travelers were leaning out of the slowly moving train, gesticulating towards huge piles of luggage left behind. Others were endeavoring to turn the air brakes. Some had reached the engineer, and were arguing briskly, urging him to stop the train or to go back. Many others slept, and by their feverish rest I could see that their thoughts were on the baggage vans. Meanwhile, back in the station, were travelers absorbed in checking and marking their luggage, or wandering about half dazed, trying to find their personal effects, and to keep them distinct from the rest. People were arriving, too, in a constant stream, belated by their

overladen coaches, and, in far homes, I saw others bustling hither and thither, packing and repacking. All of these were so absorbed that they did not know the hour was past, or that the train had set out for the land where they were all bound to go.

"Are these the helpers?" I asked. My unseen friend said that they were.

"But why do they not make haste when they are so sorely needed?"

"You see they are willing enough, but their luggage detains them."

"Could they not do with less, and arrange it more rapidly! or even discard much of it, which seems to consist of mere personal luxuries fostered by habit?"

"They could indeed, but this they do not understand."

"And, will no one reach that unfortunate country?" I exclaimed.

"Yes; the train will arrive there, but it will be detained. And many of the people in it are so harassed by their thoughts of their lost or strayed luggage, or so preoccupied in keeping it together, that they will not be able to set to work promptly on their arrival. Thus they will not resist the peculiar lethargy which prevails in that land, and they will swell the numbers of the unfortunates, who, like them, originally started out hoping to reach a happy Future."

"Are there, then, no persons of clear and unencumbered minds," I asked, "who can be of use to the rest?"

"Indeed there are, but they are comparatively few, and are swallowed up in that great crowd. There in the train you may see an occasional traveler who is tranquil, whose thought is fixed upon his errand. There are such also in the city, and they are putting forth all their strength. Who shall say whether they can do much? What is needed is that the great majority of men should try with one accord to think of The Future, to prepare to enlighten and free it. They cannot attain the great prizes here and now, but they can do something; they can prepare for it."

This person spoke so quietly that his even tones annoyed me. "And you," said I, "you appear to take all this suffering and possible disaster very coolly. To think that a land so fertile, one with such glorious, and even divine possibilities through its Humanity, should lie extinguished in darkness because of the delays of these travelers! It is enough to break any heart."

"I am not 'cool,' as you say, but I am calm. I am obliged to be, for I have seen this sight for many an age; I shall see it for many more. In all time the sad lesson repeats itself, and Time is one. What you have seen is what takes place age after age. The waiting races are always delayed by the impediments of those who start out to reinforce and to help them."

"And what luggage is this that they cherish so much as to let it stand between them and their highest impulses, their noblest endeavor? Why do they not cast it aside?"

"This luggage is needed by every traveler if he would not arrive in that distant country utterly helpless, to be himself a burden to the community. Know the truth, my friend. This luggage which every man and woman carries is *the mind*. They cannot cast it away. What they need to do is to set it in order; to cast all useless thoughts and energies, all personal mental habits aside; to concentrate and strengthen it; above all, to hold it in readiness to start on the journey to the Future, so that when they arrive they may at once begin, without loss of time, to redeem and lift that Age. Then the journey will be more swiftly made; then there will be no such long waits between stations, no obstructing of trains. I and my companions are set apart to endeavor to teach men this; we learned it through our own experience many cycles ago. And in your age as in ours, men are slow to comprehend; slower even, for in yours the darkness has settled down like a pall. Yet Hope is the very nature of Life itself, and hence, we hope."

He said no more to me then, and the vision came to an end. I saw how true was all that I had heard, and each day bears fresh witness to its truth.

The mind of man is a tremendous Force, capable of engendering many energies, of various grades, correlating and interacting. The highest of these act on every plane; the lower upon lower planes only, where they tend to beget obstructive consequences by, so to say, intensifying or thickening — condensing too — the one substance of which all things are made, into gross and material strata, which greatly impede the entrance of higher force to our plane, and isolate it and us by degrees.

What then determines the quality of a mental energy, so that it becomes of a “high” or “low” order? Its relation to the personal self-determines it. The free will of man has its point of departure in the mind. He can generate thoughts which, by concentration upon or relation to the self, tend to contract his sphere (in more senses than one), and to preserve his Being intact in the life of separateness. Or he can evolve thoughts which relate to the whole world; which flow out towards the Unity, and, by their action and interaction upon the highest forces, a part of which they are, tend to dissolve his personal life as such, to unite all his principles to their cosmic sources, and reveal the beauty, power, and wisdom of Being to his enraptured soul.

Very many of us can find but little work to do for Humanity, though work is here, pressing enough, tangible enough. But circumstances of iron control many, and these are Karma. What each one can do, however, is to purify the mind, and to develop in it such affinities, such tendencies and habits, as may be drawn up into the higher nature. These, then, will guide our soul’s course after death, leading the Ego to reincarnate there where it can at once begin the work for Humanity. The predominating love spun by our nature is like the stray end of the spider’s web, cast loose upon the air. It reaches across to some branch to which it instantly adheres, and upon it the Ego, the mysterious weaver of Life’s web, crosses the gulf we call Death, and finds each life in strict continuity with the preceding one.

These few thoughts cannot be better illustrated, or more fitly closed, than by an extract from a private letter written by H. P. Blavatsky:

“What is this about the soldier not being free? Of course no soldier can be free to move about his physical body wherever he likes. But what has the esoteric teaching to do with the *outward man*? A soldier may be stuck to his sentry-box like a barnacle to its ship, and the soldier’s Ego be free to go where it likes, and think what it likes best. ... No man is required to carry a burden heavier than he can bear, nor do more than it is possible for him to do. ... If one cannot, owing to circumstances or his position in life, become a full adept in this existence, let him prepare his mental luggage for the next, so as to be ready at the first call, when he is once more reborn. What one has to do before he pledges himself irretrievably, is to probe one’s nature to the bottom, for self-discipline is based on self-knowledge. It is said somewhere that self-discipline often leads one to a state of self-confidence which becomes vanity and pride in the long run. I say, fool is the man who says so. This may happen only when our motives are of a worldly character, or selfish. Otherwise, self-confidence is the first step to that kind of WILL which will make a mountain move.

To thine own self be true,  
And it must follow, as the night the day,  
Thou canst not then be false to any man.<sup>1</sup>

“The question is whether Polonius meant this for worldly wisdom, or for occult knowledge; and, by ‘own self,’ the *false* Ego (the terrestrial personality), or that spark in us which is but the reflection of the One Universal Ego.”

It appears, then, that our best course of action is to get our mental luggage ready, and especially to free it from the thought of self, or the “terrestrial personality” living in a dream of separation.

J. CAMPBELL VER PLANCK.

## NOTE

1. {*Hamlet*, William Shakespeare, Act 1, Scene 3.}

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*Lucifer* – December 1887, Vol. 2, pp. 288-291.

## THE GREAT QUEST. PILGRIM {PROBABLY JULIA VER PLANCK}

{1 of 2}

In many mortal forms I rashly sought  
The shadow of that idol of my thought.<sup>1</sup>  
— Shelley.

Après l'amour éteint si je vécus encore  
C'est pour la vérité, soif aussi qui dévore!<sup>2</sup>  
— Lamartine.

The loss of youth and love is the perpetual wail of the poets. A never-changing spring-time of life, where the sweet dreams of youth would be realized in the fruition of reciprocal love, such would be a heaven to them, and such *is* a heaven while it lasts. If we add to this the refined aesthetic taste that can delicately balance and appreciate to a nicety every joy of the senses, and the highly-developed intellect which can roam at will over the accumulated store of past ages of culture, what would there be left for poets to dream of? With heart, senses and mind worthily employed, and with the well-balanced nature that knows moderation alone can give continued bliss, could not man rest satisfied at last? What more could he desire?

It is useless to deny that life has very sweet gifts to give, though the number is limited of those who are capable of receiving them in their fulness. But even while these gifts are being enjoyed, it is felt that the horizon is bounded. With what questioning uncertainty — albeit with fascination — does youth open its eyes upon the glamour of the dazzling world! The love of the Springtide, even in fruition, is continually building fairy bowers in the future — it never for long rests content in the present, while to the intellect the bounded scope of utmost learning is a still more definite goad towards a knowledge that shall transcend all past experience.

And even were man content to continue to drink of the one cup of bliss, he is never allowed to do so. The lessons of life, the great teacher, are continually being altered, and the tempest of the heart takes the place of the calm that was never expected to end.

If, then, we must look in vain to find permanent bliss in any of these things — if, beyond the highest intellectual culture of an intellectual age there gleams the vision of a higher knowledge — if behind the artistic refinement of this, as of all past flowers of civilization, the fount of all sweetness lies hid. — if even the heart-binding communion

of earthly love is but a faint reflex of the deep peace realized by him who has torn aside the veil that hides the Eternal, surely all man's energies should be devoted to the quest which will yield him such results.

The whole philosophy of life may be summed up in the Four great Truths that Buddha taught, and no more convincing description of them can be read than that given in the lovely lines of the eighth book of the "Light of Asia."

He who has once been deeply imbued with these great truths — who has realized the transitory nature of all earthly bliss, and the pains and sorrows that more than counterbalance the joys of life — will never in his truest moments desire to be again blessed, either in the present or in any future incarnation, with an uniformly happy life, for there is no such soporific for the soul as the feeling of satisfaction, as there is no such powerful goad as the feeling of dissatisfaction. He is bound to pass through periods of joy, but they will be looked forward to with fear and doubting, for then it is that the sense-world again fastens its fangs on the soul, to be followed by the pain of another struggle for freedom.

When first setting out on the great quest, it seems as if many life-times would fail to appease the dominant passion of the soul, but nature works quickly in the hottest climates, and from the very intensity of the desire may spring the strength and will to conquer it. Though it is probably the same key-note that is struck throughout, the dominant desire will appear to take a different tone through the ascending scale of life. It is a speculation, but one which would seem to receive endorsement from the analogies of nature; for as the human embryo in its ante-natal development, exhibits in rapid succession, but with longer pauses as it approaches the period of birth, the characteristics of the lower races of animal life from which man has evolved, so does the human soul realize in its passage through life the dominant desires and attractions which have affected it through countless past incarnations. The lower desires which in past lives may have been more or less completely conquered, will be experienced in rapid succession and left behind without much difficulty, till the great struggle of the life is reached, from which man must come out more or less victorious if he is to continue the progress at all.

If right intention were the only thing needed, if it were a guarantee against being led astray, or if straying did not necessitate retardation on the road, there would be no such supreme necessity that belief should be in accordance with facts; but even in worldly affairs we see every day that purity of intention is no guard against the failures that come from lack of knowledge. In the great spiritual science therefore, which deals with the problem of life as a whole — not the mere fragment which this earthly existence represents — it will be seen how vitally necessary it is that facts should be conceived correctly.

To us whose eyes are blinded to the heights above, by the mists of our own desires, the only rays of light which can illumine the darkness of our journey on the great quest, are the words (whether or not in the form of recognized revelation) left by the masters who have preceded us on the road, and the counsel of our comrades who are bound for the same goal. But words are capable of many interpretations, and the opinions of our comrades are colored by their own personality — the ultimate touchstone of truth must therefore be looked for in the disciple's own breast.

Having stated the necessity for correct belief, let us now consider the question of the great achievement — the annihilation of Karma — the attainment of Nirvana. It must be acknowledged as a logical proposition that Karma can never annihilate Karma, *i.e.*, that no thoughts words, or acts of the man in his present state of consciousness, can, ever free him from the circle of re-births. This view would seem to necessitate

some power external to the man to free him — a power which has touch of him, and which would have to be allied to him.

Now the teachings which have been put before the world in *Light on the Path* state the other side of the question. “Each man is to himself absolutely the *way*, the *truth*, and the *life*.” And again, “For within you is the light of the world, the only light that can be shed on the Path. If you are unable to perceive it within you, it is useless to look for it elsewhere.” It would seem that the solution of this great paradox must be sought for in the constitution of man, as described in theosophic writings. Indeed, it is the scientific statement of deep spiritual truths which gives to the Theosophic teachings their remarkable value, and which seems likely to carry conviction of their truth to the Western peoples, who have for too long been accustomed to the mere emotional sentimentality of the orthodox religions, and to the pessimistic negation of science.

The higher principles, as they have been called, in the constitution of man, particularly the divine Atma, through which he is allied to the all-pervading Deity, must ever remain deep mysteries. But at least they are cognizable by the intellect, as providing logical stepping-stones for spanning the great gulf between Humanity and Divinity,— the Power — the correct cognition of which provides the very link between both systems of thought — which is at the same time external to man, and has touch of him by its own divine light which enlightens him, and which is also the very man himself — his highest and truest Self.

For most of us it is the “God hidden in the Sanctuary,” of whose very existence we are unaware, is known under the name of Iswara or the Logos — the primal ray from the Great Unknown. It is the Chrestos of the Christians, but, save, perhaps, to a few mystics in the Roman or Greek churches, it has been degraded past recognition by their materialistic anthropomorphism. A help to its better understanding may be obtained by a reference to Sanskrit philosophy, which describes man’s nature as consisting of the three *gunas* or qualities — Satwa, goodness, Rajas, passion and Tamas, darkness, or delusion — and the nature of most men is made up almost entirely of the two last named — while the Logos is pure Satwa.

The vexed question, therefore, as to whether man is freed by his own dominant will, or by the power of the Logos, will be seen to be very much a distinction without a difference. For the attainment of final liberation the God within and the God without must co-operate.

Desire being, as Buddha taught, the great obstacle in the way, its conquest by the dominant will is the thing that has to be done, but the Divine will cannot arise in its power, till the conviction of the Supreme desirability of attaining the eternal condition is rendered permanent; and it is this that necessitates the goad which the Logos is continually applying by its light on the soul.

We are now face to face with a very difficult problem — it is, in fact the gulf which separates the Occultist from the Religionist, and it is here that it is so necessary to get hold of the correct idea.

Strong limbs may dare the rugged road which storms,

Soaring and perilous, the mountain’s breast;

The weak must wind from slower ledge to ledge,

With many a place of rest.<sup>3</sup>

The short cut to perfection referred to in the first two lines has been called in Theosophic writings “the perilous ladder which leads to the path of life.”<sup>4</sup> To have faced the fearful abyss of darkness of the first trial, without starting back in terror at the apparent annihilation which the casting aside of the sense-life implies, and out of

the still more awful silence of the second trial; to have had the strength to evoke the greater Self — the God that has hitherto been hidden in the sanctuary — such is the language used with reference to the very first — nay, the preliminary — steps on this path, while the further steps are represented by the ascending scale of the occult Hierarchy, where the neophyte or chela, through a series of trials and initiations, may attain the highest Adeptship, and the man may gradually leave behind him his human desires and limitations, and realize instead the attributes of Deity.

PILGRIM.

(*To be continued.*)

## NOTES

1. {"Epipsychidion," Percy Bysshe Shelley.}
2. {*Harmonies poétiques et religieuses*, Alphonse de Lamartine. Translation:

"After love is extinguished if I still live  
It is for the truth, also thirst that devours."}

3. {*The Light of Asia*, Edwin Arnold.}
4. {*Light on the Path*, Mabel Collins, p. 2.}

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## THE GREAT QUEST.

PILGRIM {PROBABLY JULIA VER PLANCK}

{2 of 2}

*Continued* from the December (1887) number.

The Religionist, of course, denies that man can become a god or ever realize in himself the attributes of Deity. He may recognize the necessity of re-incarnation for ordinary worldly men, and even for those who are not constant in their detachment and devotion, but he denies the necessity for that series of trials and initiations which must cover, at all events, more than one life-time — probably many. It would appear as if the theory of evolution might be called in, to aid this latter view. If it is acknowledged that we, as individuals, have been for ever whirling on the wheel of conditioned existence; if at the beginning of each manvantara the divine monad which through the beginningless past has inhabited in succession the vegetable, animal, and human forms, takes to itself a house of flesh in exact accordance with previous Karma, it will be seen that (while inhabiting a human body) during no moment in the past eternity have we been nearer the attainment of Nirvana than at any other. If then there is no thinkable connection between evolution and Nirvana, to imagine that evolution, through stages of Adeptship, conducts to Nirvana, is a delusion. "It is purely a question of divine grace" — says the Religionist. If in answer to this view, it is contended that the light of the Logos is bound, eventually, to reach and enlighten every individual, and that the steady progress to perfection through Chelaship and Adeptship would, therefore, be a logical conclusion, it is objected that to assert that the light of the Logos must eventually reach and enlighten all, would involve the ultimate extinction of the

objective Universe, which is admitted to be without beginning or end, although it passes through alternate periods of manifestation and non-manifestation. If to escape from this untenable position we postulate fresh emanations of Deity into the lowest organisms at the beginning of each manvantara, to take the place of those who pass away into Nirvana, we are met by other difficulties. Firstly, putting out of consideration the fact that such a supposition is expressly denied by what is acknowledged as revelation, the projection into the evolutionary process of a monad free from all Karma, makes the law of Karma inoperative, for the monad's first association with Karma remains unexplained; and also it becomes impossible to say what the monad was, and what was the mode of its being prior to the projection into evolution. It must be noted that although the law of Karma does not explain *why* we are, yet it satisfactorily shows *how* we are what we are; and this is the *raison d'être* of the law. But the above theory takes away its occupation. It makes Karma and the monad independent realities, joined together by the creative energy of the Deity, while Karma ought to be regarded as a mode of existence of the monad — which mode ceases to be when another mode, called liberation, takes its place. Secondly, if the monad in attaining liberation only attains to what it was before its association with Karma, *à quoi bon* the whole process; while, if it is stated that the monad was altogether non-existent before its projection, the Deity becomes responsible for all our sufferings and sins, and we fall into either the Calvinist doctrine of predestination as popularly conceived, or into the still more blasphemous doctrine of the worshippers of Ahriman, besides incurring many logical difficulties. The teaching of our eastern philosophers is that the real interior nature of the monad is the same as the real interior essence of the Godhead, but from beginningless past time it has a transitory nature, considered illusive, and the mode in which this illusion works is known by the name of Karma.

But were we not led astray in the first instance? Ought we not to have acquiesced in the first above given definition of the theory of evolution? The premise was satisfactory enough — the mistake was in allowing the religionist's deduction as a logical necessity. When the religionist states that there is no thinkable connection between evolution and Nirvana, he merely postulates for the word evolution a more limited scope than that which the Occultist attaches to it, viz, the development of soul as well as that of mere form. He is indeed right in stating that the natural man, while he remains such, will never attain the ultimate goal of Being. True it is, for the Occultist as for the religionist, that, to free himself from the fatal circle of rebirths, he must "burst the shell which holds him in darkness — tear the veil that hides him from the eternal." The religionist may call this the act of divine grace; but it may be quite as correctly described as the "awakening of the slumbering God within." But the error of the religionist is surely in mistaking the first glimmer of the divine consciousness for a guarantee of final emancipation, at, say, the next death of the body, instead of merely the first step of a probationary stage in the long vista of work for Humanity on the higher planes of Being!

To provide ourselves with an analogy from the very theory of Evolution which we have been discussing, is it not more logical to imagine that, in the same way in which we see stretched at our feet the infinite gradations of existence, through the lower animal, vegetable, and mineral kingdoms — between which indeed, thanks to the recent investigations of scientific men — there is no longer recognized to be any distinct line of demarcation — so the heights (necessarily hidden from our view) which still remain to be scaled by us in our upward progress to Divinity, should be similarly filled with the gradations of the unseen hierarchy of Being? And that, as we have evolved during millions of centuries of earth-life through these lower forms up to the position we now occupy, so may we, if we choose, start on a new and better road of

progress, apart from the ordinary evolution of Humanity, but in which there must also be innumerable grades?

That there will be progress for Humanity as a whole, in the direction of greater spirituality, there is no doubt, but that progress will be partaken of by continually decreasing numbers. Whether the weeding out takes place at the middle of the “great fifth round,” or whether it be continually taking place during the evolutionary process, a ray of light is here thrown on the statement met with in all the Bibles of Humanity as to the great difficulty of the attainment. “For straight is the gate, and narrow is the way that leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it; but wide is the gate, and broad is the way that leadeth unto destruction, and many there be that go in thereat.”<sup>1</sup> This and parallel passages doubtless refer to the weeding out of those who are unfit to continue the progress, on which the more spiritualized Humanity will then have entered. The most vivid picture of the comparative handful of elect souls, who are fit to achieve the great quest, will be obtained by contemplating the fact already stated, that the objective universe, with its myriads of inhabitants, will never, in the vast abysses of the future, cease to be; and that the great majority of humanity — the millions of millions — will thus for ever whirl on the wheel of birth and death.

But though Nature may give us an almost infinite number of chances to attempt the great quest, it were madness to put by the chance offered now, and allow the old sense-attractions to regain their dominance, for it must be remembered that the barbarism and anarchy which every civilization must eventually lapse into, are periods of spiritual deadness, and that it is when “the flower of civilization has blown to its full, and when its petals are but slackly held together,” that the goad within men causes them to lift their eyes to the sunlit mountains, and “to recognize in the bewildering glitter the outlines of the Gates of Gold.” There are no doubt realms in the Devaloka where the bliss of heaven may be realized by those who aspire to the selfish rewards of personal satisfaction, but these cease to exist with the end of the manvantara, and with the beginning of the next the devotee will again have to endure incarceration in flesh. The eighth chapter of the *Bhagavad Gîtâ* does indeed state that there is a path to Nirvana through the Devaloka, and amongst the countless possibilities of the Infinite who shall assert that this is not so? but the context surely implies such a detachment and devotion through life as is difficult for us even to contemplate, much less to realize.

However distant, therefore, may appear to us the achievement of the great quest, when we consider how much more closely we are allied to the animal than to the God, it must necessarily seem an infinitely far-off goal, but though we may have to pass through many life-times before we reach it, our most earnest prayer should be, that we may never lose sight of that celestial goal, for surely it is the one thing worthy of achievement!

To many the foregoing may appear as mere speculations, and the firmest faith indeed can scarcely call itself knowledge, but, however necessary the complete knowledge may be, we may at least hope that its partial possession is adequate to the requirements of the occasion. To us whose feet tread, often wearily, towards the path of the great quest, and whose eyes strain blindly through the mists that wrap us round, steady perseverance and omnipotent hope must be the watch-words — perseverance to struggle on, though the fiends of the lower self may make every step a battle, and hope that at any moment the entrance to the path may be found.

As an example of these two qualities, and also because all words that strike a high key are bound to awaken responsive echoes in noble hearts, let us conclude with the following extract from the *Ramayana*:—

“Thus spoke Rama. Virtue is a service man owes himself, and though there were no heaven nor any God to rule the world, it were not less the binding law of life. It is man’s privilege to know the right and follow it. Betray and persecute me brother men! Pour out your rage on me O malignant devils! Smile, or watch my agony in cold disdain ye blissful Gods! Earth, hell, heaven combine your might to crush me — I will still hold fast by this inheritance! My strength is nothing — time can shake and cripple it; my youth is transient — already grief has withered up my days; my heart — alas! it is well-nigh broken now. Anguish may crush it utterly, and life may fail; but even so my soul that has not tripped shall triumph, and dying, give the lie to soulless destiny that dares to boast itself man’s master.”

“PILGRIM.”

## NOTE

1. {Matthew 7:13, 14.}

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*The Path* – March 1887, Vol. 1, pp. 361-367.

## HERALDS FROM THE UNSEEN.

JASPER NIEMAND, F.T.S.

{1 of 2}

Behold, I show you a mystery. We shall not all sleep,  
but we shall all be changed. — 1 Cor. xv, 51.

I have found the small old path leading far away. — *Upanishad*.<sup>1</sup>

To him who without murmuring, confident in the perfect justice of the law, waits and watches, there comes a herald from heights unseen. The just man follows him and attains; the unwise may surprise him and follow also. But when the fool has rushed unbidden in where angels fear to tread, he meets a mailed Truth with a drawn sword, on whose point he dies. Now there are two deaths. From the one he may rise, “in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, ... for the dead shall be raised,”<sup>2</sup> and this by the vivifying power of truth, if so be he have one identical incorruptible atom in his spiritual make up, or else that rash being is dead forever, and the spirit monad creates another in the dream of three thousand years.

The indivisible Truth in its entirety is incommunicable in the words of our plane. A clue may indeed be given; it is the herald to those who await him. It is useless to turn the page to see who this is that offers the clue. Of myself I know nothing, yet through me may much be made known. I am the trumpet; through it the herald may proclaim a mystery.

It was in a night of silence that a Power bade me waken, and drew me to a dark cave wherein It passed. Not so I, for the entrance was narrow and I had encumbrances about me. Only many nights later, when I had parted with effort, hope and fear, did I stand within. All of me that was essential had entered; this was enough. Then a musical chord breathed low, the darkness dispersed, and I saw the Unknown Land.

It was a circling land of streams, Light everywhere, flowing, flowing, flowing. The flow was cadenced and welled from a mysterious Centre of blackness at the edges of

which spouted cataracts of flame. My thought shrank with awe of the Darkness, but an unknown grasp of Might expanded within me and drew me to that flaming verge. On the knees of the soul I fall and am not. I become one with the All, and consciously resting in Omniscience I know the whole. Yet *what* forever dwells, wakeful and brooding with that dark pavilion, nor man nor angel may discover. Profounder than all Being, *It is*, girt about by unfathomed fires. "Ye shall enter the light, but ye shall never touch the flame."<sup>3</sup>

A stir was over that central Dark, a titanic breath, like the sighing of myriad seas, measured, omnipotent. Where its harmonious friction fretted the verges of space, the flames burst forth, and with fecund pulsations gave birth to heat, light, motion and sound. The Centre felt a boundless attraction for the circumference, pouring toward it with inexhaustible energy, for "the heart of it is Love." This was the force centrifugal, which in a dazzle of starry scintillations thrusts the universal glooms apart with a song. Were this all, Discord and Division were the end. But the circumference trembled also with a vast yearning toward the Centre, so that it ever tended to return there, as the prodigal, enriched in experience, returns to the mystic house of the Father. This was the centripetal force, and these two caused the double vibration of the Astral Light, and they are all you shall know though you blend with the infinite forever. "Whatever there is, the whole world when gone forth trembles in His breath: that Brahman is a great terror, like a drawn sword. They who know it become immortal."<sup>4</sup>

Then a voice said — "The Absolute evolves thought from Himself, and the vibration of this thought in the passive wells of space generates Light and its correlated forces. The Thought is,— '*Creation!*' The singing breath is the Word; the Light is the Absolute made manifest, and the Universe begins." At once I saw divergent lances of light pour their serried splendors into the void, and the point of each spear displaced the mist which curling backward from the center of energy thus formed, communicated the movement to sister vapors in turn. Activities shoot, play back and forth, elongate, crystalize, and so great planets spring into the arena, feel the first instinct of separate Being, struggle to depart,— an estranged Self — in meteoric desolation, when the magnetic impulse of the Centre streams along the creative ray, meets the responsive principle, and lo! each chafing Orb, held in leash by Love, wheels into the circle of attraction and obeys the Law. The astral world has begun!

Thence presently the Light spreads afresh, reflected and repeated from every facet of every star, till arrowy glories, vibrant with each vibration sped forth by the primary pencils of light, in turn create dull planetary masses in the luminous abyss; then ever renewed coruscations quicken their dust with whose initial tremor shining crystals sparkle out and glide together about a glistening ring whose center is ever a darkness ruffled by the out-reaching current from that first tinted Gloom. So new spheres form, these, repeating the parent movement, with wide spreading auras touch and arouse their neighbors, and interpenetrating, revolving, throwing off, taking on, converging, diverging, modifying and modified, a world of forms is evolved whose final expression of Being is Man. Thus further departing, the infinite variations end in individuality and the greater the individuality, the more it leans to the centrifugal force, and the lack of equilibrium in the forces draws man further from the Eternal and he forgets the Law. His aura, his rays are nerve currents centered in the personality, but linked by star-beam and moon-ray to the quivering Source of all light, so that each man vibrating, imparts to the Akasa about him his own specific rate of vibration, and all men, all things, suspended as it were in this fine ether which fills the universe, act and react each on each, every one striving to modify the others to his own vibratory ratio, while the Light in the same way attacks all, and the battle of the giants is here. So the final expression of "evil" is inertia, and the highest attribute of Spirit is the Thought which is Life.

Once again the Voice spoke then saying: "What gives Life?" Someone answered: "Vibration." And when It said, "Look back to the earth world," I obeyed. I saw the modern sage reducing all the great forces, all the intoxicating play of colors and the bewildering tangle of harmonies to this one source,— Vibration. I saw wondering students bending over sensitive flames that danced or died at the mandate of sound. I saw a child playing with iron filings on glass, and as he drew a bow athwart the pane they marshalled into tiny mimics of the primitive crystalline creation. I saw the Frost spirit, tracing his white wonders of tropical forests on vibrant surfaces, blazoning symbols of summer on the grim escutcheon of the snow. I saw Sound disintegrating granite and iron, taming wild beasts with a lure, transforming brothers into demons at the sibilant hiss of a scathing word.<sup>5</sup> I saw Light fecundating the soil, and the teeming battalions of the underworld issuing from the palpitating spark in their germs; the selective art of the flower, choosing the kindred color of her tribe from all the flashing scale, gave up to me its secret of the synchronous vibration of that hue with the astral soul within her fragrant form. Passion I saw also, flaming in two breasts that for one tumultuous moment became one, and knew it for an instant of similar vibration. Aye, and saw that Love was a steadfast quality of motion between loyal hearts, saw too that Anger and Hatred had their rise in the same source, and mounting upward I saw that Faith was a similitude of vibration with Truth itself. Again the Voice spoke; "Dost thou see aught but Vibration anywhere?" I answered: "Such all life is, and from such all proceeds. He who cons its secret laws and can institute its musical numbers at will, is a God! He can create and destroy." "Go then, and by analogy learn what thou art," said the Voice, and like the rebel fraction of a star I fell from Glory, and found myself alone in the Mâyâ world again, with these words thrilling my brain. "But He, that Highest Person, who wakes in us while we sleep, shaping one lovely sight after another, He indeed is called the Light, He is called Brahman, He alone is called The Immortal. All worlds are founded on It and no one goes beyond. This is that."<sup>6</sup>

It is rarely that a man gets the whole of his thought; often others supply it. Analogy is the power of following a thought into all its correlations, and I shall ask you to do this in a measure with mine. These puny pages cannot contain the theme of cycles, and falling short, it scarce matters by how many pen strokes I fail. Consider this first; what are we? Look abroad over our Society, largely; we see each member working on his own particular line. So it must be with man for ages. When you shall have exhausted your special hobby, when through astral perception, or mesmeric control or mental acumen, you shall have attained high powers, the hour of your limitation will strike, as its awful knell can strike, even from the towers of Futurity, and you will know that you have not found that cornerstone on which alone the Eternal rests,— your indivisible Self. "Great ones fall back, even from the threshold, unable to sustain the weight of responsibility; unable to pass on."<sup>7</sup> Follow from the start that solitary beacon which informs the ultimate goal: *Unity*. Make it your touchstone and your guide; other stars are reflected lights only. The doctrine of unselfishness is no sentiment, but of logical, practical utility. The individual way lies from limited Being, through Becoming, to unlimited Being, precisely as the universal way lies from sterile Unity, through Division to fecund Unity, or from the one Life through Death to the Life of the All. He who in final choice elects the path of Division, chooses Death eternal. You may indeed wend homeward through the devious tangle of reflected rays, but how long, how hard are such paths! I would see your souls with eagle swoop make straight for the Central Sun. Look then within you. Man! Woman! Are you what you seem? Till this thought daily; it will bear the harvest of Life.

With analogy for our guide we observe that the first forms of life are crystalline and have two poles. You man, are also a magnetic sphere with physical and spiritual poles. On the physical side of the subject we find modern scientists telling us that man

is matter in a state of low vibration, and thought, matter in a state of high vibration.<sup>8</sup> In this ascertained view, Spirit is a higher state of vibration than we at present cognize. "Does the fact look crass and material, threatening to degrade thy theory of Spirit? Resist it not; it goes to refine and raise thy theory of matter just as much."<sup>9</sup> Nor do I say this is all. Trust your highest ideal to the unconditioned causation lying back of that primal vibration — Absolute Thought.

The vibrant tension of fixed thought must in time heighten the vibratory ratio of the man, for tension excites increased pulsation. This rarefies the density of all bodies, and the friction of intensified chemical action establishes light, heat and odic force. The increased porosity of the physical body tends to disengage the atoms of the astral body, and the generation of a strong odic current forces it out to the astral world, (always attracting it) all the sooner because the intensified pulsation of thought-tension sends the auric emanations further into space, thus draughting a larger portion of the world-soul to the entity. All vibration being attended with sound (which may or may not escape the ear) we proceed to examine tones and find them varying from the lowest of eight vibrations per second, to the highest known to western science of 24,000 per second. Remember that the tones of anger, hatred, scorn are all deep notes, those of cheerfulness, love, hope are treble. Here we discover the apparently inexplicable effect of spoken words which raise or depress our vibrations to their own by means of the etheric medium. To resist the wildfire spread of passion or anger we have but to check the vibration by holding steadily to our own; this maintained, may raise that of others, precisely as the high musical note constantly sounded, raises all lower ones at all related, to its own pitch. Tyndall says: "Scientific education ought to teach us to see the invisible as well as the visible in nature; to picture with the vision of the mind those operations which entirely elude bodily vision; to look at the very atoms of matter in motion and at rest, and to follow them forth without once losing sight of them ... to see them integrating themselves in natural phenomena." So I shall ask you to imagine a tone at a high rate of vibration, to see it striking the hearer's brain at a certain focus, creating there a center of energy, which tending to crystallization, fixes the thought in the mind. And the more permanent duration of pleasant (which are high) thoughts and tones is evident if we glance back over a long period of time and note how the joys stand out and the griefs disappear; so we always forget physical suffering. Moreover we may see this tone raising his vibratory ratio and glancing off at an angle of reflection equal to that of incidence, reacting upon the surrounding ether and upon all hearers. The magical success of eastern mantras depends upon the exact intonation, which governs the vibratory result, and the proper intonation of the sacred books, learned from the priests, doubtless increased their effect. Turning to colors, we find them varying in vibration from violet 1/60,000 inch to red 1/38,000 inch, and the violet has greater actinism; so it would seem to follow that the more extended the undulation the greater the chemical action and resultant odic force. Hence the tone of animals or man is not such a poor test of their nature as we might suppose, and a certain clue to character is given in a preferred color. The higher sounds thus create greater akasic disturbance through increased undulation. Deleuze in his work on magnetism says: "The word which indicates our will can often exert an action. ... The very tones of the magnetizer, being produced by the vital energy, act upon the organs of the patients."<sup>10</sup> Reichenbach proved that all chemical action is a source of odic force, and the transmission of air being nothing less, additional witness is born to the occult power of a word. All mesmerizers are now agreed that motions and words are unnecessary; the will suffices; what is this but the tension of fixed thought. Everything in Nature has its own specific rate of vibration; if we know and can reproduce and heighten it we can call the thing into existence or pass ourselves within its consciousness. Hence the old saying that numbers are the names of things. The "lost word" itself is, doubt it not, a

sound of the highest possible vibration, represented by the Aum, or sound of the eternal outpour of Light, the Logos of the Christians. The ordinary ear may not grasp this sound, but Tyndall tells us such are not dead because they have passed from our ken.<sup>11</sup> When we remember that this astral vibration can in time elevate that of all matter, we glimpse alike the great factor of Evolution and of the use of Aum. The thought being spiritually fixed, an unbroken vital current sets in between the man and the “One eternal Thinker, thinking non-eternal thoughts. He though one, fulfils the desire of many. The wise, who perceive Him within their Self, to them belong eternal joy, eternal peace!”<sup>12</sup> — Here we perceive the force of the repeated injunction to be calm; how else can the harmonious medium act upon us? “The man who is not calm and subdued, or whose mind is not at rest, he can never obtain the Self, even by knowledge.”<sup>13</sup>

Follow me now to the plane of soul. As all things from planet to molecule have their mystic center, that of man is found in the heart, whose systole and diastole are regulated by the double movement of the Astral Light. There, hemmed about by the light of the semi-material soul, is the dusky center, where the spirit may awaken and breathe. “The self is smaller than small, greater than great, hidden in the heart of the creature.”<sup>14</sup> Air is breathed by the lungs; the soul breathes the astral light. As that spiritual monad who is your own Augoeides, breathed first upon the plastic Akasa and drew together the principles of a man, so It must again breathe upon this silent center to create the spiritual man. It does not inhabit him, It overshadows him. It is his “Father in Heaven” to whom Jesus bade him pray; his Creator. In each heart stands this shrouded altar to an unknown God. “Whom ye therefore ignorantly worship, Him declare I unto you.”<sup>15</sup> He has created the physical man hundreds of times, for His mission is unfulfilled until through Evolution, He shall have made “one higher than the angels.” In that illimitable future which evades the mind, my soul sees ultimate beings in their glory, raise the swelling tide of Being higher still. So Divinity raises Itself by Itself and man expands God. Here is the adhesion of Jesus to the destiny latent in Humanity. “Be ye perfect as your Father in Heaven is also perfect.”<sup>16</sup>

JASPER NIEMAND, F.T.S.

## NOTES

1. {*Brihadaranyaka Upanishad*, IV, 8.}
2. 1 Cor. xv.
3. *Light on the Path*. {Mabel Collins.}
4. Vedanta. {*Katha Upanishad*, II, 6:1-2.}
5. It is known that in Ireland and other places, many peasants possess words whose sound can thrill a man and make a horse unmanageable. [ED.]
6. Vedanta. {*Katha Upanishad*, II, 2:8.}
7. *Light on the Path*. {Mabel Collins.}
8. See Fiske, Stuart, *et al*.
9. Emerson. {*Essays: First Series*, “Circles,” Ralph Waldo Emerson.}
10. {*Practical Instruction in Animal Magnetism*, Joseph Deleuze.}
11. On sound, p. 54. {*Sound*, John Tyndall.}
12. Vedanta. {*Katha Upanishad*, V, 13.}
13. *Idem*. {*Katha Upanishad*, I, 2:24.}
14. {*Katha Upanishad*, II, 20.}
15. {Acts 17:23.}
16. {Matthew 5:48.}

## HERALDS FROM THE UNSEEN.

JASPER NIEMAND, F.T.S.

{2 of 2}  
(Concluded.)

“Yet mark it well, man cannot compel the God. The self cannot be gained by the Veda, nor by the understanding, nor by much learning. He whom the Self chooses, by him alone the Self can be gained. The Self chooses him as His own.”<sup>1</sup> How then would you attract the Shining One? You must first strive to raise your own vibrations. Tension does this, the tension of lofty thought, benevolent feelings, the living spirit of holy books, communion with high minds, any and every elevating practice, the mind fixed on the True. And, look you, this is no matter where you may dissect from the outset; you must have Faith. If you institute the conditions, the event follows; such is the economy of the occult world. What is Faith but the institution of conditions? “He cannot be reached by speech, by mind, or by the eye: He cannot be apprehended except by him who says, *‘He is.’*”<sup>2</sup> You must bear some relation to Spirit, or its eternal vibrations cannot raise you. Knowledge attained, you will find it submitting triumphantly to every test. Calm is the essence of Faith because a similitude of vibration with Truth (in its living record) is only possible when you are no longer at the mercy of astral currents. Then “regard most earnestly your own heart.”<sup>3</sup> The soul is there; all may feel its heat, some hear its musical tones as it expands. Sink your thoughts down to that heat: the Spirit (Buddhi) enters by the head and your final object is to bind heart and head together in an abiding consciousness of Unity. The *Bhagavad Gîtâ* tells us plainly that when the mind roams man “should subdue it, bring it back, and place it within his own breast;”<sup>4</sup> not, as you see, in the brain. Now by “mind” the intellect is not meant, but manas, the collective thoughts and desires upon which Reason, (or Buddhi) may act as guide or control. You will find that you can think from the heart, just as all strong emotions,— such as fear, love, suspense,— take their rise in the heart and spread wave-like over the chest, and have no similarity to the flash of an idea in the brain. In the ordinary man the brain is only the focus for the thoughts streaming in through the solar plexus, and many are lost, just as millions of seeds in nature are lost. So the *Upanishad* echoes the warning:— “The mind must be restrained in the heart till it comes to an end;— that is knowledge, that is liberty; all the rest are extensions of the ties.”<sup>5</sup> When we are able to think from the center we shall realize what is now difficult to believe — that our present intellection is not the highest avenue of knowledge.

“When a man is delivered from his mind, that is the highest point.”<sup>6</sup> We sink our thoughts then into the flowing Light as men sink nets into the sea,— withdrawn, they are full to breaking.

A distinguished confrere, speaking of this subject in the October *Theosophist*, says that the right “Word” must be known, when we may sink it down to the heart where it becomes a living power: he adds that *Om* is used for this purpose in India and *Jao* in Europe. These are good words as we all know, and represent high vibrations. The *Upanishad* says plainly:— “*Om* is the sound-endowed body of him:” and again; “The syllable *Om* is what is called the Word and its end is the silent, the soundless, fearless, ... immovable, certain Brahman.” We are told by the authors of *Man*<sup>7</sup> that “in

incantations, sound is so modulated as to produce the same state of the body as that which invariably accompanies the generation of any desired psychic or spiritual force.” Nor is it difficult to find the rationale of this use of sound when we consider that there exists in the Akasa a latent and eternal power called Yajna, which is supposed to form a bridge between mortals and spirits, or gods, like the ladder in Jacob’s dream. “*Isis*”<sup>8</sup> states that it can be called into play by the lost Word receiving impulse through will-power. This sound is the Vach, or dormant “Word” of the sacred Mantras, evoked by those who know their proper intonation. Krishna says that as Adhiyajna (Lord of Yajna) he is present in this body. Reflect deeply on this. He who can fret the sensitive akasic chords with heat-compelling tones may see this stupendous electric force burst outward from its hidden lair and rend for him the veil of Isis. So indeed he mounts to the Gods.

When Hartmann adds, however, that attempts to carry on this practice without first obtaining a “Word” just suited to our condition from an Adept are dangerous, he tends to frighten away those who would try to find the “Lord of all worlds” for themselves, as if an Adept were needed when “Ishwar resideth in the breast of every mortal being.”<sup>9</sup> An Adept can impart an impulse, stimulate our vibrations momentarily; he cannot strain his powers to raise us to an artificial status and hold us there. Knowledge is Being; you *cannot* know more than you are. You have within you the eternal motor,—Thought. Apply it through the universal vehicle,—Will. I do not say that such external impetus as Adepts can give is not a great advantage, *provided it is in your Karma*. Otherwise it is useless except to teach you a lesson through premature failure, and The Brothers, foreseeing the end, will if left to themselves deal more wisely with the man of desires than he with himself. Anyone may follow Krishna’s behest and “raise himself by himself.” Students should give serious attention to the point that mere automatic processes have as such no place in the higher science of the Wisdom-Religion. Astral perception confuses and retards; it is but a period of synchronous vibration with that sphere; “ye cannot *serve* two masters:” though, all service ended, you may become astral serpent and spiritual dove in one. Yogees in India who pronounce Om for years with fixed thought often make no apparent progress; its full application is beyond their ken; it would seem beyond Hartmann’s also. For the article in question somewhat belittles the practice of Charity, Devotion, and the like, whereas all procedure comes to naught in the final test, (and I consider nothing short of that,) if these sacred principles do not constitute the integral make-up of the heart. “Though I speak with the tongues of men and angels and have not charity, I am become as sounding brass.”<sup>10</sup> I repeat, men have fallen into a way of considering such injunctions as mere adornment, whereas they are structural necessities, truths as demonstrable as any mathematical equation. How shall I think as a god if I have not the large outlook of a god? I would not willingly behold any differentiation in the universe which is not visible from the standpoint of the polar star! The sum of Karma consists of all deeds referable to the self; the deeds done for self-increase the sense of self, while spiritual life consists in the absence of self. Thus the fundamental necessity of spiritual growth is that all be done for all. Whatever tends to raise the vibration is of value, your intuitions must direct you to a wise admixture. Persevere; “to the persevering mortal the blessed Immortals are swift.”<sup>11</sup> In some quiet moment you will feel a touch upon the heart as if a spent bullet had lodged there, or a soft stir, as a nestling dove. Later, sounds will ensue, sounds like singing sands, or piping winds, or the surge of golden bells chiming adown far coasts. Sometimes a fine aerial music attends the august vibrations, as heralds announce the King. *For when the sound arises, the Light is near*. Then control the mind, whose centrifugal tendency is immense; it is a Ulysses who must be tied to the mast when these syren voices echo, lest it lose itself in the sea of sense. Attend only to those ideas to which the sounds give rise in the heart. Other wonders

accrue, fields of color, flashing sights and psychic sense unfolding, but to describe these is to leave the student at the mercy of a vivid imagination. I can only state that something is born again under the potency of the *Word*, and this *Word* is a fixed rate of high vibration.

You have now a clue; try. On the doors and walls of the temple the word “*Ty*” is written. The entrance found, use this key. “The mouth of the true Brahman is covered with a golden lid, open that, O Sun, that we may go to the true One, Who pervades all. He Who is that person in the sun I am He.”

“After having left behind the body, the organs of sense and the objects of sense, (as no longer belonging to us) and having seized the bow whose stick is fortitude and whose string is asceticism, (the true kind) having stricken down with the arrow consisting of freedom from egotism the first guardian of the door of Brahman, having killed that guardian, he crosses by means of the boat Om to the other side of the ether within the heart, and when the ether is revealed, (as Brahman) he enters slowly, as a miner seeking minerals enters a mine, into the hall of Brahman. After that let him by means of the doctrine of his teacher, (trying his intuitive way and not that of another) break through the first shrine of Brahman, (consisting of the four nets of food, breath, mind and knowledge) till he reaches the last shrine of Brahman. Thenceforth pure, clean, tranquil, breathless, endless, imperishable, firm, unborn and independent, he stands in his own greatness, and having seen the Self standing in His own greatness, he looks at the wheel of the world, (therefore he may still be in the world,) as one who having alighted from a chariot looks on its revolving wheel.<sup>12</sup>

Take up the analogy. Get to the wondrous center and ask of the latent Light, and “all shall be changed.” Then Brothers, give, give what you receive. Cast all your treasures to all the winds of morning; the closing pinions of the night will bring them back transformed. *Fear nothing!* Bend the inner ear and you shall hear that royal Watch who calls across the Darkness, “All’s well! All’s well!”

Ishwar, Lord of the Light! Make me to be a channel through which Thou flowest. Teach me to know Thy voice in other hearts as well as in mine own, and inform us with Thine effulgence through the generating cycles — Om!

JASPER NIEMAND, F.T.S.

## NOTES

1. Vedanta.
2. {*Katha Upanishad*, 2.6.12.}
3. *Light on the Path*. {Mabel Collins.}
4. {*Bhagavad Gîtâ*, Chapter 6.}
5. {*Matrâyana Brâhmana Upanishad*, 6:34:8. The “ties” are those which bind us to this life.}
6. *Upanishad*. {*Maitrayana-Brâhmana Upanishad*, Sixth Prapâthaka. As found: “When a man, having freed his mind from sloth, distraction, and vacillation, becomes as it were delivered from his mind, that is the highest point.”}
7. *Man, the Forgotten...* {*Man, a Fragment of Forgotten History*, Chatterjee and Holloway.}
8. {*Isis Unveiled*, H. P. Blavatsky.}
9. *Bhagavad Gîtâ*.
10. {1 Corinthians 13.}
11. Zoroaster. {*Ancient Fragments*, I. P. Cory, “The Chaldean Oracles of Zoroaster,” Verse 158.}
12. *Upanishad*. {*Maitrâyana-Brâhmana Upanishad*, Sixth Prapâthaka.}

## THE HERESY OF SEPARATENESS.

J.

Lack of charity is the basis of all immorality. By “charity” is meant the true brotherly love, or viewing all other beings as one’s own self. “Sin” has its rise in selfishness, or the idea of benefit or advantage to one’s self as separate from — hence in opposition to — other selves. When man *realizes* the spiritual identity of all Being, then only does he cease to sin, for then only does he know that to sin is to injure himself and all other selves — the universal whole — by action in opposition to Universal Law. But such realization consists only in living out his belief. Intellectual appreciation and acceptance are mere stepping-stones to the groundwork of true realization.

Thus he who lacks charity for all his fellows is himself immoral in thought and in fact. In dwelling in thought upon the sin of another, he perpetuates and vivifies that sin through the thought pictures thus made, and clothed anew with his own mental energy. Man thus becomes a sharer in the “sin” of his fellow by creating new effects for the original evil. We graft upon ourselves the sins of others; moreover the *cause* of sin is in both cases identical; it is the mutual belief in separation from the universal whole. Thus the method of wrong doing differs, but the original cause exists in both the sinner and the man who condemns him. He who has entire charity, has it by virtue of his recognition of the identity of all souls. This identity often obscures the original starting point of an evil action. The self-righteous man, and even the stern moralist, may have created in their abhorrence of sin, strong pictures which may have an automatic action upon the sensitive inner bodies of mankind. Or our brother may have seen his fault, may resolve to amend, and may again be overpowered by the dynamic action of the thought pictures of that fault poured forth by our minds. They have a life which binds him down to his sin. Hence the only safe course is that charity which “seeketh no evil.” The moment we attach immorality to our fellows we commit the same sin so far as the real root of sin is concerned. True charity implies a recognition of the existence of evil itself as a misuse of powers, and as a fault common in this age to all men. It does not dwell upon those particular forms of sin most abhorrent to its own mental make-up when these are manifested by men or women, but endeavors to lay the axe to that common root of self in all men — most of all in the personal self — while helping all other selves. The recognition that all are alike sinners against the Law of Unity, causes a man to seek for likeness and not difference between himself and all other men. Then he begins to overlook the sins of men and to abandon the character of judge, accepting instead that of helper of all selves. But let him, as he values his own soul, continue to condemn the root sin of self. And let him ask only of all others and in his own heart, not the question, “Have these sinned?” but, “Are these endeavoring in any degree to help the world?” If not, they most of all need his charity and his aid.

J.

## HOW THE CHRIST-CHILD WAS BORN.

J. CAMPBELL VER PLANCK

Carlo stood by the window making pictures. He made them by breathing upon the pane and drawing upon it with his fingers. His Papa was shut up in his study with all the nasty bottles and jars and things. His Mamma was where she always was now,— upstairs in bed, looking so white and tired. The servants were in the kitchen laughing over the very biggest turkey you ever saw, and Carlo was just here in the parlor, alone and cross and tired. He was tired of his play things; tired of the Christmas tree; tired of having a good time with his little cousins who had just gone home. He felt just like being a torment to somebody; that was what nurse called him when he began to fidget and ask questions.

When you are a little boy a great many questions come popping into your head, and you think grown people are put there to answer them. Carlo supposed God put them there; He seemed to do all that was done; at least the grown people said so. But Carlo wondered why God did not make them tell things right; some of their answers were certainly wrong because Carlo could not understand them. They made the world out to be quite another place from what Carlo saw. He had eyes; he could see very well; and he didn't see anywhere some of the things that grown people said were there. They were silly to suppose that he, a big boy of five years, would believe such stuff about babies, for instance. He never, never found one under the cabbages, though he had looked every day since his new little cousin had come to the world. Why should the grown people find all the babies? They didn't get up so early as the children. And when people died; that was another thing. They were put in holes in the ground. No grown person — fond as they were of puzzling children — had ever said they weren't. Except, indeed, Uncle Dick, who said sometimes they were burnt and sometimes they were roasted and eaten. That was in foreign countries, however, and Carlo didn't believe in foreign countries. He believed in what he saw, and his Papa, who was a very wise Professor, said that was the only wise way. But the sharp eyes of Carlo saw that his Mamma always looked sad at such words; looked sad, indeed, at much that his Papa told him; "just like she looks when she wishes I wouldn't," thought Carlo. And he had heard nurse say to cook that his Papa was "a worse haythen than all thim Protestants." He was sure this must be some dreadful thing, because nurse said it with the same voice in which she told Carlo what became of bad, bad boys when they died.

Altogether there were many questions Carlo wanted answered, if only the grown-ups would tell him the same things. They didn't; they never did. When he asked his Papa what Christmas was, for instance, he said it was "a fool's day," — whatever that was. He said he wouldn't have a Christmas in his house if Carlo's Mamma were not so sentimental and so ill. And Santa Claus. His nurse had told him about Santa Claus, and had even shown him the real picture of the saint. But when he had said, "Papa! what is Santa Claus?" Papa had answered in his very gruffest voice, "*A lie!*" Only think! But how could there be a picture of him if he wasn't alive somewhere? Carlo asked his Mamma next, and she said, "Santa Claus is a real spirit of love and kindness, who comes every Christmas to children whose parents love them." As for nurse, she just held up her hands and exclaimed, "Master Carlo! Where do ye expect to go to whin ye die, if ye don't belave Santa Claus is a little, fat, rale, live gentelman, what will lave yees a

bunch av sticks an' ye're a bad bye, Sor?" It was so about everything. The grown-ups all told you different stories, and frowned at you if you didn't believe them all at once. If they only knew how tired a child gets sometimes with all their mixed-up tales, and how many new questions come popping into his head then!

Now there was one, this very minute. It was a question that was an old friend of Carlo's. He had been asking it ever since he could remember, every once in a while. He wondered what "God" was, and why He let grown-up people be naughty, and not children. Nurse was always talking about Him, and how angry He would be for every fault, "The badder a boy is, the more God keeps coming around!" poor Carlo cried out "I should think He'd hate to be so near, always getting children scolded. Why don't he never come when I'm *good*? Perhaps because being good is so dreadful stupid," thought poor Carlo. Down deep in his little heart was a thought he was afraid of; a thought which he knew would draw down upon him the frowns and anger of all his little world. It was a thought only to be whispered to a bird in a tree; or to the moon on bright nights; or perhaps to some trusted companion when you were both naughty and in punishment, two stubborn little rebels together. This was the thought,— if only you please won't be shocked at it. "Perhaps there isn't any God at all! Perhaps He's just an ogre made up by the big people, like the one in Jack-the-Giant-Killer, on purpose to make boys behave!" Some days Carlo felt sure this was true; and he knew, he *knew* his Papa would not scold him for saying so. What he feared was the sad, sad look in the eyes of his pretty Mamma. But he could *think*, and think he did, that if a boy was to behave like this God of theirs did; spying, meddling, killing people in Bible stories, and being different to everybody; always on the side of the grown-ups and always hard on the children; Carlo was sure such a boy would be put into dark closets for life. "It just makes me mad," thought Carlo, "to have them say He loves me. He's nasty; I don't want Him to love me. He made His little boy grow up so unhappy and be *killed* for me. I'm glad I ain't God's little boy and I won't be, either." By this it may be seen that Carlo's Papa was partly right when he said the boy would get no good from Sunday School. But like Carlo himself, his Father dreaded the mournful look in the eyes of his dying young wife. "There are times in life," he groaned, "when a man has to choose between being a brute or a liar." Uncle Dick had suggested that there was a third way, a golden mean between the atheism of the Father and the strict theology of the Mother, but while she lay there dying, trying with her last breath, as it were, to bias the fresh young soul of her son, for whom she feared perdition if she could not set his mind in a fixed direction before leaving him;— while she so lay, it was impossible to wound her. Uncle Dick resigned himself and trusted to Carlo himself; to something that he was sure was in Carlo, and would someday speak to the boy. Meanwhile, how sad to see the awful waste of energies directed to the thwarting of nature, to the attempts to alter the immutable Laws!

Carlo's last thought made him fling himself impatiently on the rug by the fire, the better to gaze up at the Christ-child on the Christmas tree. It had wings, and a star on its forehead. It was all gold and pink and white, like pretty Mamma, and Carlo loved it. He hated to think that such a lovely being had been nailed on an awful cross, had grown up to be a man, just like Papa's friends, only better, he supposed, and had been so good that people hated him and killed him. "It is stupid to be good, and people hate men for it out in the big world," mused Carlo. His little brain ached with all the contradictions about him. Unknown to himself, the child felt the strain of the contest which was killing his Mother; which was rending the world all about him; the contest between Science and Theology, and, still more, between Matter and Spirit. He looked up at the shining figure on the tree, and said in his clear young voice, "Christ-child, I do wish you would tell me the real, true Truth."

It was so still that Carlo heard all the clocks ticking. There was a pause. The child lay so still, with the fire shining on his curls, that you would have thought him asleep.

Then the Christ-child spoke in a voice like the chime of bells, and said; "I will, Carlo! What do you want to know?"

You may be surprised, you big people. Carlo was not. He had always known that there are fairies, and that things can speak. He once talked with a squirrel in a tree, though neither of them made a sound. Children know well that all that you can think is possible. So he simply answered in a pleased little tone, "Then tell me, Christ-child, how you can be God if you were a man, and if you're up there on my Christmas-tree."

"I am not up on your tree," said the Christ-child.

"Oh! Christ-child! Do you tell stories too? I hear you speaking up there."

"That is not myself," said the Christ-child. "That is my picture. You have known before now, Carlo, that pictures could speak."

"Yes; all the pictures talk to children," the boy assented. "I hope I shan't forget it when I grow up. But where are you really, then?"

"I am everywhere, Carlo. Everything is my picture, and all try to speak of me. I am in the stars and in the glowworms; I am in the winds and in the mosses; I am in the fruits, in the oceans, in the storms, and in the heart. I am All. I am God."

"But how can you be so big, if you are just the Christ-child?"

"They call me that when I am young," the voice said. "But I am not in one little body, like yours, Carlo. I am in all bodies, but they are not me. Listen! You will feel me in yours!"

Carlo started. Down in his heart he felt a stir, a strange sweet feeling that filled him so full of joy.

"Here I am," said the voice in his heart "When you do wrong, it is I who speak to you and make you sorry."

"I thought that was Carlo's own self," cried the boy.

"It is yourself, but I am yourself, Carlo. I am the inner Voice in your heart. I live in the hearts of all men and all things. I am *the within* of all creatures and all beings. Long, long ago I slept in the Heavens. Then I woke, and I came into the world. I came because even God wants to feel and to know the great world which is himself. When I came I was a child, because I had not grown up in that world. You know what growing pains are, Carlo! When I entered into all these bodies, when I tried to make them speak of me, and tried to make them so pure and good that they should become myself, and when they would not, then they crucified me. The nails and the thorns are their evil deeds. And when men are entirely wicked, then they kill the voice in their hearts."

"But you are alive all the same, and I don't understand that."

"I am alive because I am the Christ-spirit."

"What's a spirit?" Carlo interrupted.

"I cannot tell you. But you may feel it. When you gave your lunch to the lame beggar yesterday, you felt a spirit in your heart. When you said you had been good, and mamma kissed you, but you knew you had told a story, you felt a spirit inside that reproached you and would not let you rest. When the storm howls outside and you lie listening to music stealing through the darkness and over the uproar of the storm, and you feel safe and happy without knowing why, then you feel a spirit. When you look up at the bright stars and one shines and shines till you can't look away, but you love it and something goes out of you to the star, and something comes from the star to your heart, then you feel your spirit and the star-spirit meeting."

"Then what I feel is a spirit?"

“No, Carlo. But that which causes all these things; that which is *behind* everything; that which you cannot see or hear, but only feel when you are very still; that is Spirit and *in it I am*. I ride in that feeling as your heart rides in you.”

“And why do you take so much trouble for everything, Christ-child?”

“Ah, Carlo! My Carlo! I love men. They may be mine. They may grow up to be me. I cannot tell you how to-day. It is a long, long story. But I will tell it every day, if you will only listen. I will teach you better than anyone can if you will only ask me in your heart.”

“And what will you teach me first, Christ-child!”

“To love all beings, for all are mine, and I am speaking in the heart of all. Even the stones grow through the wonderful music of my Voice. If you kill the bird, you kill my picture, and you drive me out of that pretty form I loved. If you strike a child, you strike my image. No one can hurt *me*, or pain *me*, or kill *me*. For I am God. But these creatures which I came to help, to raise up to great Beings, they can be destroyed and scattered for a time. Even a little child can interrupt my work for a while. If you do not listen to me, Carlo; if you do not obey me when I speak in your heart, and believe my voice above all others, then I cannot join you to myself; then we cannot grow up to be one great, wise Being; then I cannot take you home to God where we are one, you and I. And thus you can prevent my work.”

“When I want to be bad, is it you who speak to me then?” said Carlo, puzzled.

“No. It is yourself, that thinks it does not know me. It is because you do not know that I am really Carlo; I am what Carlo may grow up to be, but what he is not yet.”

“How shall I know which Voice is you, then, Christ-child?”

“You may know by this. I shall never tell you to treat any person, or anything, any differently than you would me myself. I will only speak to you in gentle, quiet hours. And often you will make mistakes, for that is just what you are put into the world for, Carlo; you are put there to learn to know my Voice from all the rest. If you try, you will know. When people have puzzled you so much, it was I said down in your heart, ‘Never mind! Let us go play.’ For it was not time for you to think of those things. Often I whispered to you, ‘*Carlo! it is not true.*’ I am always speaking from your heart and from the hearts of all things. Listen for me. Try to know me when I speak from the lips of other people. For I love you! I am yourself. And you, little Carlo, you may grow to be everywhere in the great world. Wait, try, and you will understand.”

“I will try, Christ-child! I will try!” cried Carlo, springing to his feet. The room was quite still. The shining figure hung upon the tree. Everything seemed as usual. Yet down in his heart Carlo felt a strange warm feeling, a something bigger than himself. When he tried to tell his mamma, he could not make it real, and she said it was a dream; but whether or not, on that Christmas Day the Christ-child was born again.

J. CAMPBELL VER PLANCK.

## HYPNOTISM.

MRS. J. C. KEIGHTLEY

FROM A THEOSOPHICAL STANDPOINT.

The subject of Hypnotism has to-day a marked and ever increasing importance. It is encamped in the fields of Therapeutics, Jurisprudence, and Sociology, gaining admission to the latter through its bearing on morals.

A brief glance at the medical situation reveals the two conflicting schools — the Substantialists and the Suggestionists, so to name them — disagreeing among themselves and each with the other party, as to whether (A) the remedial value of this agent, or of Suggestion, is real, practical and generally available; and (B) whether their use does not engender injurious after effects. These effects appear erratic; are of the nature of reflex action; or of some abnormal generation, obscure in history, arising in the dark crannies of our psychological nature, and revealing tendencies never before observed in the patient. This uncertainty of the medical schools affects all other fields with doubt.

From the standpoint of Theosophy, one aspect of this subject is the commanding one; all others are subordinate to it. This is the moral aspect. Priority is given to it, not by virtue of human codes, but by those changeless laws of Nature which provide that motive determines the quality of psychic energy, or force, evolved by the Will. Those who believe that “Will in motion is force, and force produces matter,” claim that motive is the Selector back of the Will, predetermining the use of one or of another cosmic principle, presenting it now as pure force, and now as force tintured and impaired by selfish desire. Each such principle works upon its specific plane, accomplishes results of a given order, and may be sub-divided into force current with evolutionary law, and force working counter to that. There is good and evil (spirit and inertia) in every point of the universe, and every force, in action or at rest, declares for one or the other.

For the purposes of this article, the term Hypnotism will be used in contradistinction to Magnetism or Mesmerism. Hypnotism and Mesmerism are two aspects or forms of the same force, while Magnetism is more properly applied to the working of that force in Cosmos. We hold that all forces are differentiations of one supreme vital electric force, called *Fohat*. *Fohat* is the synthesis of force. It is the energetic aspect of the one Substance, the eternal and intelligent Life Principle; all other forces are its countless correlates. Hence magnetic currents may become electric currents and vice versa; they are interchangeable. Thus Hypnotism and Mesmerism are opposite modes of a generic force; said modes, whether universal or individual, being included under the general term, Magnetism.

The basis of Magnetism is not far to seek. It is that Substance variously called Luminiferous Ether, Radiant Energy, Interatomic Ether, Akasa and so on, though the real Akasa lies far back of the ether of modern Science, and is the noumenon of all these lower forms. It has one specific attribute, which is Sound. A recent scientific discovery shows sound creating force in a sensitive substance. Notes of the musical scale, sung into a tube and vibrating against a membrane covered with ductile paste, produce, each, a geometrical form upon the paste. Another experiment shows that a beam of the solar spectrum say green, when passed through a glass containing wool of

its complementary color — red — causes the glass to emit a given musical note, which is said to be “Do” in the above case. We have here evidence that ether, the great and necessary connector of worlds, the radiant fluid in which all creation hangs suspended, and which interpenetrates all forms, pours forth from the unseen and unknown Source, radiantly shining, evolving form and singing as it comes. Its spaces are constantly magnetized, and Prof. Tyndall says; “Sound is one of the physical effects which accompany sudden magnetization and demagnetization.” (“Light,” p. 136, Para. 22.)<sup>1</sup>

We have thus a predicate of the great resonance called Aum, as well as of the mystic sounds heard by the self-magnetized yogi. Prof. Tyndall further says: “All the tissues and all the solids and fluids of the human body are diamagnetic.” (“Light,” p. 145.)<sup>1</sup> “There is nothing but radiant energy, says a writer in *“The Theosophist,”* Purush and Prakriti (Force and Substance) are the two poles of the one eternal element and are synonymous and convertible terms. Our bodies as organized tissues are indeed “an unstable arrangement of chemical forces, plus a molecular force, as Prof. Bain calls Electricity, raging in them dynamically during life, tearing asunder their particles at death to transform itself into a chemical force after the process, and thence again to resurrect as an electrical force or life in every individual atom.” These manifestations of force may be summed up in magnetic attraction and repulsion, always taking place in the whole body of ether.

Prof. Bain regards electricity as a molecular force. In the November issue of the *“Popular Science Monthly,”* an Electrician demonstrates it to be light, while Keely, destroying gravitation in a given mass by the discovery of its key note, shows sound inhering in the etheric constitution of all things, and Professor Crookes has come many steps nearer than any modern Scientists, towards the demonstration of ether (or protyle) as the one basis of all force. It would indeed seem that there is only one magnet in the universe, as Kircher claimed, which magnetizes all creation, and that this is the “Spiritual Sun” of the Occultist, the One Life “whose center is everywhere,” in the innumerable radiant atoms which exhibit the eternal motion, now acting, now reacting; now attractive, now repellant. We have here the basis of magnetism; and, when it is differentiated into the life force of man, the basis of Mesmerism and Hypnotism as well.

Turning now to the consideration of these as applied to individuals, we have first to ascertain what has really been done when an operator produces their effects. Bearing in mind that the one Substance is atomic, (we use the word in a higher spiritualized sense) we find that “the manifestations of atomic forces are individual actions of Will, resulting in the unconscious rushing of atoms into the concrete image already subjectively created by the Will.” (*Isis* I. p. 61.) These atoms are the monads of Leibnitz, the passive life elementals of the occultist, which act automatically under the stimulus of cosmic or individual will by the means of which, ideas — thought forms — are stamped upon them as upon a sensitized plate. Each has its own inherent motion. They have been identified with the Pacinian corpuscles; they exist throughout free space and interpenetrate all objects; we take them in by processes of inhibition; it is through them that “occult influences alter the constitution of so-called inorganic matter;” they are the semi-conscious agents of all natural phenomena. In the *Occult World* an Adept describes them as coalescing with the thoughts formed by us, and peopling our currents in space with living pictures or forms sensed by our fluidic bodies; finally modern Science, in the person of Dr. B. D. Richardson, F.T.S., recognizes them, albeit unconsciously, in these words: “I speak only of a veritable material agent, refined, but actual and substantial; an agent having quality of weight and of volume; an agent susceptible of chemical combination, and thereby of change of physical state and condition; an agent passive in its action, moved always, *i.e.*, by

influences apart from itself, obeying other influences; an agent possessing no initiative power, no *vis* or *energia natura*, but still playing a most important if not a primary part, in the production of the phenomena resulting from the action of the *energia* upon the visible matter." This, says Madame Blavatsky, is a description of passive life elementals, "one of the countless aspects of our subtle super-sensuous matter, life principle."

Flammarion the astronomer, quotes Dr. Barreti as saying that there is a "special nervous force which he calls radiant neuric force; it is shown to act according to laws analogous to those that have been recognized by experimental science in Light, heat, and electricity." Hence this force must be molecular or atomic, or inter-atomic as Keely would say. We have to deal with this force in mesmeric and hypnotic phenomena. Madame Blavatsky states that "in Mesmerism the curative agency is an animal aura, force or fluid in one person, by means of which a peculiar action is set up in the physical system of another." It also appears that while "the earth is charged with one form of electricity — called positive — which it evolves continuously by spontaneous action in its interior or center of motion, human bodies in common with all other forms of matter, are charged with an opposite form of electricity — negative," and that organic and inorganic bodies, if left to themselves, will constantly and involuntarily charge themselves with and evolve the form of electricity opposed to that of the earth itself.

This natural law is the basis of gravitation, which is reducible to magnetic repulsion and attraction. The above quotations are from "Isis Unveiled," whose author goes on to say: "When the magnetizer shall have learned the grand secret of polarizing the action and endowing his fluid with a sexual force, he will have become the greatest magician living. Thus the astral light is androgyne, for equilibrium is the resultant of two opposing forces, eternally reacting upon each other. The result of this is Life. When two forces are expanded and remain so long inactive as to equal one another and come to a complete rest, the condition is Death." — *Isis*, Vol. I. p. 25.

The operator, then, knows that the vital airs move in the nerves and are connected with the production of Breath. These vital airs are different kinds of magnetic currents. Their action upon the surrounding ether produces various occult sounds. They are, so say; the different vital rays in the body and form, in their totality, the *Jiva*, called *Prana* in individual man.

All nervous diseases are caused either by the want of this fluid or by its accumulation. Its absence produces debility, and all states of organic exhaustion and breakdown. Its accumulation produces obstruction, congestive states, and the like. These two conditions are the parents of all diseases. Either condition may be set down as a disturbance of magnetic equilibrium or magnetic polarity. A great number of lesser polarities existing between cell and cell, between organ and organ, between molecule and atom, go to make up the grand total of the magnetic polarity of man. An adept mesmerizer would sense the exact center of disturbance. The less informed operator either gives his own healthy fluid to make up for a deficiency in the patient, or removes local obstructions by increasing the circulation and equilibrating the nervous fluid of the patient. In either case he gives his own vital force and it, of itself, of its own motion, enters the patient's system as a natural and healing force. Sympathy between patient and operator hastens the cure, for the reason that all bodies are either positive or negative to one another, as well as to the earth. If both are positive, "like poles repel." The auric or magnetic emanations are broken or driven back upon their center of motion and a jarring or antagonism results. This magnetic disturbance is sensed by the mind as "antipathy." When the rays or currents pass through one another in even flow from center to circumference, as in cases where one body is negative and the other positive then magnetic harmony results. "There is positive magnetism," says Fludd, fire philosopher, "for the rays pass from center to circumference, and in this

case they not only affect sicknesses, but also moral sentiments.” Two bodies thus concur in the production of a positive form of force which can be used by him who has the impulse of will and healthy action. The sympathy is most complete when the other body is charged with the opposite form of force; this is noticeably the case in sex attraction.

The ordinary operator begins by *sub-conscious* action. Back in his mind he has a motive. This motive gives intensity to the will, and *form to the idea*. It classifies his action. That is to say, the moral bearing of his action causes him to choose, unconsciously to himself, by *the selective action of soul*, either one or two forms of force. This is the point of departure between Mesmerism on the one hand, and Hypnotism on the other, and we shall subsequently revert to it. Whichever course is chosen, the after action of the operator is the same. He brings clearly before his mind a mental image of the thing he desires to do.

Dr. Hammond says that “Mind is a force produced” (eliminated, or freed, would be better) “by nervous action; the brain is the chief organ from which the force called mind is evolved.” We consider the brain as a reflector; a register of the universal mind. The stress or tension set up in the nervous fluid by the fixation of the Will and Thought acts like crystallization and produces a subjective form or picture, which is, on the plane of Thought, a real one, just as vibration in ether produces forms in sensitive paste. Into this living form as into a vortex, the atoms are drawn; the whole is projected towards the patient by means of a current of nervous or life fluid, liberated by the Will, and effects a lodgment in his system. The atoms, or life elementals, stamped with the image of the operator’s Will, automatically fulfill that Will. This action of Will upon the atoms is dynamo-magnetic, just as there is also “a magnetic-dynamic action upon elementals, of different planetary conjunctions and oppositions,” so that the adept calculates the effect of such an influx, and can also “trace the parabola of a thought.” (Olcott, “*Theosophist*,” Vol. VI., p. 173.) The fact that some of these elementary germs drawn from the psychic nature of the operator, (germs often latent in him; seeds of his previous lives,) remain in the system of the patient, may serve to partially explain the fact that a sudden moral crisis and tendencies hitherto unknown, are often post-hypnotic results in the patient. Such seeds ripen in him under favorable circumstances, when sown in the passive soil to which the operator has unconsciously consigned them. Moral and mental disease is thus contagious — infectious even. It is absolutely necessary that the mesmerizer should be pure in life and in mind, in order to secure results of permanent, unqualified benefit. “Will, guided by immutable laws, acts like a blind force. It evolves forms, consciously or unconsciously, according to the principle by which it is guided, and is subject to Law.” The adept does consciously all that in the minor operator is unconscious, and he alone *consciously* selects one or another of the cosmic principles, which selection, in the ordinary man, is sub-consciously determined by his motive.

This question of motive we will now examine, for in this the distinction between the mesmerizer and the hypnotizer arises. It is the selective agent. To take first the case of the mesmerizer: his intention is *to give*; it is benevolent, healing. He has rarely anything to gain by his act. He does not desire to *compel*, to *force* health upon the patient; his wish is to give health *if it may be given*; hence he works under the Law. He pours forth his force into the universal medium, satisfied if the currents coincide and his force fulfill its aim; satisfied too, if that aim fails, being modified by the universal currents governed by Law. He accepts Karma, or action and reaction, when his force is thrown back upon its center, as when it passes, glowing and free, to break down the barriers of disease, or congested Life. From its very nature, his is the *expansive* form of force. The Life force *per se* is colorless, universal; and in so far as he does not color it with the tincture of his personality, having no personal desire in the matter and leaving

all to Law, his fluid is not charged with his personal psychic seed, ideas or life forms, and these are not sown in the foreign ground of his patient's nature. Whether he gives vitality or removes obstructions, his force acts with the universal Life force to that end and is no more "his" than the electricity freed by a battery bears the specific stamp of that battery. It is Jiva, guided by evolutionary law, focused, for the moment, in the operator. When equilibrium is brought about and magnetic sleep is induced, it is brought about just as natural sleep is, by the preponderance of the Life waves, and leaves the soul as naturally free. These waves "rush into the body with greater intensity every hour, and we, being unable to resist them any longer than the period usually observed, they overpower us and we fall asleep. While sleeping, the life waves adjust themselves to the molecules of the body; and when the equilibrium is complete we again wake to continue the contest with Life. If this periodical adjustment did not occur, the life current would destroy us." (*Echoes of the Orient*, p. 13.) Finally those versed in the finer forces of nature, know that the fire or heat *tatwa* is expansive.

In Hypnotism, all the above is reversed. The intention of the operator is to dominate, to subjugate, to overpower. He may be an experimenter in psychic phenomena or may desire to produce sleep for an operation; either way, his Will is to succeed; its action is explosive and its choice is the contractive form of force. Where his primary object is knowledge, he fails to reflect upon the psychic means taken to obtain it. In the very nature of things his force is *contractive*; it springs from the Karmic plane, the plane of desire. Consequently we may expect also to find that force of his, awakening the animal or instinctual nature of the patient, the life of the Karma plane. These two things are just what we do find. Proof of the first, the contractive nature of his force, lies in the fact stated by modern Science and by occultism both, in rare agreement, viz: "Hypnotism is produced by the *withdrawal* of the nervous fluid from the capillary nerves." These nerves, remarks Madame Blavatsky, commenting upon the work of A. Simonin, a modern experimenter, "being so to say, the sentries that keep the door of our senses open, getting anaesthized under hypnotic conditions, allow these to get closed." Proof of the second fact is given thus by A. Simonin, among others. "In Hypnotism, animal instinct reaches the greatest development," (prefaces Madame Blavatsky.) "So much so, indeed, that the aphorism, 'extremes meet,' can never receive a better application than Magnetism and Hypnotism." How true these words of A. Simonin's, as to the difference between the mesmerized and the hypnotized subjects. "In the one, his ideal nature, his moral self — the reflection of his divine nature — are carried to their extreme limits, and the subject becomes almost a celestial being: (*un ange*). In the other (Hypnotism) it is his instincts which develop in a most surprising fashion. The hypnotic lowers himself to the level of the animal. From a physiological standpoint, Magnetism, (Mesmerism) is, comforting and curative, and Hypnotism, which, is but the result of an unbalanced state, is most dangerous." The hypnotizer, then, produces an unbalanced, and jarring condition, whereas the magnetizer equilibrates and redistributes Life, often giving, or to speak more correctly, conveying, more to his patient. Swedenborg, like the oriental adepts, considered evil the first cause of disease; that "evil" which is represented by the passivity or inertia of nature. It primarily consists in resistance to the normal flow of Life currents and, in the moral world, to the upward, tendency of evolutionary law. This moral resistance has its seat in divergences and differentiations of the Life principle. Swedenborg, says that "evil acts in the body by closing the minutest vessels that enter into the texture of the larger, hence the first and inmost obstructions and vitiation of the blood. Every individual disease corresponds to its own evil." To put this closure of minutest vessels into other words we should have to describe the contraction of atomic and elementary substance.

The magnetizer gives. The hypnotizer robs. His animal force, rushing from the plane of Desire (Kâma) overpowers, devitalizes, brutalizes. The magnetizer imparts a Life potency which proceeds from higher planes; it is manasic.<sup>2</sup> The selection of one among the seven human principles has been made, in both cases, by the motive which is the determinant of energetic quality or nature, and we find the physiological realm illumined and governed by the majestic righteousness of Soul, by the absolute justice of moral Law.

MRS. J. C. KEIGHTLEY,  
*In the Occult Review.*

[No apology is required for the insertion of such a lengthy article in the abbreviated columns of the PACIFIC THEOSOPHIST. Hypnotism is too important a subject, and Mrs. Keightley treats it from the standpoint of thorough knowledge. — [ED. THE PACIFIC THEOSOPHIST.]

## NOTES

1. {*Six Lectures on Light*, John Tyndall.}
2. Manas. The Mind.

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*The Path* – November 1891, Vol. 6, pp. 233-237.

## THE IDEAL AND THE PRACTICAL. PILGRIM {PROBABLY JULIA VER PLANCK}

{1 of 2}

It must be admitted that to be of any use in the world the ideal must be capable of being proved practical, but from this it does not follow that the self-dubbed practical people of to-day are the fittest judges of the practicability of any ideal theory; indeed, their very nature disqualifies them from judging of the wider fields of vision.

The charge of being unpractical is often made against the idealist who deals with the higher ethics by those who trudge along the well-worn track of daily duty, but though the latter may be incapable of soaring beyond the well-beaten way, the study of history in all departments of life might teach them that the visionary's dreams of one age may form the basis of practical work in the next. What good thing is there that the race has ever achieved that was not in the first instance shadowed forth by one whom the practical workers of his day regarded as an idealistic dreamer? The poets and prophets of all ages stand in advance of their time, but a modesty of demeanor in face of a revelation they are incapable of grasping would be a more appropriate attitude for the practical workers than the assumption of omniscience which their ignorant criticism implies.

It is also beside the point to dwell on the fact that the idealist's life may not be on a par with his teachings; it may indeed fail to come up to the level of the conscientious duty-performer without in the least detracting from the value of such teachings. And it must also be remembered that "man is not, according to any analogy, observation, or experience, a straight line. Would that he were, and that life, or progress, or development, or whatever we choose to call it, meant merely following one straight road or another. The whole question, the mighty problem, would be very easily solved

then." Man's nature is as complex as the Universe of which he is the microcosm. To instance two of the parallel lines of advance, the awakening of his spiritual perception is quite as important a part of his development as the progress of his moral nature towards altruistic thought and action. But all the force of the nature is required to effect real advance on either plane. Alternate life-times may be so consumed, with the apparent result that the one or the other is taking precedence in the development of the individual man. It ill becomes any, therefore, to belittle the results that are being achieved because they may not be on the particular lines on which they themselves are advancing.

It is also a fact in Occultism that the attainment of knowledge as to the real facts of existence and the ultimate possibilities of the soul produces great Karmic results. "That is because it is impossible to give any attention to occultism without making a definite choice between what are familiarly called good and evil. The first step in occultism brings the student to the tree of knowledge. He must pluck and eat; he must choose. No longer is he capable of the indecision of ignorance. He goes on either on the good or on the evil path. And to step definitely and knowingly even but one step on either path, produces great Karmic results. The mass of men walk waveringly, uncertain as to the goal they aim at; their standard of life is indefinite; consequently their Karma operates in a confused manner. But when once the threshold of knowledge is reached the confusion begins to lessen, and consequently the Karmic results increase enormously, because all are acting in the same direction on all the different planes; for the occultist cannot be half-hearted, nor can he return when he has passed the threshold. These things are as impossible as that the man should become the child again. The individuality has approached the state of responsibility by reason of growth: it cannot recede from it." The outcome of all this is that the evil in the Occultist is more rapidly brought to the surface than in the case of ordinary men. This is of course due to the greater intensity of purpose in the former, and it also requires a greater intensity of purpose to rid himself of the evil, but while that process is going on it is only natural that the evil which lay deep seated in his nature, and which has been brought to the surface, should be very apparent to the eyes of men. The initiatory stages of occultism — that short cut to Perfection — may therefore easily appear to the eyes of the ignorant as a descent instead of an ascent.

A vivid illustration of the high ideality of a very material conception may be found in Mr. Edward Bellamy's novel *Looking Backward*. But to the majority of readers it will also stand as an illustration of the impracticability of an ideal theory. It must indeed be a trumpet call to action to one who can so shut his eyes to facts that he is capable of believing such an organization of Society as there pictured could by any possibility be realized by humanity as now constituted. Whether realizable or not, it should be to all of us a beautiful picture to which it is a delight to turn from the hideous reality of to-day. Though severed from all the spiritual aims that could alone give it great value, it is in some sort of way a vindication of the higher Socialism, the Socialism taught in the life of Jesus Christ, whose animating motives are love and charity, and whose end is justice — a contrast truly to the socialism whose animating motives are greed and envy and whose end is plunder!

Writing on *Christianity and Socialism*<sup>1</sup> in an article which breathes the atmosphere of sound common sense, and also that of an enthusiastic sympathy such as may well quicken the pulses of the reader with a like hope, Dean Plumptre points out that Socialism's real antagonist is not Christianity but the terrible culmination of Individualism which we are now reaching — individualism which finds its utterance in the question "May I not do what I will with mine own?" and which is summarized in the motto of universal competition, "Every man for himself and devil take the hindmost."

There are so many false notions prevalent about Socialism that his description is worth repeating. "The ideal of Socialism," he writes, "is just the opposite of this (Individualism). It assumes as the result of experience that there is in every man, either inherent in his nature or as the result of the environment by which his character has been fashioned, an evil selfishness which needs control; that the struggle for existence implies a fierce warfare of class with class and man with man — *bellum omnium contra omnes* — and is productive of an immense amount of evil. It holds that it is the function of the State to moderate this warfare and to remedy these evils. It insists on the principle that the rights of the individual are subordinate to the well-being of the whole Society; that right to freedom of action and to property is the creation of the State, and may therefore be limited and controlled by it. Even the Socialist theories which postulate the natural rights of man both to freedom and to a share of the land look to the collective action of Society as the means of asserting and perpetuating them. It lies in the nature of things that this may be the ideal of any form of government — Monarchic, Aristocratic, Democratic. It is found in the theocracy of Israel under its judges or its kings. It may be represented in ideal pictures of a patriotic king, such as we find in Dante's *De Monarchia*, Fénelon's *Télémaque*, or Ken's *Edmund*, or of government by the wisest, as in Plato's *Republic*, the *Utopia* of Sir T. More, the *New Atlantis* of Bacon. The language of the late Emperor Frederick in his rescript to his Chancellor was altogether that of one who desired to be a patriotic, and therefore Socialist, King; ready to "support every movement towards furthering the economical prosperity of every class of society and reconciling their conflicting interests."

But to return to Mr. Bellamy's book. An utopia where every desire of the senses should receive instant gratification is an ideal which will no doubt satisfy many men. To the poor of this world who are able to satisfy so few of their desires, it may indeed seem an Eldorado, but even granted that state to be attained which Mr. Bellamy so ably pictures, what advance towards any permanent bliss will man have made? Life must still be a struggle, blinded with ignorance and bounded by the grave. There will still remain the whole vast infinitude between the unrest of conditioned existence and the Nirvana of pure Being, between the pain-goaded and pain-causing struggles of man and the unutterable Peace of God. "Teach the people," says one who stands on the very threshold of that Peace of God, or who, indeed, may have renounced it in order more effectually to succor Humanity, "teach the people to see that life on this earth, *even the happiest*, is but a burden and an illusion." While the solution, one by one, of the varied problems of the hidden life may be practically attained by every individual, the Socialistic dream of material perfection, though it may become practical in some modified form to the Humanity of a far-off future, remains to-day in the realm of the beautiful ideals that are utterly impracticable.

While no real comparison can be made between the fanciful story we have been discussing and a great ethical work, it is a satisfaction to turn to such a book as Dr. Buck's *Study of Man and the Way to Health*. Though it may not be given to man to mold outward circumstance in accordance with his ideas of divine justice, the betterment of his own inner nature, the conquest of self, and the gradual enlargement of his sympathy are in the highest degree practical.

The *Study of Man*<sup>2</sup> is undoubtedly a valuable addition to the Theosophical literature of the age, inasmuch as, while barely mentioning the word Theosophy and hinting only in a vague way at the fundamental doctrines of Karma and reincarnation, it yet appeals to the general reader, and more particularly to the scientific one, in terms which, if the train of thought suggested be carried out, are likely to lead to some apprehension of the divine Wisdom, which alone can offer to men, capable of reason, any adequate explanation of the mystery of existence.

It is, however, in some ways a disappointing book to lay down, particularly after the expectations raised by the laudatory notices with which it was ushered in. Perhaps too much stress must not be laid on the fact that for the general reader — indeed for all save those who are versed in the medical science of the day, many passages in the book would require further analysis to render them intelligible. But this, after all, is a minor point.

All able exposition of ethical doctrine must doubtless find readers whom it will benefit, but for those who only respond when the highest key is struck this book must be considered a failure.

To inculcate the love of one's neighbor, or, in a word, Altruism, has been one of the objects of all teachers of morality, and only praise can follow the perusal of any work devoted to such an end. But some efficient cause must exist. Without the highest sanction Altruism is impossible. "No man can be good without God," writes Seneca in his 14th Epistle; "God is nigh unto thee, He is with thee, He is within thee. If thou shalt see a man unappalled by dangers, untouched by illicit desires, happy in adversity, calm in the midst of tempests, looking on men as from a higher place, on gods as from an equal place, will there not enter into thee a reverence for such a one? Wilt thou not say, there is here something greater, something higher than can be believed to be of mere kin to the mortal body in which we behold him with our eyes? And such there is: that power within him hath come from God."

PILGRIM.

## NOTES

1. "Christianity and Socialism," E. H. Plumptre, Dean of Wells, in the *Contemporary Review* of November, 1889. It argues well for the Church of England to find in its ranks so worthy a successor of such Christian Socialists as Robertson, Maurice, and Kingsley.
2. {Referenced in this article (by H. P. Blavatsky) in *Lucifer*, April 1889, pp. 169-171:

## REVIEWS.

### A STUDY OF MAN AND THE WAY TO HEALTH. <sup>1</sup>

"Selfishness is the father of vice;  
Altruism, the mother of virtue."

Such is the motto which Dr. Buck has placed on the title page of this remarkable work, a motto which is as appropriate to the book as it is itself true, to which these pages bear most lucid and convincing testimony. But their scope is wider than this, and the readers of LUCIFER will assuredly be grateful for a somewhat full account of a book which should be in the hands of every one — whether a Theosophist or not — who is in any sense a searcher after truth.

It will assist the reader to quote the following lines from Dr. Buck's eloquently simple preface. He writes:—

This treatise may be epitomized as follows:—

The cosmic form in which all things are created, and in which all things exist, is a universal duality.

Involution and evolution express the two-fold process of the one law of development, corresponding to the two planes of being, the subjective and the objective. Consciousness is the central fact of being.

Experience is the only method of knowing; therefore to know is to become.

The Modulus of Nature, that is, the pattern after which she everywhere builds, and the method to which she continually conforms, is an Ideal or Archetypal Man.

The Perfect Man is the anthropomorphic God, a living, present Christ in every human soul.

Two natures meet on the human plane and are focalized in man. These are the animal ego, and the higher self; the one, an inheritance from lower life, the other an over-shadowing from the next higher plane.

The animal principle is selfishness: the divine principle is altruism.

However defective in other respects human nature may be, all human endeavor must finally be measured by the principle of altruism, and must stand or fall by the measure in which it inspires and uplifts humanity.

Literary criticism, however justifiable and however valuable, is not the highest tribunal; were it so, the following pages would never have seen the light. The highest tribunal is the criterion of truth, and the test of truth is by its use and beneficence.

Superstition is not religion; speculation is not philosophy; materialism is not science; but true religion, true philosophy, and true science are ever the hand-maids of truth.

It should be noted, however, in connection with this brief outline that, while rightly insisting on the ever-present *duality* in all forms of manifestation, Dr. Buck is fully alive to the importance of never losing sight of that Absolute Unity which lies behind all the duality of manifestation. On this Unity he insists repeatedly and emphatically, for it forms one of the fundamental doctrines in his philosophy, as it has always done in that of the East.

In his first chapter, on the Criterion of Truth, the author most ably leads the reader's mind from the familiar fact of his own personality, step by step, through the dangerous rocks of both scientific and religious dogmatism, to the conclusion that the criterion of truth for men lies not in their estimate of the senses, nor in a specific process of reasoning upon phenomena confined to one half of his nature; but in the co-ordinate harmony which he is able to bring out of the chaos of all his varied experiences.

Such is briefly the conclusion to which the first chapter leads up, but it is to be regretted that want of space prevents our calling attention to the many beautiful thoughts and luminous suggestions thrown out in the course of the argument, especially in that part where the author demonstrates the equal and co-ordinate reality, validity and importance of the subjective as well as the objective aspect of man's nature.

The second chapter deals with the problems of Matter and Force in a manner at once simple, clear and highly philosophical. The beautiful application made of the principle of consonant rhythm as the agent by means of which *form* is produced is at once a splendid, far-reaching generalization and a tribute to the truth of the fundamental axioms of occult philosophy.

The succeeding chapters on The Phenomenal World, Philosophy and Science, are in a measure preparatory to those on Life, Polarity and Living Forms. All through these chapters the clearness of the author's thought and exposition deserve the highest praise. On one point only — since it is the function of a reviewer to criticize — need a word be said. On page 60, *et seq.* Dr. Buck speaks

frequently of “dead” and of “living” matters, drawing a marked line of demarcation between them. Now since Dr. Buck has evidently thoroughly assimilated the doctrines of Theosophy which indeed underlie and permeate his entire work, he is doubtless well aware that *strictly speaking* there is no such thing as “dead” matter in the Universe. It is therefore but fair to assume that he uses the term “matter” in a limited sense, to distinguish a state of matter in which life does not manifest itself in that particular manner to which we have confined the term “living” from that state in which life does so manifest itself. But, unfortunately, as Dr. Buck has not stated and explained this specifically, he may be misunderstood to believe in that fiction of the scientific imagination, commonly called “dead matter:” a belief which would be inconsistent with the whole tenor of his work.

This criticism is partly anticipated by the chapter on Planes of Life; but though his meaning is clear to those familiar with his basic thought, yet a few explicit sentences might usefully be added in the pages referred to on the appearance of the second edition — which will undoubtedly soon be called for.

The author’s conception of “Magnetism,” too, needs further elucidation. The term has many meanings and many connotations, so that Dr. Buck needs to devote a few pages to careful explanation and definition of the sense in which he uses it.

From the chapter on the Planes of Life, we pass naturally to that on Human Life, the central point, the culmination of the book. In this and the following chapters we see the real bearing and utility of the general principles with which the author has familiarized us in the preceding pages. We see them applied to the concrete facts of life as all know them; and we learn the reason of the almost joyous hope and expectation with which the author faces the many terrible problems now clamoring for a solution which seems afar off.

From this point the author deals with various aspects of human life and development, throwing light on all and giving clues to many an intricate problem. More and more clearly does he demonstrate the truth of the motto placed on his title page, and ever and ever more forcibly does he bring it home to the reader that happiness only is to be found in widest altruism. And through it all runs clear logic and accurate science, no analogy being accepted that has not been fully tested and proven legitimate. The chapters on Consciousness, Involution and Evolution of Man, and the Higher Self are especially to be commended to the careful study of all students. Some of the author’s statements are not only profoundly true and philosophical: they are simply sublime.

It is such books as this which form the best answer to the query: What has the Theosophical Society *done*? For this book — written by an earnest theosophist, one of the oldest and truest members of the T.S., a man respected and beloved by all who know him — will give new light, new hope, and new courage to many. It will give a fresh impulse to earnest seekers for truth by pointing out a new method of research, as well as by defining and clearly stating the problems which call for investigation.

#### NOTE

1. By J. D. Buck, M.D., Cincinnati. Robert Clarke & Co. Price £2 50 (or 10s. 6d.)}

## THE IDEAL AND THE PRACTICAL.

PILGRIM {PROBABLY JULIA KEIGHTLEY}

{2 of 2}  
(*Concluded.*)

Altruism truly will have to be realized and expressed in action during our journey to the great goal, but it cannot be called the great goal itself. It may be a means, a necessary means, but it is not the only means. The very word, too, has a ring of coldness in it, and there must be many who require to light the flame of their love and devotion at a more fervent center than any thought of Humanity can kindle! Indeed, is the Humanity of to-day either in the individual or in the mass such as to elicit either our love or our worship? Scorn, loathing, and pity seem more like the emotions raised in contemplating alternately its meanness, its vice, and its suffering. True it is that none are so fitted as the Occultist to return the world's scorn with princely interest, for none are lifted so immeasurably above the world with its bounded vision and its trivial aims, but though scorn may only be the reflex action which would make it exactly commensurate with the intensity of worship in the soul, it is of the very essence of separateness, and it must be remembered that all sense of separateness has to be killed out. The scorn must be replaced by an infinite compassion. But how is this to be done? The divine alone provides a bridge for the scattered fragments. It is only through the Deity — the Perfect — the All-pervading — the Unutterable Essence of our own inmost Being — that man can truly become one in love and worship with his fellow-man. Yoga is the watchword, Yoga is the means, Yoga is the end. It is written, "Counsels of perfection are the aliment of all strenuous souls," and one who in this bitter and arid desert of illusion has once seen the vision of the holy grail can never cease to thirst for its draught of sacramental wine.

Union being, then, our watchword and our aim, we must not be too much cast down at the apparent disunion which seems to precede the attainment of each stage in the progress. It is sad beyond expression, the feeling of disunion when the ardent affections of childhood and youth are gradually dissipated through the failure of the old friends to respond to the newer ideals before us. The closest earthly union of all — that of the married souls — would indeed so fill the whole horizon of life with bliss that it would far more than compensate for the sad severance of the other ties, but when this also is denied, there often rises in the heart a feeling of loneliness and homelessness so accentuated as to be almost too bitter to bear. But is not this merely the prelude to the heart's greater expansion? to the soul's wider vision of its object and its end? It is long indeed before the "great orphan" Humanity can claim its own in us! before we are capable of giving birth even to the germ of that world-wide sympathy which so infinitely transcends all personal claims, and which, when grown to full stature, *is* the very blotting out of self, *is* the very gate of Heaven!

The practical person may here step in and say that this identification of self with Humanity can only be achieved by practical work for the race in every-day human life. Doubtless the race needs its champions and deliverers to-day as of old. Let Hercules again step forth, girded to cleanse the Augean stables! Let the troubled and careful Martha continue her work of service! There are many laborers wanted in God's vineyard. But let not the hands that work say to the brain that guides them "We have

no need of thee.” The practical person has work to do in the world: let him do it! but “counsels of perfection”<sup>1</sup> were not written for him! It is the same old problem of “Meditation and Action”<sup>2</sup> which so few of the western people are yet fit to grasp,— within the quietistic term meditation being embraced all the battles of the hidden life, including the “great battle.”<sup>3</sup>

A pointed illustration of Europe’s incapacity for right thought may be found in Draper’s great work, *The Intellectual Development of Europe*. Words are of course mere counters which may bear different significations in different ages, or to different individuals in the same age, but no mere juggling with the counters will account for a fundamental difference of conception as to the thing, and when a writer (and the point is only accentuated when the writer is so distinguished for ability and wide-mindedness) uses the word quietism as synonymous with apathy, it is similar to mistaking the top rung of a ladder for the bottom one — an absolute perversion of vision. A little knowledge of the Vedic philosophy teaches that the active emotional nature of one lit with the fire of Passion (“Rajas”) is greatly superior to the apathy of one sunk in the ignorance of Sloth (“Tamas”), but far above the passionate nature stands the one who has transferred his energy from the outer on to the inner plane, and has thereby attained some amount of equilibrium, some amount of self-control. When the inner struggle is continued with such intensity — aided and guided by the concentration on the Supreme — that all outer things lose their importance, a stage of “quietism” is reached which in external appearance may resemble the debased apathy of the ignorant boor, but does it not imply absolute perversion of vision to mistake the sublime heights of Serenity (“Satwan”) for the depths of ignorant sloth? It must be apparent that the above misunderstanding is no mere verbal difference, and can only be accounted for by the fact that a material-minded race is incapable even of believing in the existence of states of spiritual exaltation.

Before the battles of the inner life all else truly sinks into unreality, and the great teacher whom the Western people honor has in the story of Martha and Mary left a record of his thought on the subject of “Meditation and Action” which may be summarized in the lesson that it is greater and nobler and better *to be* than *to do*, that the race is ultimately more benefited by the thinking of the thoughts and the living of the life than by all the actions of all the philanthropists. The real battle has to be fought within, and any finding of external spheres of energy or beneficence is a mere postponement of, though it may be a necessary preliminary to, that awful struggle.

It is only by slow degrees that the lesson contained in each pregnant paradox of *Light on the Path* is painfully learned through payment of heart’s blood. First in the book but last in realization comes the rule (No. 5) “Kill out all sense of separateness.” When the disciple has learned this in its entirety he is one with Humanity, for he is one with God. But the painful process is described in the antithesis, “Yet stand alone and isolated, because nothing that is embodied, nothing that is conscious of separation, nothing that is out of the Eternal can aid you.” It is this standing alone that is the hard task, but it must surely be the prelude to the greater expansion of the whole nature, it must surely be a step nearer to the merging of the self in the All! Bitter beyond description is the learning of the lesson, when the whole passion of the passionate nature is concentrated in the cry — the unavailing cry — for the sympathy of the friend, for the love of the lover. It is poor consolation to say that to find content in these things would be to satisfy the immortal hunger upon husks. It is a very mortal and human hunger that cries out. Nevertheless it is but reasonable to admit that only by such means can the mortal hunger be replaced by the immortal, that only by such terrible strangling of our personal human desires can man attain to the wider sympathy, the greater wisdom, and the all-embracing love of the God.

Many, O weary pilgrim, may be thy journeys back to earth, many thy tortures on the ever-recurring wheel of life, many thy shrinkings of soul from the terrors of the “dire probations.” But take courage, Lanoo, and keep the fire burning, the fire that burns within, for its light must grow and must increase, until when the last great battle shall be won, “its light will suddenly become the infinite light,” and then to thee may be addressed the words — words that may even convey to our still earth-bound understanding some faint description of that indescribable achievement — the realization of the loftiest conceivable *ideal* as an absolute *practical* fact: “Behold! thou hast become the light, thou hast become the sound, thou art thy Master and thy God. Thou art *Thyself* the object of thy search: the Voice unbroken that resounds throughout eternities, exempt from change, from sin exempt, the seven sounds in one, the Voice of the Silence.”<sup>4</sup>

PILGRIM.

## NOTES

1. {The councils of perfection, also known as the evangelical councils, are three Christian principles that are intended to help people attain perfection. They are: Chastity, Poverty, and Obedience.}
2. See the article on “Meditation and Action” in *Problems of the Hidden Life*.
3. {The “great battle” most likely refers to the lower v. higher, good v. evil, or material v. spiritual battle within oneself.}
4. From *The Voice of the Silence, being extracts from the Book of the Golden Precepts* translated and annotated by H.P.B. *Light on the Path* was a work deserving of the highest praise, *The Voice of the Silence* is beyond all praise. It is more light on the path to those capable of understanding it. — PILGRIM.

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## THE IDEAL IN POLITICS.

JASPER NIEMAND

From the point of view of modern politics, the title of this paper would appear to be a misnomer. Ideals occupy an insignificant place in the political life of to-day. That an Ideal *should be* the informing soul of politics, national or international, it is the aim of this paper to demonstrate; and to demonstrate, moreover, without dissection of any political party or creed.

In the search for correct thought as a preliminary to right action, we do wisely if we examine the universal model — the spiritual Law and Mode manifesting through Nature. We find that spirit — or life and consciousness — permeates matter down to the last atom of substance. Analogy, then, would lead us to expect that an Ideal should be the breath and life of all systems of thought that are destined to move the world, and to assist the march of Evolution. We do, in fact, find recognition of this truth among all genuine workers, the creators, those who work for the love of the work in itself. To such as these, the ideal model always stands forth clearly before their inner eye.

The public mind, however, *as such*, is as yet inchoate, elemental: it has barely conceived the idea that there is any necessity for the presence of an Ideal at the core of all action, human and divine. This gap in the general thought has arisen, to a very great

extent, from the hardening effects of creed and dogma upon human life. Dogma prevails in many departments of thought: nowhere is its petrifying Medusa head more clearly seen than in the idea that man is, to a large extent, a creature destined to live the best part of his existence, to reap his most actual harvests, to possess his most vivid consciousness upon the material plane. Religion combats the belief. But Religion has not that vital grip upon the public mind which could alone sway public action. It is an instinctive belief, rooted in the brain-mind, and it follows that matters of all kinds are mainly judged by men, from their effects or results — often their immediate results — upon the material plane. We admit — some of us — that a man may die for his Ideal; poor as is our modern life, we have seen a nation rising in its unit-mass to do the same, we have held our breath in amazement — almost in recoil — at the sight of thousands who held their own lives as nothing compared to the national Ideal, the national honor and Soul.

It is through Religion that we might look to find some relaxation of the materialistic attitude of western nations. Doubtless we do find it so relaxed in individual cases. But the great religious hierarchies *as such* have become embedded in the material mold of the world. Tithe and tax; creed and counter-creed; the unreal values of formulae and definitions; the grip of carnalized teachings — once spiritual — upon the civilization of our era: all these translated into terms of wealth, following and power, have accumulated barnacle-like around religious Ideals, associating these, in the minds of men, with temporal power and material benefits. So it has at last come about, under the quickening touch of the Spirit, that some western nations find themselves placed to-day where they must make a choice between national Freedom in Religion — the disassociation of the temporal and the spiritual powers — and political diminishment; while the churches are confronted with the same choice; that of leaving to Caesar what pertains to Caesar, if they would share with God that which pertains to life in God. It is from the recognition, complete and profound, that Religion is a life and not a creed; that Religion is the aspiration of the Soul toward *its* true Being; the recognition that the spiritual world strives to inform and to permeate the material world with its high rule and Law; it is from this recognition that we may hope to reach that bridge of thought which will convey to the heart of every action, the Ideal around which its constituent parts should freely group. This conception of Religion is rapidly gaining ground in the West, and nowhere more rapidly than among devoted and sincerely religious minds in the churches, both lay and clerical.

Another obscurant undoubtedly exists in the fact that the public mind has not as yet awakened to the scientific idea of Evolution. Evolution, if it *is* at all, must be found in all things. A law of Progress cannot be spasmodic; it must be continuous, or it is no law. There is too much failure to perceive that the goal of Evolution is spiritual life, and not material life; that the vast descending arc bends, and returns upon itself. Each step made by the human unit — or by the national unit-mass — away from the real goal of Evolution impedes the true march of events, precipitating discord and confusion. Material benefits; the crude obviousness of immediate results; the fixed concepts of bodily life, physical frame and brain-mind as the major portion of a man; the refusal to throw a span over death and to conceive of life beyond that vanishing point as sequential and concordant; these and other slurs of thought have robbed daily life of the sweet and sane breath of the Ideal.

How, then, has the public indifference to the true Ideal of Evolution effected the political life of our era? The answer is not far to seek. The idea of Evolution as applied to Political Economy has not dawned across the public mind at all. Each party in a modern State is content to demonstrate that its creed — or form of political belief — is correctly in line with some chosen writers of the past, or of to-day. Few, indeed, appear to be aware of the truth of the world-science which we call Evolution, must

also prevail in the sphere of Politics to its uttermost circle. We must expect to find the Art of Government, like that of self-government, proceeding upon lines of spiritual law, not upon lines of human dogmatism. A recent writer, commenting upon the writings of Dr. Crozier, says that the learned Doctor “has set himself to show that, in the science of Political Economy, that principle of Evolution by virtue of which it built itself into its present form has lost none of its energies, and that the conclusions of its most skillful exponents cannot be regarded as final, for the reason that the science deals with conditions which are liable to an eternal flux and change, and that, so far, no ruling principles have been evolved which cover the *whole* of the points in dispute.”

In examining the social and political structure from century to century, we are dealing with infinitely fluctuating conditions, the entire series of which is enormously effected by the minds and actions of men living at the time. This series is also subject, in its entirety, to all the variations and re-adjustments of universal Law. The attempt to cut out some small, chosen portion of this deep theme and to round it to a political creed, is a method as fatal politically, as it is admitted to be in Art and Science: as fatal as it must be in Religion. Evolution, that mode by means of which the Welt-Geist *consciously* constructs and pushes its Plan, is not to be denied its way at any stage or point of life. In short: Politics must be considered as another manifestation of the Soul, and not as a means of national or self-aggrandizement; nor for the exploitation of party purposes. Here, as elsewhere, the mind must avoid a tendency to harden and formalize on the one hand, the tendency to analyze and dispute on the other. We must glide between the political Scylla and Charybdis to the open sea of synthetic, national Ideals.

How is this to be done? How are we to bring the Ideal into the sphere of practical politics?

The answer lies here: We must find the underlying Principles governing Evolution. These found, we must not measure them by material measures, but by the breadth and length of eternal Ideals. Proposed political action must be scrutinized for its relation to the good of the world — in other words, for its connection with the Evolution of the world.

Let us abandon, for the moment, the conventional idea of Politics, and adopt another point of view.

In this suggested point of view we shall find that each nation, like each man, has a mind, which mind is evolving towards the national Genius, or Soul. The mind of a nation, like the mind of a man, is not perfected; it is developing towards a higher degree of wisdom, to culminate, let us hope, in a spiritual Ideal, or Logos — the national Over-Soul. Some nations are as yet undeveloped, elemental; in others we find the presence of the national Soul plainly indicated, by such traits, among others, as the following:

Law and a sense of obedience to Law. This fundamental trait is an absolute necessity in the development of the Soul. Through obedience to Law, man learns to govern and subordinate his lower self. When this trait manifests in the national life, we may feel sure that the units of the nation have made a decided step, *as a whole*, in the life of the Soul. We may expect to see the men of such a nation led by national destiny and individual duty to carry their genius for Law, Order and Obedience — for just organization and self-control — into lands and tribal conditions where no such trait exists as yet; for those who make a step in learning must in their turn teach; those who have received must impart; so runs the universal, spiritual Law.

Another nation may exhibit the trait of extreme and patient attention to detail, to Order. Order is heaven's first law: it is that which is, and was, and ever shall be. Through Order, by Order, in Order, all things come forth into manifestation. The march of the spheres is ordered: the evolution of angelic hosts and hierarchies of

powers as well. Order is a grand trait to be built into the Soul of a nation. A third nation may exhibit Courage and Energy: a fourth may have a gift for Imagination of a high order, and this would make its practical life sober and moderate, its inner life spiritual and profound. It is one of the most practical and industrious of western nations which is said to have produced the greatest number of true mystics. The *true* mystic is no dreamer, as so many think: he is a man of practical duty, of cheerfulness and a contented heart. The thinker who studies national traits synthetically is soon convinced that nations, like men, have a Soul.

Following out this line of thought, the next step is the recognition of the fact that the Soul of any one, among the host of nations, is not as yet perfect; it has not yet reached the condition of a Genius at one with the Over-Soul, able to move and to inspire its units with a perception of spiritual Law. Older nations, we believe, have in the past reached this period of efflorescence; the national Soul has informed and guided all those of the nation who were able and ready to receive the efflux; then, the era of efflorescence ended, the advanced human Souls passed on to other departments of life, and the nation, abandoned by its Soul, or real life, sank in the scale of Being to the condition of a shell or husk of Form, inhabited by lower lives. Its Light had passed on; but its form still cohered. The condition put forward in the *Secret Doctrine*, and similar books, as being the condition of the moon or any planet from which the higher principles have fled, is a corresponding condition.

The prevalence of the ruling Genius, or Soul of a nation, renders it easier for the men and women born in that nation to acquire the traits of the national Soul. Thereby, as we shall see, they do incur a debt to the national Soul, a debt which they neglect at their peril. The national Soul, patterned after the World-Soul, can only become enriched by the advance of its human units: their evolution it is which assists and maintains the spiritual development of the national Soul. Reciprocal service is rendered. Action and reaction come into play. Evolution marches on. The human Souls are the flowers: the national Genius, perfected, is the sublime fruit.

Looked at from this point of view, we can see that each Religion, and each form of Government, is the expression, in time and space, of the need of the national mind at *that* period of its history. Egos requiring to learn that especial lesson, incarnate in the land where it is going on.

The lesson learned, what then? Is it to remain the same? Is not the primer exchanged for a more advanced book? It must be so. Therefore there should be a perfect and entire individual freedom on the part of humanity to learn the next page of the great Book. Everything that interferes with this individual freedom of choice, or that would impose conditions of rigidity upon the free development of the national choice and the national freedom, must be banned. Forms of Government alter: none are perfect, hence none are final. Is there any virtue in finality? There is none. Nature is splendidly iconoclastic in her rulings. At times she is frankly radical; she amputates and excises with ruthless but beneficial precision. Then she turns conservative: preserving and embalming are her chosen modes. Again she is liberal and free, and her winds blow all ways on earth and sea. Never may the student lag or sleep who studies her book. Always she teaches the lesson that, as once said, the evolution of the Soul is "accomplished by a process analogous to the drawing in and out of the breath. In this alternation consists the essence of life at one stage." The watchword of Evolution is change. The mandate is ebb and flow: influx and efflux: change and counter-change: Absorption: Disappearance: Reappearance. In a word: Evolution.

Coming down to a particular instance: how would these ideas apply in the case of a man?

We will suppose an individual case, the case of a man — call him X., for each man is an unknown quantity to himself. X. is just entering upon his adult life. He is of age, and has, shall we say, a mind turned towards right action, a religious mind. He regards the universe as a manifestation of spiritual Law, and he wishes to live in accord with that Law, so far as he is able to learn it. He naturally turns to the consideration of the duties pertaining to his own place in Life, and he will be careful not to assume any duties other than those which are his. Consequently he will ask himself: What are my duties? Have I a duty at this point? or in that other respect? Where does my duty lie? In politics, for example, he will ask himself: Have I any duty in that direction? Whether merely as a voter, or as a representative; have I a duty towards the political life of my nation?

Now this question of politics is really a wide and deep question, one that no amount of chamber study and thought can solve without experience of an extensive kind. Not all men, not even a majority of men, are fitted by training, by education, by dispassion, by close observation of wide areas of Life, by human sympathy and comprehension — to say nothing of the primary necessity of self-control — to legislate at all. A very large proportion of those who have the franchise are seen to be utterly unfitted to exercise it wisely: how can they act wisely when they really have no first hand and real information about the subject? In some nations there seems to be a prevalent idea that a majority of citizens should attempt this difficult art of political enfranchisement. In this Country<sup>1</sup> the idea is under forty years old, and the sad prognostications of those who opposed it, forcibly at the outset, are not all unfulfilled. With this point, however, the present paper has no concern at all. It is only desired to point out that almost every political unit to-day — the human units — argues from a supposed bed-rock of unalterable fact that the right and duty of political action inheres — as if by nature — in the majority of men. On what fact, historical or natural, is this assumption based? The present methods of enfranchisement in the countries which have a franchise are still under trial. The American experiment is the oldest of the kind, and it is comparatively young — and by no means a success. The truth escapes the view of the ordinary “man-in-the-street,” but it is true that all the present modes of Government have been tried already, practically and in essence, and all have failed. Why? Because in the great round and cyclic change of evolutionary progress, the Soul of a nation is best served, best represented, now by one mode of political Rule, now by another. We see this if we allow our minds to embrace wider areas of study and thought. Nature, let us not forget it, “exists for the purposes of Soul.”<sup>2</sup> With nations it is the same; nations exist for the same purposes.

The idea at present prevalent, that every man should attempt the exercise of the difficult art of political action, is an absurdity which only becomes comprehensible on the ground that mankind, not yet evolved, as a whole, beyond the human-animal stage, must learn self-control and self-government in the world school: at least, he shall have the opportunity of so doing. So we are put into the political kindergarten, to learn in our games, which we take in deadly earnest. We learn, if we be docile and willing, as well as intelligent, through the friction and follies engendered by our child-like attempt to govern nations before we are able to govern our personal selves. But all the same our effort reacts upon the nation at large, and so aids its Evolution. This, some think, is the underlying purpose of the present stage of political development. We are to learn through political disaster our own urgent need of self-control, discretion and dispassion. We are to learn that no mode of Government hath virtue in itself: no political creed is right or final. We are to learn to examine each political step as we would examine each step of our personal duty, seeking to see what it involves, and how it stands in principles. We are to learn that the national Soul evolves through the alternation of opposites. In its progress it uses men and parties indifferently — and it is

well for the man whose intuition and grasp upon principles demonstrate to him where, and with what party and method the *next step* lies. All Nature is forcing this truth home upon our slow minds, and when we catch a glimpse of it, our knowledge will react towards the national life, and will permanently enrich it.

The nations have each their own modification of the Ideal form of Government. It would seem as if each such modification were the expression, not only of the development of a nation, so far as it has progressed, but also an indication of the experience demanded *at the time* by the national Soul evolving through that nation. When the Soul has satisfied that especial need, the form of Government will *inevitably* alter: it alters at the need of the national Soul. The alteration is often attended by social upheaval. In the same way, it is said, the final departure of the national Soul from a nation far advanced in decay, is attended by physical upheaval and submergence, as we read was the case with Atlantis. All these considerations should help us to divest our minds of the false idea that any one mode of Government, or any one political party is alone right and true. There is truth in all things, even though it be but a gleam. He who considers every method or proposal upon its own, individual merits, is able to discern “that which shines through” not he who accepts a proposition wholesale, for the sake of some merit with which his mind invests it as a whole, dressed in authority and finality.

So long as any form of Government still endures, forces are developed by the oscillation of parties; this interchange and development of force, in its ebb and flow, is that which maintains the Government in life: without the oscillation all Governments would come to an end through decay. In other words, the oscillation supplies the forces which are its life, in the same way as life is maintained in the physical body through the development of life powers under the struggle of opposites which liberate all that the body requires for its life. None of these modes of development have any super-excellence in themselves, whether in nations or in the physical frame. They all provide a field for the necessary alternations by means of which the Soul — national or human — gains experience in any particular direction. Each party thus does a work *of its own kind* while it is in power: each is used by the Powers guiding the evolution of nations from behind the screen of material life. When a party is not in office, it provides the necessary opposition by means of which the ruling party has something to push against and so strengthens its work. When the nation no longer requires that given form of Government for its evolutionary experience, the form will pass away into the silence and a new form will arise.

Hence our friend X. would do well to ask himself, in the exercise of his common sense: Have I, in my place of life, any duty towards Politics at all? If he has not, he will avoid embracing a duty not his own, and breeding confusion thereby; but if so be he has a duty, he will not surrender it. It may be that he has inherited a physical body — an instrument — with aptitudes towards political life, a body parented by those used to govern and to organize. If this be so, he has, as to his instrument, a tool which the Soul behind can the more readily use; and this fact would appear, in the absence of counterbalancing facts, to convey a hint of duty. Or it may be that in his mental heredity — the heredity of Himself, his Greater Self — there is that inheritance of mind or heart which needs further expression and experience of political life. We need only point out that a process of selection such as this, *voluntarily* engaged in by thinking men, might possibly have the happy effect of weeding out from the overgrown political field, some, whose destiny, duty and aptitude do not conduct them there. Public life and private manners would benefit by the absence of the politically unfit from the political arena — unfit, in the sense that no man is really fitted for that which is not his duty. Of course this is a point which must be left to the heart and conscience of each individual man. We need only note that a great point would be gained if we could

provide that each man should ask himself, first: Have I the duty of political action? Second: If I have such a duty, what form does it take? He would examine his own fitness, his own fair-mindedness, his own perceptive and synthetic abilities to see if perchance there were that in him which could be incorporated into the political life of his nation with advantage to that nation. The nation would then be the gainer — immensely the gainer — by such an act of self-examination, in lieu of the commonplace hodge-podge of routine ambition and self-display by which mankind claims its supposed “rights;” as if some such thing as “rights” had existed from time immemorial. The true “rights” of man are deeply hidden within the Soul and the life of the Soul, and are manifested upon the material plane only through his duties. But the sublime, ancient virtue — Abstention,— is almost submerged in modern life.

Granted that X. has asked himself these questions, and has decided that it is his duty to take part in the political movement of his nation, we may now further suppose that he will wish to find a touchstone of wise political action. At this stage his earnestness will protect him from the pit which yawns for those who adopt a hard and fast attitude. Seeking this touchstone, we believe that he will find it in principles. He will examine the principles underlying: a. His own proposed political action. b. The political concepts of the various political parties within the State, and the steps which they propose to take. (As often as not he will find the proposed step and the official creed, utterly at variance with one another. In politics, as elsewhere, the word and the action are frequently opposite in direction.) c. The principles which ensoul any question which may come up for decision, and whether these be retrograde or no. d. The national Ideal. e. His own Ideal.

Principles — the principles of Soul — will thus provide him with the alchemical solvent which he requires. For it is alchemical, this purpose of resolving crude modes of thought and action into their underlying principles, and then submitting them to the conscience, the judgment seat. Being thoughtful, he will not attempt to infuse his personality and its preferences into the Ideals which he seeks and longs to find. He will be on his guard against his lower nature as he starts out upon his great adventure. He will go to Nature for her model. In her sage companionship he will seek to match his earthly colors with hers; to weave his human web upon that plan of which the poet wrote:

“Slow grows the splendid pattern that she weaves  
Her wistful hands between.”<sup>3</sup>

He will observe the ceaseless vortex of Nature, the grind of eternal change. How the Soul now builds to secure experience for a central unit, or idea, and now destroys to free that unit from the fetters of Form. He will see that all Nature is subordinated to the requirements of the evolving Soul; he will understand that all of himself which is lower than the Soul must be subordinate as well. He will realize that Nature and human nature are extensions of one mode and Law: that principles work in and through life as a whole, and that these principles alone endure. He will come to accept political change as he does the waning and the waxing of the moon; the play of the tides; the alternations of the seasons; of life and death; of all the “pairs of opposites.” Coming into closer human range, he will note that quaint trait in us, by virtue of which, many who are proudly free from religious dogma, will accept, will even wrangle for a political dogma, remaining blind to the truth that, whatever form *dogma assumes in us* — whether political, scientific, artistic, religious — it still *is* dogma, and we are still enslaved. So seeing, he will come to place his faith more and more upon the principles of Soul. Face to face with some proposed political action, he will ask himself: is it just, not to some

among men, but to *all* men? Is it merciful, slow to judge — not some — but *all* men? Is it in line with the national Ideal — and my Ideal? Does it make for freedom — not political or social freedom, but for true freedom; freedom of choice on the part of the individual; freedom of choice on the part of the nation: does it impose rigid conditions, trite uniformity upon the human soul; or does it leave men free to choose? Does it assist the nation to conquer its own lower tendencies, its instinct for grip and grasp, for the material as against the spiritual? Does it make for national unity and international fraternity? Does it treat our neighbor as we would be dealt with by him: does it fulfil an inherited duty on the nation's part? Is the fraternity a phantasm of material conditions and assumed "rights?" Or is it a spiritual product, a unity in diversity? Is it ensouled by obedience to the laws of the real world? He will demand national rectitude: in what should the rectitude of a nation differ from that of a man? This question he will ask of the national advisors, and he will supply the answer: It differs only in its magnitude; is not the whole greater than a part? He will remind them and himself that days have been — "when none were for a party, but all were for the State" — and that such days may yet again be.

Such is the view which we venture to set before you. We make but one claim for it — that it is our Ideal. A man who holds this Ideal will fight the battle which each man must fight within himself. He will make many mistakes, owing to his human prejudices, his mental and other limitations; but his feet will be set upon the right path. His errors will be all his own; but his effort and right motive will be taken up into the Soul of the nation, and will flower there. He will be one of those rare men for whom all nations wait — a Patriot. He will place the material interest of his nation lower than her permanent gain in principle. He will see with a prophet's eye that the nation which abides by the right, and follows its own Genius, cannot fail; it is a part of the building Principle of the world. So he will know no fear. He will understand that to the Motherland he owes — under spiritual Law — his human body, his human sphere of action, his parentage, his "local habitation and a name," and he will never forget to pay the debt. He will ever be loyal to the sweet Motherland to which he owes so much. He will never speak in the gate of her enemies, nor enter the council of her foes. He will not approach her in her hour of shame and failure. Her woes will be his woes; her sin, his sin; her triumph, his victory. Not that he will see her always right; far from it; is she not a composite of erring human lives, like his own? But he will see that he dare not censure her; that he is involved, consciously or unconsciously, in her every action. If he would purify her, or any of her modes, let him first purify himself. He will learn from his heart in the silent hours that a long, long penalty lies before those who are false to their Motherland; those who betray the national Soul. He will contemplate the world-citizen, and the exile, and will see that these share his duties, as he shares theirs.

Thus following his Ideal, his mind will enlarge, nourished by the forces of his heart, and in his political action, as in his abstention, he will ask himself one question only: it will be the same question that he asks of his conscience and before God at the close of the day. He has come to see that his duty to his nation is rounded at every point — social, industrial or political — by the exercise of the attributes of his Soul. Life is one: he will not dismember his life, but will transmit one central purpose through its days — the purpose of the Soul.

In seeking the Ideal, he seeks for something better and higher than himself. And yet, when he has made that Ideal his own, and has interwoven it into his daily life, he makes the sudden and radiant discovery that this which he has so longed to find is indeed himself: a self of greater stature and aglow with the light of the Soul. Slowly becoming aware of this light, he lifts his heart in prayer to that God whose Being he comprehends but dimly, but whose Love he has felt, asking that his mind may be clarified by the vision of the Ideal — and shining through that Ideal, the Divine

Reality. That prayer never goes unanswered. By the time that he has made it, he will have merged politics, and with them, all the rest of his life, into his Religion, the Religion of his heart, which shall guide his every action to the end.

JASPER NIEMAND.

## NOTE

1. {Julia was living in England at the time, though which country she meant seems to be a question.}
2. {*The Yoga Aphorisms of Patanjali*, IV, 32.}
3. {*The Light of Asia*, Edwin Arnold, Book the Eighth.}

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## THE IDENTITY OF SOUL.

J. CAMPBELL VER PLANCK

A VOLKS LEGEND.

{*How Troll, the Water Spirit, Became a Man.*}

Among the solemn forests that fringe the chill waters of Baltic seas, this legend has been told among the peasants for centuries.

There was once a great Bishop who rode on his white palfrey at the head of his retinue, on his way to the court of the King. One hand stoutly carried his carved crosier of oak, the other held his jeweled reins; he mused now upon the Courts of Heaven and now upon Courts of earthly splendor. Behind him, in the respectful silence due to the revery of the Lord of the Church, his own small court followed slowly.

All at once the stillness was sharply broken; shrill, sweet streams of laughter, flute notes, and then a bubbling song gushed out upon the air as if from some hidden fount of joy. A song so madly gay, so softly, so bewitchingly merry, so innocent and pure, yet so contagious in its mirth that the very horses curvetted and caracolled, whilst rude men at arms, pages, nobles, acolytes even, beat time and swung to and fro in the saddle. The Bishop forgot his reveries; he smiled, then laughed aloud as he listened. The child-like, infectious merriment of laughter and song blended with the plash and trickle of some unseen cascade. Liquid notes, purling notes; voices of the wind upon the tense branches of slender white birches; voice of flute and water voice and human voice together, filled all the woods with a cadenced merriment, with the full, the ripe delight of harmony.

“Who lives and knows nought of Life’s sadness? Who, in this world below, has tasted bliss so perfect that the very soul of him pours forth in pure gladness?” quoth the Bishop. “I must see and congratulate this singer.” Turning his steed, he pushed into the woods, following the airy trail of song to find the wonderful, light-hearted musician. Soon — too soon, alas! — he came to a cascade falling into a beryl-brown pool, where sat a young Trölle, a water sprite, brown of eye and limb as the pool itself, playing upon his pipe of reeds and singing. Every forest creature left its lair to hear him. The ptarmigan nestled near in the moss; the slim deer looked on with friendly, pathetic eyes; the innumerable small lives of fen and fern and solitude, even the fish in

the water, the motes in the sunbeam, paused, drawn by those compelling notes of gladness.

"How now, how now, thou naughty nature-spirit!" called the Bishop, frowning; "how darest thou thus to sing?"

The merry Trölle twinkled his shy brown eyes, laughed and cut a caper, then blew such notes upon his flute as set every foot to tapping and every spur to jingling.

"Why should I not sing, my Lord?" smiled he; "I who am born to gladness as the water mists are born to rise."

"They rise, to fall again. *Thou*, born to gladness: *thou?*" spake the Church's Lord in scorn. "Thou art born to nought; thou art born to bitterness, to the frosts of death eternal. For, mark it well, thou witch's son, thou hast no soul."

"What is that, to have no soul?" asked the Trölle, wistfully.

"It means that He who made the world and His Sweet Son who died for it have no place for such as thee, in all the great hereafter. When the soulless die, for them is no salvation; they die eternally. They pass as the shadows on the bracken, as the hoar frost from the rocks."

The Trölle shivered. "I? To die forever? Say not so, my Lord," and his voice trembled, but not for gladness. He lifted beseeching hands; his flute fell into the water. "We of the forest see the broad swathe Death cuts at fall of the leaf and in the bleak black winter, but in the springtide we see also the renewal of Life. Thou art wise in these things, great Lord, and if I sang my best to-day, it was to cheer thy journey through the sylvan silences. Tell me not that I must die, that I must pass forever into leaf and mold and chill crawling things, with never a hope of return to the blithe sunshine, the jovial pipes, and saucy sparkling waters. Has not He whom I know not, but whom thou knowest, a place for such as I in all the future fields of Life?" He bent his knee before the Bishop, looking up with entreating fawn-like eyes, startled, widening with their first pain, clouding with the mists of misery.

The austere Bishop raised his great oaken staff in air. "I tell thee, Trölle, sooner shall this, my dead and carven staff, burst forth into bud and bloom before mine eyes, than that the soulless, such as thou, shall be saved. For thee is no salvation, no miracle."

The Trölle fell upon his face at the palfrey's feet, weeping bitterly. The Bishop turned and rode away, his staff following. A shade fell upon the forest; a shuddering breeze ran through it; lowering looks and mutterings ran from rider to rider, and were echoed by Heaven's low thunder, while ever through the forest wailed notes of pain and despair.

Yet still the Bishop rode serenely on, safe in a Heaven of his own making, which excluded him not. Slowly a spicy fragrance stole upon his senses, a perfume as of celestial flowers. He plunged his searching eyes among the mosses; he lifted them to rocks and cedars; he scanned the air, and lo! his staff had burst into white and crimson bloom. Shot through with living, radiant light, its blossoms shed Heaven's own dew upon him; they had a mute but mighty voice, and smote his heart as never flowers smote human heart before. Springing from the saddle, he knelt before that cross miraculous, his awe-stricken retinue kneeling with him. Then, mounting, he spurred back into the forest depths where the voice of grief still complained beside the plaintive waters. Bereft of all his woodland friends, who fled from him as from a human thing, the Trölle wept alone.

"Hear now, oh Sprite!" the Bishop cried: "Behold a miracle wrought for thy comforting and for my rebuking. The dead has come to life; the staff has blossomed." He held it high; it shed its holy balm upon the poor sprite's heart. "Thou mayst yet be saved. Thou mayst yet have a soul. Sing thy blithe song again."

The Trölle scattered the tears from his eyes. "I shall never sing it more," he said, laying his tremulous hands upon his heart. "I have now a soul; I feel it within me, weak yet heavy, like a new-born thing. And I know, oh Lord of the Church, that the High Soul descends upon all Nature, and that its first baptism is sorrow. Woe is me for my forest life; to be human is to suffer."

"And to suffer is to conquer," said the Bishop very humbly. "Take up the cross of the soul and follow me."

J. CAMPBELL VER PLANCK.

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## JUDGE THE ACT: NOT THE PERSON.

JASPER NIEMAND

### ADEPTS AND MEDIUMS.

The past month has given us a lesson in occultism. Its bearings are questioned by aching and bewildered minds. Our private lives repeat to-day the frequent experience of History,— that it is the foe of our own household, the traitor high in trust of nation or corporation, who is able to inflict injuries of a magnitude unattainable by the open enemy.

The theosophical ranks held no exponent more valued than the Editor and Scribe of *Light on the Path*.<sup>1</sup> We gave her the interest and love that attach to the orbit of some bright planet. In the gloom of a material age this gracious personality shone upon us with a chaste and tender splendor. Her gifts prophesied the hidden powers of man. Her influence spanned the globe. The Light that passed along her ray had a glory so serene, a strength unwavering yet so deeply human, that while thinkers never mistook the vehicle for the Light, nor identified message and messenger;— while, indeed, they saw that the messenger was, for the most part, an unconscious agent who did not assimilate the message, still they felt her in their hearts as we feel the flower shedding fragrance on the summer night, giving, unconsciously, the sweetness passed through it from the Source of all sweetness, to the darkened world. Suddenly she whom we honored rises distractedly before us and proclaims that in claiming an adept's inspiration for *Light on the Path* she had not been truthful, but had made the claim at the bidding of H. P. Blavatsky.

So eager is she to lay the blame of temptation upon a woman once her chosen friend, a woman now dying by inches, who has labored as no one of our era ever labored for Humanity; aye, one she swore in the most solemn of pledges to sustain and defend,— that she has not hesitated to cast herself in the dust at our feet; giving herself as tool to an unscrupulous — because insane — agency. Sick at heart, spent with a tempest of anger and pity, of love contending with outraged faith, what are we then to do? Our Duty. In this and in worse upheavals, our Duty to one and to all. If we are torn from this anchorage, the hope of the race may founder with us.

What is our present Duty? Hear the words of the Master. "Judge the action, not the person. You never know the true motives. Never judge human nature on its lowest level. Everyone has a *potential* Dugpa<sup>2</sup> in him." We are to separate the deed from the doer. To remember that we all share this Karma; it is that of our common Humanity. To return to our lost comrade the immortal spirit of the message she bore; to cast its veil of charity about her. We dare not turn back her weapon against her own breast.

While we remain true to the truest in a comrade, she is never wholly lost to us. If she has departed from her better self, we may hold up that ideal as a beacon to guide her back. If never here, then in that bright day when “we receive the new knowledge,” may this and other loved ones lost await us there where Life shall have purified and redeemed us all!

The deed we must unflinchingly analyze. Our duty to all demands this. Its bearings can be shown by analogy. Suppose that a soldier is tried for infringement of oath and discipline, and is dismissed the Service. In his rage at the justice he has called down and of whose penalties he was distinctly forewarned, the soldier turns to the enemy with false information,— a spy and traitor,— as a revenge upon his former Chief, and claims that his punishment has released him from his oath of loyalty to a Cause. A pledge, once taken, is forever binding in both the moral and the occult worlds. If we break it once and are punished, that does not justify us in breaking it again, and, so long as we do, so long will the mighty lever of the Law react upon us. As for the person who was Mrs. Collins’s instrument, and whose wretched tool she has become, not a shadow of doubt as to the immediate cause of his attack upon Madame Blavatsky remains with those who have read his letters to her, demanding an official position which is not within her gift, and threatening to take revenge if his demand was not granted by a certain time. The time elapsed and the attack was instant. There is an eloquent biblical passage which limns the situation. The master is shown as saying: “Behold, the hand of him that betrayeth me *is* with me on the table. And truly the Son of Man goeth as it was determined: but woe unto that man by whom he is betrayed!” (St. Luke Ch. 21. V 21-22.) Here is a clear statement of Karmic law, and a no less clear hint that some persons are the weapons of Karma. We can produce an old letter of Madame Blavatsky in which she says that her present betrayer is and will be just such an instrument of Karma. Such an inheritance from his past is of a nature to make any man quail — unless he laughs the laugh of madness.

We then have two similar acts by two different persons. One, a personal intimate friend, suddenly throws forth an accusation against H. P. Blavatsky of tempting to a fraudulent claim for inspiration of a splendid work, the object in view being apparently only that of damaging H.P.B., at the risk of reducing the book to the lowest possible level and the author to a lower. The other actor, believing in no one’s truth, rushes into print with the confession of untruth, the object being to damage H.P.B., with the inevitable consequence of lowering the author of *Light on the Path* in everyone’s estimation, for when a woman accuses herself of mendacity the world think her mad if they do not believe the accusation.

These acts are untheosophical, no matter who are the actors. They cannot be excused nor forgotten.

These facts are outside the chief teaching of this event, which is that we do not sufficiently discriminate. We judge by the external, by persons and personalities; we neglect the study of laws; we permit the *spirit* of things and deeds to escape us. This spiritual energy can only be touched by the Intuition: what that is, and what the spirit of things material is, we will hereafter attempt in some measure to explain. If it can be shown that abrupt disintegration of the moral forces is not unprecedented and should serve us as a warning and a guide, then we shall not have suffered in vain. It ought to be known, and earnest students have long known it, that the relation of the writer of *Light on the Path* was that of a transmitting medium. The term “transmitting medium” is here divested of all reproach or slur. The colorless term *per se* is used to indicate a person to and through whom something is *given*, and stands in contradistinction to the word Adept, or one who *takes* what he requires. Adepts, too, are of all grades within the two orders, the Black and the White. A question has been asked by a few students. They say: What difference is there between the instrumentality of H.P.B. and that of

any transmitting medium? There is that radical difference which exists between the two extremes called by us poles. H.P.B. is an Adept; the other not. The adept is such by virtue of the active principle. The medium is such by virtue of the passive principle. When the adept is in trance, his spiritual nature is the center of activity. When the medium is entranced, his astral nature is that center. The medium, when he goes into trance (when not hypnotized by another or in the catalepsy of disease), does so because his bodily senses become controlled by an outside force while his soul will remain passive. His vitality and consciousness are then transferred to the astral body. In this condition he is a spectator. What he sees, and the height or depth of his insight, are regulated by the purity of his auric sphere. Truths or falsehoods may be impressed upon him. He may or may not remember them afterwards; he may report them correctly or misinterpret them. If a powerful Force uses him as its agent, that Force can and does stamp its information upon him with a sharpness of outline which his waking brain cannot blur. During this process his consciousness is discontinuous so far as he knows. From the standpoint of his normal condition there are the same gaps in it that there are in the consciousness of the ordinary man.

The adept does not make the outer body passive. He paralyzes it and remains master of all his nature above the body. He retreats deeper within than the medium, and does it consciously to himself! During his volitional and successive transfer of vitality and action from plane to plane, or from seat to seat of force, no breaks in consciousness occur. In all places and states the adept is self-identified. He moves from state to state at will. When he reaches the spiritual center, from it he controls all the rest. *This center is universal and is not his own.* The Higher Self of one is that of all. And, finally, the consciousness by which the adept does this is not at all the consciousness known as such among ordinary men. How shall the secret of the ages be put into words at all? It cannot be done for us by those who *know* unless we first give them the word and sign. Not the word of any order, but *the self-communicated sign*. Who has wakened at midnight and felt the mystic breath within himself; who has trembled as Woman trembles when first she recognizes a life within her body, a life of consciousness and motion proper to itself and necessary to its existence, which yet she does not share or understand? Who, amid thrills of physical terror, has waited till the Power expanded and opened, till the Voice spoke, overcoming the physical and merging him into Itself; who has learned that this Power *is the* man, and, coming out of the awful experience, has resolved to lose his (lower) soul, in order to gain it? For him there is no return; he and such as he alone understand that the Adept is not an instrument. But then, too, the adept is not the person and body we see; they are His instrument and He is that hidden Voice come to self-consciousness in its temple. It is referred to in Rule 21, *Light on the Path*, Part I. Also in the second password of the T.S. In Becoming, the adept may pass through the phase of mediumship, while still a pupil, and this is why it is better not to enter that astral plane until we can do so with a guide, or, in mystic language, until we can do so “from above.” When first the “mysterious event” occurs, we think some power extraneous to ourselves is acting; later we find that this Power is indeed our Self of selves. This all-seeing Power is not answerable to any human rule, or to any law but its own, the Law of laws. The personality governed by It may do much that conflicts with every opinion of men; they cannot expect to understand It, but they may recognize it. It is Itself a cause, and acts only upon the plane of cause, and the body subservient to it is above all Karma. Of course also there are grades of adepts and steps in Becoming. Still, the least among adepts acts with a knowledge of realities far above our own, sees what we see not, and cannot be judged by our rules. His acts have results that we know not, causes that we see not.

We shall be asked what evidence we have to offer that H.P.B. is an Adept, or the other a medium. Our evidence is of two kinds. (A.) That which appeals to occultists only. (B.) That which appeals to the average man.

To deal first with B. one proof is, of course, the manipulation of natural forces due to the knowledge of them. Putting this proof aside, however, H.P.B. is an active, conscious agent, acting through will power, having attained the power of perfect registration and trained concentration, able *at all times* to give a full account of all she knows, and one fitted to the development of the questioner, one responding to his physical, astral, or spiritual sense. She is learned, acute, profound; disease of the body has not impaired her work, its quality, quantity, or her fidelity to it. The great proof is thorough comprehension, to the fullest depth, of all she has taken or received, and the body of H.P.B. is her own instrument; she even holds it back from dissolution.

M.C. has never understood what was given through her. She is not at any time able to give a full account of it. She has said to many “she knew nothing about philosophy or the laws of occultism, of Karma or any far reaching theosophical doctrine.” Advanced occultists identify *Light on the Path* with an ancient, untranslated and unpublished MSS. called “The Book of the \* \* \*,” to which M.C. could not have had access, and whose precepts must have been communicated to her through occult methods. The inadequate comments on *Light on the Path*, published by her in *Lucifer*, prove that she spoke the truth in this. She says that the work is “written in astral cipher and can only be deciphered by one who reads astrally.” The comments only bear upon the ethical and intellectual part of the Rules; they remind us of false starts made at a race that is finally abandoned. They explain but a little of the surface meaning of the noble original. The deeper meanings are untouched by the Scribe, such as that same astral one, or, again, that bearing upon practical occultism. For there is, within those Rules, a statement of number, of center, of order of procedure from seat to seat of force. Chela-initiates know this. Subba Row’s able comments on the *Idyll* <sup>3</sup> contain more than hints of it. To illustrate one concealed aspect of the Rules, inclusive in part of the key just alluded to, let us read some remarks from an Oriental Adept which came into our possession many months ago.

“Kill out all sense of separateness.” “Union with the Higher Self is the best manner of killing out the Sense of separateness. Therefore man must become a Slave of his Higher Self. No two men pass through the same experiences in effecting the union with the Higher Self. The true Higher Self is the Warrior referred to in *L.O.P.*,<sup>4</sup> and it never acts on this plane where the active agent is the manas, etc. A sense of *freedom* is one of the marked characteristics of the higher consciousness, and the will-effort needed to silence the body is much the same as that needed to forget pain. The Higher Self is shapeless, sexless, formless. It is the perfect quaternary, Nirvana; above which there is the first  $\Delta$ . It is a state of consciousness; a breath, not a body or form. It is always to be sought for within; to look outside is a fatal mistake. The effort to be made is to reach the Highest State of which you are capable and to hold yourself there. Concentrate on the idea of the Higher Self, say for one-half hour at first. Permit no other thought. By degrees you will grow able to unite your consciousness with the Higher Self \* \* \*” (Here follow rules for concentration.) “The registration of the consciousness of this plane takes place at the last moment of the passage back to the physical, and this, together with the fact that the double is often active, often produces a kind of state of double consciousness, and the latter is a source of error. In acquiring the power of concentration the first step is one of blankness. Then follows by degrees consciousness, and finally the passage between the two states becomes so rapid and easy as to be almost unnoticed. The great difficulty to be overcome is the registration of the knowledge of the Higher Self on the physical plane. To accomplish this, the

physical brain must be made an entire blank to all but the higher consciousness, and the double or astral body must be paralyzed, or error and confusion will result.” (Here is developed one allusion to centers of force; the seats of the astral force must be paralyzed and inhibition of the cortex of the brain must be accomplished.) “In the first place, try to put yourself into such a state as not to feel anything that happens to the physical body, in fact, to *separate yourself from the body* ——”

Enough has been quoted to let in some light upon the vital grasp of these precepts. Also to show that she who reported them never understood them. Madame Blavatsky has long been urged to unveil their meaning further, and we trust that she will do so. If M.C. had drawn from her highest center the knowledge stored in that center, she would be mistress of it, as H.P.B. is of hers.

Various conditions must combine to render any person a good instrument. There must be a certain mediumistic quality, or, in other words, physical passivity and loose tenure of certain principles or forces. There must be what we may call a Karmic permission, or current. It is desirable that the person should have the power to make himself heard, as, for instance, a literary person. We do not frequently find all these conditions combined in one person. After a time the nervous conditions of natural mediums and their physical passivity break down their health, and a stage is reached where moral disintegration manifests in a center of hopeless disease and commands our profound commiseration. Colonel Olcott never made a truer remark than when he said the moderns ought to learn from the ancients how to isolate their mediums. *Light on the Path* is a jewel shining by its own light. Its precepts would in any case have been given to the world by the hand of whomsoever was available; it is much to have been that hand, and, for the sake of its deed, let us love it even when it is raised against all that we prize, even while we strike the poisoned weapon from its grasp.

As regards proof A. The case of Madame Blavatsky is *sui generis*. She is not only the messenger; she is herself a part of the message, is herself a revelation and a test. Many of us firmly believe that faith in her is the real test in Theosophy. Why? Because Theosophy primarily teaches the within of all things, the latent divinity. It urges us to look deeper than the apparent, further than the goal of sense. Its first test is made upon our Intuition. By that light we must read the spirit within Madame Blavatsky, or we shall never read her. Clairvoyance, psychometry, and the rest may be false guides. The seer looks outward from within himself, and, if his sphere be clouded, so shall his interpretation be. Such visions are spasmodic, precarious, subject to no rule, unless a course of occult training under an adept has been had. Intuition at all times serves us when once developed. It is always present to be drawn upon. It is sure, because it is the Voice of the Higher Self, Its messenger through which action occurs on this plane. Not that guesswork which some persons call intuition, but that force to which the occultist gives this name. Manifesting in sheeted light within a center in himself similar to the one in which it has arisen (whether in macrocosm or microcosm), it imparts to him a knowledge of the real spirit or essence of what he hears or sees, through a similar essential and vibratory quality. It is often confirmed by the physical senses, and the conjunction forms a sure guide in ordinary life. But when the senses conflict with Intuition, we must let the senses go and trust to the Voice alone. Modern Science demonstrates the insecurity of the senses. Rules governing the credibility of testimony show that no two honest witnesses describe a scene alike. We constantly suppose ourselves to have had experiences which never took place. The severance of sense and sign need not cost us too much. Everything bears about it its own password and sign, founded on laws of number. The occultist senses this within himself; it is stamped there, as it were, in a corresponding center of force: all centers are subcenters of the universal seat of that force. Once trained and self-initiated, the occultist cannot be deceived. The vibratory ratio (and “spirit”) of a given sub-center outside him registers

first in a similar sub-center within him, together with a peculiar sheet of light through and from a certain organ, and is then conveyed to the brain. The subject is more explicitly stated than is common because it is highly desirable to show that persons governed by Intuition will believe it rather than their ordinary senses. Such persons know that Madame Blavatsky has never deceived anyone, though she has often been obliged to let others deceive themselves. That which she has done has not been correctly reported with those persons who think she has deceived. The vibration of their own sphere was such that direct transmission from hers was impossible. The whole secret of the transfer of nervous vibration to the brain where it *somehow* becomes translated into thought, is locked up in this subject. Untrue thought would be impossible if our specific vibratory ratio did not render synchronous vibration with the universal mind impossible; it impedes and alters that coming to us from the Oversoul, and from any other center. We believe, on the word of science, that water is a union of gases, though most of us have never seen it. Many believe that color is a thing in itself. All our records teem with the fact that our senses are false witnesses, and we are fools to trust them. The inner centers of force are true witnesses, but we must learn their language. Then and only then can we judge of the forces acting through persons, and whether a force uses a body which is its own habitat, or a body owned by a latent ray. We must also learn the language of the heart. We must love our Intuition and trust it. It must be more to us than our personality. It leads away from personality. When results seem to disprove it, we must remember that results are often incorrectly estimated, that Truth has no compact with results or circumstances. It stands to itself alone.

A comrade writes: "This battle does not seem like the real one. That will come when, for purposes of testing the staying force of her supporters and the influence on them of theosophy, H.P.B. will *seem* to give herself away."

We put it on record now that some of us stand ready to face this event, and that, should it come, we shall intuitively comprehend it. Without some such record, we should not be believed. We are not looking *at* H. P. Blavatsky, but *through* her. What she is, may not be for us to know, but the manifestation through her we do know. By internal, ineffaceable, undeviating testimony, based on law and number, witnessed by analogy and carrying conviction to the soul, the occultists of every era have known the Power. To it they look and not to the person. What is it she wrote? "Follow the path I show, the masters who are behind. Do not follow me or my path."<sup>5</sup>

We speak to those who read by interior light. Wherefore let every man hearken greatly within himself. Let him catch the winged messengers. Let him trust no event, no circumstance, that conflicts with the swift and shining Voice. Let him not look to see it confirmed by the world, but rather out of itself, out of its own life. Let him know that faith and love open a door for it into the nature. Above all, let him remember its first lesson, which includes every other. We are one in all; there is no real and efficient way in which we can serve Humanity except in seeking that Truth incarnate in us, in holding to It, living it, taking heed lest we deny it while approving ourselves. Eternally the divine Voice repeats: Be true; be true; be true!

JASPER NIEMAND.

## NOTES

1. {M.C., (Mabel Collins).}
2. Dugpa, a black magician; one devoted wholly to self. This and other quotation are from the private letters of the Adept.
3. {"The Idyll of the White Lotus: Reflections on its Inner Meaning, Taking the Interpretation for Basis Which Appeared in the *Sphinx* of January, 1890" — (Signed H.A.V.) by T. Subba Row, *The Path*, August 1890, pp. 148-153.}

4. {*Light on the Path*, Mabel Collins.}

5. {"A Private Letter." R.S. (Julia Keightley) *Reminiscences of H. P. Blavatsky and "The Secret Doctrine"* – 1893, pp. 121-129.}

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*The Path* – April 1891, Vol. 6, pp. 15-18.

## KARMA.

J. CAMPBELL VER PLANCK, F.T.S.

The Law of Karma, or Action, is one of the chief teachings of oriental philosophy. It is stated to be a universal Law, having its root or basis in the outbreathing (action) and inbreathing (re-action) of the Brahm, the Great Breath or Unseen Mover, from whose motion in matter (substance) all things are evolved.

There is one thing which we may predicate of Action; that is, Reaction. This fact indicates the method of Karma. Karmic Law manifests on or in various planes of life, and differs with that plane wherein it acts. Newton expressed one mode of Karma upon the physical plane when he formulated his first law of Motion; viz. "Action and Reaction are equal and opposite in direction." Physiologists and psychologists tell us that this rule holds good in Emotion, and in nervous action and reaction also. The Western bible expresses Karma for the moral plane when it says: "Be not deceived; God is not mocked. What ye have sown, that shall ye reap." This ethical causation, this moral reaction, this conservation and intercorrelation of mental, moral, and psychic energy, is also Karma.

We can imagine that when a man does a selfish deed or thinks a selfish thought, it goes forth into the swift and subtle aetheric world as a specific vibration, colored, so to say, with his mental and moral coloring, bearing his stamp, as it were, in that vibratory ratio which is his own. We can fancy it issuing, a tireless energy, into that aether which powerfully responds to the tremor of a thought, and thus affecting, modern Science tells us, the far stars with its dynamic palpitation. On the confines of a system this energy must return, and it does thus react, naturally along the line of least resistance, to the sphere or base from which it emerged and which powerfully attracts it, bringing with it all that it has gathered to itself in the course of that long journey, and taking effect in manifold ways upon the doer, the creator, to whom it has returned. Nor is this return always made in the same brief human life. Hence we have Reincarnation as the companion or extension of Karma. The soul is drawn back to earth life again and again by the return or re-awakening of its dormant energies, self-engendered and responsive to material planes of being. The one Substance, Akasa, Mulaprakriti, Aether — call it as you will — that from which all things are evolved, is, by virtue of its atomic constitution and magnetic laws, the great Agent of Karma. Through it, all things and beings, in it immersed and by it saturated, become the minor instruments of the Law.

Karma is, in fact, Action and Reaction, as we have said. All that is, has been, or will be done occurs by virtue of this Law of Cause and Effect; all Action is the result of previous Action. Its justice is perfect, its equilibrium unshaken. It provides that all things shall return to their source. Amid myriad tangential causes its delicate adjustments and readjustments are unerring, because every action has its due balance and effect.

Imagine the reverse of the case above stated, and conceive an unselfish man, acting only from a sense of duty, and in accord with the progressive tendency of evolutionary Law. As by its light he sees that mankind are one and inseparable, his acts will have no personal coloring. They create no specific self-condensed and contrary

currents or discords in the aetheric medium, but pass out into the harmonious ocean of life about us, in waves as universal as its own. Bearing no personal impress, they have no cause to return to his sphere, which then pulsates with the surrounding harmony and broadens into the eternal.

Some persons say that Karma is “cruel,” because it “punishes those who do evil without knowing of this Karmic Law.” But Karma does not punish. That is incorrect and slovenly speech. How can Action punish? Action reacts; that is all. A selfish action cannot react as a good one, any more than an apple seed can bring forth a fig tree. We must expect to receive back our action in kind. When the unconscious child puts its hand into the fire, we do not say fire is cruel because it burns the child. We recognize here the action of a Law of the physical plane. We respect it as such. But Karma is equally a Law of many planes, and cannot be bribed or bought off any more than fire can be so dissuaded. The burnt adult suffers more than the child, for his imagination enters into the matter. So he who knowingly does a selfish deed, defying Karma, suffers, in its reaction, upon moral and mental planes; whereas he who has done evil in ignorance of Karma, probably has only the lower forms of reaction to bear.

All action is Karma and causes new Karma. Deeds of men and of nations; social conditions; mental limitations, joy, sorrow, life, death, health, disease, rapture and pain; all are the effects of previous action, whether of individual men, of nations, or of races. We bear our part in national Karma, and suffer, as units of that nation, for deeds not committed by our individual selves. But Karma — our past actions — brought us into that place and nation, and to such consequences, while also in Devachan there is compensation for the individual for such trials as he has not merited in his single individual capacity.

We hear talk of “interfering with Karma,” but this is absurd, impossible. If to one is awarded penance or suffering, to another it may be given to relieve that suffering. It may be your Karma to be menaced by dire consequences, and mine to avert those consequences. Suffering, too, is one means of the soul’s expansion and advance, so that it may be “good” Karma, while a place amid earthly ease and immunity from sorrow is often contractive and disastrous to the soul. More disastrous still is that repression of sympathy and help when chilled by the reasoning faculties, which forbid us to “suffer with all that lives.” We cannot swerve Karmic Law. It may be retarded, but returns with compound interest.

The Law is divine. We do not make it. We only set in motion causes which this pre-existent Law of Action and Reaction returns to us as effects. We engender these causes, and, in regard to them, we exercise free will, at least until the innumerable causes, reacting, stultify that will.

In action alone is the registration of all deeds and thoughts; their impress upon the One Substance constitutes the true book of Judgment. Thus Karma is the only rightful Judge. It alone can fitly punish and reward, for in it alone is full discernment. As true Love consists in perfect Justice, *impartial to all alike*, so is this Law one of universal Love. It alone impels the soul, through experience of the misery of Self, to expansion into the Selfless and the Universal.

Yet there is one escape from Karma. That is, by Becoming it. Duty done for its own sake, regardless of results (for Duty alone is ours; the consequences are in the Great Brahm), acting or refraining from action because it is right to do so, we do thus, by our inward devotion, become one with that Law obeyed by us. No longer its unconscious instruments, we are its conscious agents, parts of itself, hearers and doers of its first great injunction.

“Inaction in a deed of mercy becomes an action in a deadly sin.”<sup>1</sup>

J. CAMPBELL VER PLANCK, F.T.S.

## NOTE

1. *Voice of the Silence*. {H. P. Blavatsky, p. 31.}

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*The Lamp* – February 1900, Vol. 3, pp. 201-205.

## LEST WE FORGET.

JASPER NIEMAND

Perusal of THE LAMP stimulates thought. This is as it should be; the light, held high, makes the dark places clear. It shows, not one, but all; a sense of proportion comes to our aid. Seeing thus the workings of minds other than our own and perchance hitherto obscure to us, we are the better able to balance experience and to reach conclusions of a larger mold. To observe ourselves and others from a distance is to borrow some of the advantages of history.

So, reading the last number of our LAMP, many thoughts came before us: these illuminated our own experience, as said, and perhaps did more. Some standpoints, with their inevitable conclusions, started into view. And on the threshold of a change of date, if not quite yet century, these viewpoints of other minds became as it were, milestones to mark the road.

So much it imports that we should read our lesson clear. Not only for to-day, but for that wider to-morrow to which, in its added work and larger powers, we must still look. Our experience has been so checkered, and the work of the other lives to come will be wholly directed by our ability to read the right lesson from it: a solemn thought which may well give us pause. Another succeeds it: will not our relations with one another here and now affect that future work incalculable? Some who believe this to be true are not among those who have thought in shallow streams. If man must lay his gift before the altar while he goes out first to find his brother and become reconciled with him — then indeed it behooves us to think once more of the true meaning of our experience.

It is evident that men cannot think in a single groove, and so the true reconciliation would seem to be, not alone that very elementary duty of not quarrelling with a view alien to our own — the duty of entire Toleration — but also that more difficult but happy task, the reconciliation, not of opinions, but of ideals. And when the ideal is that grand one of respecting the belief of our fellows as if it were our own, then indeed may we hope to stand nearer to the portal of the kingdom we do so desire.

In this light, the letter signed by Mr. Willard<sup>1</sup> becomes important to the thinker. It is the sincere protest of a sincere soul which sees *its* ideal violated. If the thought be somewhat rude in its dress, that denotes that the soul there felt a wound, a generous anger, and, being pained, struck back, in our uncivilized fashion. Karma takes charge of all our errors and has a mighty back stroke, so that the personal censure which comes to weight the wings of the loyal impulse recoils upon the writer in the manner of obscuring, to many, the very real beauty of the impulse to defend another. If, in fighting against condemnation of others, we ourselves condemn, then is our defense null and void; we have beaten the air. So more and more it becomes clear that we must defend principles and attack error, without personality.

There is a standpoint, and it is shared by the present writer, which maintains that the theosophical lesson for the last decade at least, may be summed up in this; that we should learn Toleration; that we should embrace the ideal of non-condemnation. Loyalty to this ideal is not easy; it includes loyalty to one another, quite as much as

loyalty to a cause or to leader. The ancient saying applies: if we do not love our brother, whom we have seen, how shall we love God, whom we have not seen? "God," the essence of every cause, of all loyalty, the true teacher — in other words the Soul back of all things and beings — it is to that our devotion is due. We do but poorly serve that Soul; we but meanly serve the visible cause or teacher, even (mere imperfect instruments though these be of that high Soul saluted by the Master-Souls in the meanest human being); we damage the cause and we injure the teacher if we permit ourselves to construe loyalty to these into attack upon our fellows, into insults of their point of view. And knowing that it will be said by some who may chance to read this, "What if the teacher bids us attack persons?" — to such the reply might be made: ideal loyalty is not the easy task some imagine it to be; if we owe a duty to the teacher and to our fellows, so also does the teacher owe a duty to us and to those others, while above all the signal duty owed by all alike to PRINCIPLE. It cannot help cause or teacher that we should for their sake violate an inflexible law of nature. Over every portal which the human soul must assault and take on its way to the halls of light is written that inalterable rule — JUDGE NOT. Ah! poor human heart; how long thou art in learning this. Can it be that thou art so enamored still of thine own image as mirrored forth on the waves of ether, that still thou canst not tear off and fling away the fancied right to pass judgment? Hast thou never considered the recoil of that weapon?

So too in the thoughtful letter of Mr. Wright in the same issue of THE LAMP, we find another note struck which points what we are at present considering. "Because one man was charged with a crime, he should not have dragged the whole American section after him." Certainly not, nor was that done. But many hundreds of souls equally earnest and sincere as is our brother and present objector, left that body of the T.S. in order to vindicate the principle of non-attack, of non-condemnation; they were not willing to accept the denial of that principle, quite apart from the fact that they believed and do still most thoroughly believe the accusation to have been a very grievous error of fact. No one had the power to keep them in a Society which, as a body and so to say officially, was violating the basic principle of the T.S. They were free agents. Mr. Judge could not prevent them. In the heat and mortal suffering of that day, many fell upon the very rock which they most wished to avoid. In attacking a false principle, they went on in the stress of action, to attack persons. This they came to see later on, doubtless in real and unaffected sorrow, as they little by little came also to see how this error marred the good they had wished to do, the standard which they wished to uphold, and which became obscured by the dense clouds of personal bitterness. So perhaps some of those minds embraced the only real and useful form of repentance, and perhaps they then abjured condemnation and the fancied right to condemn, and called, it may be, on fate, to give them another trial, another chance to do better and to undo, in the T.S., the effects of their early error. For though man cannot blot out the lines of fate; though those airy lines must run to the ends of the universe and mar or make what they touch; yet a new cause and a better cause — a holier cause — may also at any moment be set in motion, to run also its due course of blessing and helpfulness. The knowledge that a true repentance may thus issue forth freshly upon the universe as a factor for good, must have been a solace to those silently grieving hearts who saw that in being loyal to the friend, teacher and leader, they had still done a wrong to all, and to the ideal as well, when they marred their defense of principle by personal attacks. They too had injured the Society they loved; the thought was bitter to human pride; sadder still, the Soul within refused its approval. If then they did resolve upon a nobler stand, a higher and a wider, truer loyalty should occasion again serve, we may be sure that the book of fate, side by side with the vow, contained the promise of a fresh trial of strength. For that living volume is self-acting, and he who calls on fate to hear his resolve of change, does also in that same moment determine his own future test:

this is that right to be tried which is our only personal right under heaven. We call on the gods to hear us; by that very act we do in truth say: "Do ye forget us if we forget this vow." The hour of fate strikes soon or late, and fate searches our souls, lest we forget. And the high gods look on, hoping for man's victory, compassionating his failure. But so great is the task, so firmly are all the reactionary powers and forces banded together to prevent the fulfilment of the vow, that even a small advance, even a few points of success are counted to man as a victory. Not at once, not in any one field, does man attain to perfect work. So then, other communications in *THE LAMP*, relate to the last crisis of the T.S. And it is with this that we have now to do, for the failure of the leader to fulfil the ideals of the followers are the burden of their tale. There is no need, for the present purpose, to go into the question as to whether the leader was, or was not, a real agent, at one time, of the spiritual forces. The writer is one of those who holds the former fact is the true; it can at least be shown to be a reasonable view, in respect of many facts not widely known. But be this as it may, it does not affect the question of Non-condemnation and Non-attack. Many things may be said on this head, as, for example:

1. When once any one has been accepted by another as a leader and teacher in the least, a bond has been made in the spiritual world. Non-performance of duty and broken compact on the one hand, do not excuse non-performance on the other hand; but the duty of the wronged one has now altered: it is not that of following when wrongly led, but is that of doing all things possible to turn the course of the other by kind representation; failing in this, to withdraw in fraternal good-will. It may also include an open statement that certain methods are not adhered to, but this can be done without attacking the person who errs, often without naming that person at all. In short, our course should be that of one who deeply loves the other, and who would do all that can be done in the matter. This ideal love is rarely possible; but it is possible to set it before us as ideal, and to compare our actual method with it. It must never be forgotten that failure of faith towards us does not in the least excuse our failure to follow Principle and Fraternity, or the failure towards that other.

2. Too often exposure of persons believed to be guilty, is but an insidious form of self-justification. We must show that we had nor lot nor part in this thing. We owe it to the public to expose this or that, as if the world were standing with bated breath to know our opinion. Or we will not have our contemporaries believe this or that of us. Poor souls! We think to save others, and ourselves we could not save! It is of loving deeds that self-knowledge is the child, not the reverse.

3. Often the leader is molded by the followers, quite as much as he molds or leads them. He cannot advance in any wrong direction if he meet a firm refusal on their part. He cannot awaken any germ in their hearts or minds that was not already planted there. He can only take what he finds in them and what they give to him. So that if wrong be done, all have shared in it; and it is the duty of each to help the leader who goes wrong, to retrieve; it is not enough to save ourselves and to go out and declare dissent and publicly wash our hands of the wrong doing. Is Karma to be tricked in that way? We have got to do more than that, and each must painfully find within his own soul what that further duty is, again remembering that only by means of loving deeds is this self-knowledge to be found. What! leave another in the hell we have helped to make; leave when we have found that it is hell, and find no better work to do than to denounce hell's horrors, while knowing all that other must in time, ay, and does now, suffer there? For the human soul is a thing hard to stifle or to cheat at dead of night, or in some stabbing noon-day; be sure that even now the dread avenger wakes in us all and demands an account. "Do not fancy you can stand aside from the bad man or the foolish man. They are yourself, though in a less degree than your friend or your master. But if you allow the idea of separateness from any evil thing or person

to grow up within you, by so doing you create Karma, which will bind you to that thing or person till your soul recognizes that it cannot be isolated. Remember that the sin and shame of the world are your sin and shame; for you are a part of it; your Karma is inextricably interwoven with the great Karma. And before you can attain knowledge, you must have passed through all places, foul and clean alike. Therefore, remember that the soiled garment you shrink from touching may have been yours yesterday, may be yours to-morrow. ... The self-righteous man makes for himself a bed of mire....”<sup>3</sup>

All opinions have weight and value only as we can refer them to the universal scheme and see its law and order in them. The great laws of action and reaction, of non-separateness and solidarity alike forbid denunciation and personal attack. Beyond these is still one final and grand reason. When we condemn the person we presume to judge the soul and its work; to say: This is of the soul and that is not of the soul. Yet that soul may well know that inexorable Karma drives us into some one of earth's hells to learn there what our former actions have really been. Or, mayhap, to learn the sympathy we have denied to those who made their own hells (not one such but some other helped in the making); to learn that the self-righteous judgment had the power to create one such hell *for ourselves*. And what if we thrust another still deeper into the pit by our hard denial that for him too there might be excuse? We feel our own power to rise from evil, and to amend error. Why not admit that in another also is this divine power, this gift of the soul? We do deny it, practically, by our action, when we condemn. We shall truly refuse to do the wrong deed, and we shall show why the unfraternal action is unwise; but we must, at a dread penalty for our failure, we must refrain from action which may send another deeper down. Silence may show us in a poor light to the world and its judgment; but also it enters into that golden light of the spiritual sun which bathes the soul convinced of non-separateness.

In the course of ages, each one of us must somewhere come up to the serious test of leadership. Whether we snatch at it out of time and compel it at an unripe moment from the karmic recorder; or whether it descends upon us when the fruitage is ready, matters nothing to the final result. May we then be able to stand! May we not find in our way terrible barriers erected by our judgment or our dealings on the failure of someone we had met along the path! It may be we shall not find this test so easy. It may be that we shall discover how we ourselves had earlier helped that other to fail. And it may well be that we shall find also that this or that leader who earlier fell, by reason of the awful difficulties in the path and nature's opposition, so hard to overcome; that this lost and then regained leader has gloriously arisen, and stands there to help us to rise.

If a man have tried in any way to work, be it ever so little, for the spiritual their powers, their gratitude is practically unending, their aid always given, whenever it is possible to give. When no more can be done at the time, error is so often enfolded in a wise silence, which permits of reflection, which opens up the material avenues, down which the light of the Soul must travel: there is more help in our silence than we dream.

So long as a single human heart looks to some other as a leader and light, all is not lost for that leader, however he may err. Love and faith have ere now rekindled dead fires as by miracle. It is no miracle, but is one of nature's laws, that a light shall kindle a light. Love is the light of the Soul. Let us then go softly, speaking no hard word of this thing to us forbidden, for it may well be that the man who still believes is wiser far than the judges; he will rekindle the light. So long as man looks to any other as his teacher, it is sure that this chosen one has, in fact, some teaching for the believer. This teaching may be indirect and only by way of harsh experience of error or what not else; or it may be unconscious; still is it teaching, long as the man clings there. It is the drawing of the human soul that he feels, and well the higher Soul back knows that the

man has still a karmic something to learn. So let us not attack the teacher of any man, for in following he obeys the behest of his soul. It is enough that this is not *our* teacher. It is enough that the teaching does not appear wise to us. The fact that we do not follow should be enough for the world, which has not the duty to judge us. The world has its laws and its appointed agents, but it goes beyond this when it says that a man shall denounce the wrong-doer personally. Should he not then first denounce himself? Or does he say that he does no wrong? Not consciously, at least? And can he attest that this other is conscious of wrong, and is not self-deluded, with the rest? Let us avoid evil and point out unwisdom, and go softly and humbly in heart, remembering where our own weakness lies. Man has cried aloud when justice and pain have overtaken him for violation of nature's laws. By that cry, let him remember mercy!

Does it sound trite? Yet it costs much to learn in the least, and a blessedness shines through the smallest fulfilment of this law. Our duty is not that of the world. It is the duty of a definite pledge. Let us put up a great plea for mercy, for fraternity and a closer touch with the reality of Unity. And let us call on the gods to still be with us, lest we forget: *lest we forget!*

JASPER NIEMAND.

## NOTES

1. THE LAMP, December {1899}, p. 169.
2. {1 John 4:20.}
3. {*Light on the Path*, Mabel Collins, pp. 18-19.}

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*The Path* – June 1887, Vol. 2, pp. 65-71.

## LETTERS ON THE TRUE.

JASPER NIEMAND, F.T.S.

I. {1 of 4}

MY COMRADES:—

A renowned occultist said recently; “Do not write like the Peripatetics, but put your soul into it.” The wisdom of this advice becomes at once apparent. We may not all attain those brave pinnacles in the distance, but the first hard steps lie close at hand, to be taken by every earnest man. He takes them more or less in the dark. Now our struggle is for Union; not merely to be in Union, but to be that Union itself. This idea should attend us from the outset, for ideas create men. So in considering the subject of Truth, and how to become It, I find myself confronted with my individual experience, and my conception of its value soon enlarges as I find it repeating itself in many another life. It would seem that I might thus come to you, a friend to friends, speaking plainly of such hidden essences as I may find in diurnal things. I do not offer a universal panacea. I point out that which is for me The Way. Yet I say also with Ulysses: “I am a part of all that I have met,” and to those sharers of my larger nature I manifest that which I have found. You are very present with me, oh, my Comrades! Distance cannot shut you from me. Mâyâ cannot hide you. As we breast the tide of this Dark Age, I seem to feel your hearts beating time with mine. I meet one, and he becomes identical with me; then perhaps another and still another, until merged in the pulsation of a single Hope, we are but so many throbs in the Great Heart of All. I

salute you out there in the Unknown, and may we one day come together with the large Homeric joy of fellow warriors! Now you know in what spirit I address you.

Would to God Truth were more believed in! I say this amid frequent surprise. Yet it is a mimic Truth by which we live. This puppet virtue emasculates. It cozens our judgment, disowns our intuitions and divides our motives. We drift to and fro with the material scum of Being. When do we come face to face, speaking entire thoughts? We look each at the other's mask, and Truth is dumb. Shy as schoolboys we are before the tricky illusion of form. As friends commune best in the twilight, so we shrink back within the veiled recesses of the mind, and if we speak our conviction, it is in parable. Who has a true relation in life? Between the closest lovers there arises this impalpable wall of fictitious personality. We do not break through it. The heart pants for the True, but it cannot reveal its necessities to those whose thirst is slaked at shallower streams. If we dared be what we are with one another, we might get down to bed rock, and begin to understand somewhat of this great mine called Life, and the lay of its ore veins, and where a man may blast through to everlasting riches. You will say to me; "Shall I disclose the sacred core of my soul to be gapped at and appraised as the thing for which I have paid just so much blood and so many tears?" *Never!* I know well that even those who under ties of birth and law have a right to confidence, do not always know of its existence. You sit among them in the twilight, gazing towards the horizon, striving to catch the first divine harmonies of the on-coming night, and when they say to you, "Of what are you thinking?" you answer;— "I wondered if to-morrow will bring good harvest weather." For you have tried it and found no scale to measure, no bottom to the box. It is a common need that I specify. We are delivered up at the bar of custom, impressed under arbitrary standards, bidden accept the verdict of self-impaneled citizens for the swift mandate of our own soul. She mocks at this usurped authority. We have too long allowed others to bind us in the names of the great Verities, and now we discover beneath those august mantles, plastic little gods of civic creation. It is a tale as old as the world.

It lies within our power to change this in some degree at least. He who would have true relations, must himself be true. Let him distrust names, and sift facts. Give nothing the right to pass you unchallenged. The most trifling opinion must give the eternal countersign before I admit it within my lines. I receive no idea until I have tested it by all the laws known to me, whether natural or supra-natural. For if I give out some false thought to another, I poison his spring. I have a Corsican feud with that lying word — "*Independence.*" I would raze it from the memory of men. There is no such thing. The True repudiates it. Exact Science protests her ignorance of this fabled monster. Even on the physical plane, each man, himself a glowing sphere in action, throws off and inhales by every pore, particles of matter, of mind stuff, of cell stuff, of all that goes to the making of the mere flesh and blood man. Case him up in plaster of Paris with but the necessary orifices for organic functions, and see how long he will live. Put him into solitary confinement and mark what becomes of his "independent" brain. We interchange bodies with one another and recruit them even from the dead. Reject me; put the Atlantic between us, and I will send a shaft to your heart in the shape of my thought. I have seen proud men chafe at a comrade's suggestions, and accept unconsciously the alms of a thousand stranger minds. We have a tremendous lien upon one another. All Humanity impinges upon every man, at every instant, on every plane. Where among the worlds do you find Independence? Is your constitution larger than that of Orion? Shall continuity be displaced, that you may stretch yourself? Accept the reign of Law: and instead of Independence write "*Interdependence,*" on the lintel of the heart. I do not say this procedure is always painless. Truth is a goddess who demands a human sacrifice. For my part, give me facts, though they crush me. Something finer will spring up from the remains.

Being true friends we shall find them. Here in this perplexed world if hearts could get together, and together — untinged by sense — go out through one another's real experience, much might be found out. Such friends love truly because each in the other sees the true self reflected. They do not hold silence but reveal hidden thoughts, and by mutual comparison, which is greater and surer, eliminate error, realize the True in all things and "keep each other awake in Him." They hold intercourse also, at times which they do not recollect, as we do with all higher souls who love us, and who certainly exist, though not now known to our mortal eye and memory, and who drink perhaps often with us the little ambrosia that we are able to reach. For this infrequent boon doubtless all people languish, knowing not what it is that they desire, and thus many a soul goes through life seeking it for years, and often, too often, concludes that it is a search for Utopia, because the rough experience of long seasons proves apparently that "friends such as we desire are dreams and fables."<sup>1</sup> It need not be so, if you will not have it so. Be wholly true and you must find within your circle at least one heart equal to yours, with whom you can establish this priceless interchange. Seek one another; break up the ice and get out into free air. The man of the world and the deifier of the practical, will alike bear witness that in such union is strength indeed, no matter to what issue. It can be maintained where lives have a mutual lodestar. Yet be on your guard against the intellectual tramp, who is ever ready to refresh himself in your inner domain and gape at your wonders. The curious and the idle have no right of way through my mind.

The awakening soul demands a plain and vital relation. She cries to all her environments: "Hereafter I am bound by no arrogant claims. Does your word reverberate in me? I follow! Does your thought attract mine? Take it! I will give you all that is yours in me; I will not give you one jot more. Hope not to mold me within given limits. I shape myself only to the True. I will no longer be merely virtuous. I am Virtue!" Such is the language of the soul, to whom her own Being is sufficient fact, who offers no explanations, no excuses, but faces the interlocutor boldly, and answers: "Thus have I done. Am I or am I not free?" When the eternal comparison is established, however, she bears herself humbly before it, so long as she has not herself become that Eternal in very fact. She knows that there is but one place in the universe whereon a man may make a square stand, and he does so with the Law to back him. That place is his Duty. The equation of the Past has brought him there. All these paltry concerns, this material pressure are outcomes of the energies of that Astral Medium which is at once his flux and his teacher. He and others about him are making these things themselves. He must learn why and how; for this lesson there is no better place than that wherein his soul first rouses from her stupor.

I spoke of Virtue. What is that? Emerson once told us: "Virtue is the adherence in action to the nature of things."<sup>2</sup> That commanding Nature, which is the True, stands above the adherent virtue. Growth and decay advance through retrogression, the fermenting and cathartic processes, these are Nature's. She gives, not opiates, but astringents. To sin, which is to go off at a tangent from the True; to suffer, which is discordant vibration; to return when a latent attraction, developed through pain, sets out towards the sphere of harmonious action; all this is natural. To lose a thousand vintages through the evolution of finer forces, to make here a rose and there a desert, these, with many transmuting and conserving powers, Nature offers as analogies to the student of the True and forbids him to condemn any of them. Sometimes convention establishes this natural order, simply because it is too massive to be overlooked, as when well-bred people select only topics of general interest to all. Then the crowd follow, not because it is true, but because it is convention. This cold acceptance freezes up the vitality of the germ. Let a man agree with his own soul that he will not lie because he galvanizes non-being into Being; that he will not steal because he goes

behind the law which gives him all that is his own and will demand restitution at compound interest for the very word of which he may have deprived another. Let him not covet aught because his true manhood depends on his balance of power, his control of desire. Let him demand of himself the *Why*, of every impulse. Let him seek out the basic reason of his thoughts and actions, and assuring himself of his hidden motive, kill or exalt that as it may deserve. This is vital. What I say here of man applies once and for all to woman also. I am considering that fontal essence in which is no sex, no condition, no division — the True. If the whole tendency be to that, the greatest secrets in occultism can be known. Loyalty must be a sum, not a fraction. Take Truth alone for your headlight, thereby the world may see your course, and children and jejune idlers be warned from its track. I do not say you should rise up and cast off the outer life all at once. That is your protection; you will need it for some time to come. But I say that you should look sleeplessly for the true kernel of these external things. Our advance must even be made with discrimination, often in befriending silence. Remember that under the present social constitution, as long as Theosophy seems to unfit men for their private capacities and obligations, so long will the world condemn it as lacking in moral and in common sense. Its exponents may not deal violently with established relations. You are to work out, not to jump out. If we love the True, we shall fulfil every personal claim, every formal pledge incurred by our position in life, at no matter what cost, rather than allow a false deduction to be drawn which shall implicate the good faith of our moral philosophy. Those to whom we are due alone can free us. An Adept wrote recently: "To find masters, you must be unclaimed by man or woman." Unfulfilled duties are ropes which drag us back. Men are eager to serve this cause; let them bear the result of their actions for its honor until the high law sets them free. Only an overwhelming certainty of a divine mission, of a certified call to Adeptship and the service of Humanity at large frees us from these present considerations by removing us to a higher plane, wherein we stand justified. While I live among men I wear the garment appointed to their assembly. Hours befall when I am called to quit this communion for that of the gods! Then I only know the laws of the soul and emerge from these platitudes of this lower world.

We cannot too deeply inhale the knowledge that Truth is not a surface growth. How often I have seen the clue overlooked by seekers; how often seen the messenger refused! Perhaps the tenor of his speech was too foreign, or too unassuming; or time was lost in questioning his methods, or the student flung away in fancied independence, forgetting that men do not own their own minds, but are debtors to the great currents of Thought. These flow through us like a river; the individual mind is but one of a million ripples, yet the force gathers momentum from ripple to ripple and all are the river. Only a large nature can receive a gift with grace and integrity; it has no fear of belittling itself by acceptance, for it knows that in the True we only receive in due proportion to our gifts, and that it must speedily bestow this bounty elsewhere. You do not hesitate to accept the services of a bank clerk because he is paid for them. Do you suppose that equity is confined to men, and that the Eternal gives us no retainer? Dismiss this commercial weighing and counting; give and take as the winds do! If an archangel stood within a body whose exterior did not announce that divine prompter, men of average standing would reject him while searching for him. "I faint with the desire to find those who will unselfishly accept me and work for the rest. I give myself in all things for your benefit and would be glad if by my death or by my loss you could reach enlightenment. I would transfer, could I do so, all my experience to your soul and give it away to you. For what? For nothing at all save your acceptance. You know very well we can do no more than offer these goods. We set up the wooden image before the eyes of men and not one taking the sword cuts it in two, to find the jewels within. Then we sadly go on again."<sup>3</sup> That is the language of spiritual power and

self-confidence ignores it daily. If Jesus and Buddha walked the earth to-day without followers or protestations, how many men who clamor for the mysteries would recognize Them by an innate perception of Their qualities? I marvel that others suppose the Great Spirits of all ages to have passed onward to realms of bliss, without a second thought for the belated brotherhood behind. By the inexorable laws of Their perfected natures, some must have returned, in renunciation and bondage, to live and humbly teach and cheer reluctant men.

Do not take any man at his surface valuation or yours, but look to the spirit within his words. This discernment of spirits is a great power; it can be cultivated. Close your eyes, summon up the man before your thought and try to *feel his total effect* as it impresses itself on your passive mind. Then regard him impersonally as a problem solved, not forgetting that a foolish man may at times become the mouthpiece of unseen powers. Our perception is often tested thus; be vigilant, lest unawares you reject the fruit of life. But you wish to pluck it for yourself without the aid of any man? Friend! Such fruit never grew. *The One Itself can only realize through the many.* Are you higher than that?

Others again fall into the besetting error of students who are tempted at the outset to elaborate a system. The wish to set our intellectual acquisitions in order is natural enough, but as on our present plane we can only attain to partial conceptions, we may harden them into a finality, become insensibly attached to them as being our very own, and reject all that does not accord with them. Must the universal march up and toe my chalk line? Eschew mental habit; it is a great encruster. Submit the outer and inner man to the solvent of will. Heed the indications of Nature. Observe the bird as it folds its wings and drops down the air to the predetermined spot. Consider the lightning, when from the lurid sheeted flow it forges a bolt and darts it to the mark. Every bullet that scores must first be liquid lead. Fix your motive, then make your thought fluidic and free. We are much conjured in the name of consistency. In heaven's name then, let us be consistent, but to the Truth itself, through all its varied manifestations. Each man need care only for what he is this moment, and pass on easily with life to the next. There are times when we rise into an instant perception of Truth through the total nature of the soul. Then I feel myself great, by reason of this power, yet infinitely small, in that I do not hourly contain it. The laws governing this tidal wave form part of my inner consciousness, just as many of my forces are out yonder in the infinite correlations of cosmic energy. A full perception of them enables a man to hold up hand and lure, and the hawks swoop down. When a comrade displays this touchstone of the soul we know one another without any words. Many men of positive nature think that they also have fallen heir to this power because they test and are confident. They stand fast in reality by the lower knowledge of the delusive self, and can no more apprehend this internal aurora which throbs and gleams through the expanded man than a child discriminates between Northern Lights and the glare of distant conflagrations. The reason for this, as for all mistakes, inheres deeply in the elemental nature of man, and suggestions can be given whereby he may first recognize and then if he be a strong man — conquer it. To this end let us unite our efforts, for you know it is through sharing this faulty nature that I have been led to an earnest contemplation of possible remedies.

JASPER NIEMAND, F.T.S.

## NOTES

1. Emerson. {*Essays, First Series*, "Friendship."}
2. {Emerson. *Essays, First Series*, "Spiritual Laws."}
3. Letter from a friend. {H.P.B. or W.Q.J.:}

## LETTERS ON THE TRUE.

JASPER NIEMAND, F.T.S.

### II. {2 of 4}

MY COMRADES:—

The elemental nature of man has long engaged my thoughts, for so soon as I look within myself I am confronted with a mystery. Others admit the same experience. There is in me a morass, or a mountain, or a cold water dash which appalls me, it seems so icy and dead. In it none of my friends do walk; all is frozen and silent. Yet I seem to like the place, for there I can stand alone, alone, alone. When a boy I had often to cross that cold tract, and then I did not want to meet any boys. I wished to go alone, not with despair, but with a grim and terrible pleasure. I could weep and enjoy with another, and drink in their words and their souls, and the next week that cold arctic death came between us. It does so still. What think you, comrades, is that? But the stars still shine overhead, and on the margin flit the shapes of my loved, and I know that I shall either go back to them or meet them on the further side. It is not grim nor ghastly at all but is certainly unseen by the crowd. This mystery rose before me often and surprised me. It knew so much that it wanted to tell me. Soon I found that all my energies were but the play of correlated powers upon the margin of that strange spot. Where did all my life force come from, if not from that? What else had saved my ideals from the degradation of our material mechanical life? Over there in the center, mist-enfolded, is the tented Self, the watchful god. Only a great tide of love, impersonal, unselfish, divine, can dissolve the lower self and flood us over that arctic desolation. Such love is the aloe flower, and blooms but once a century. Here, on the near side of the mystery, the side nearest the outer man, embedded in his heart, is the lurker, the elemental self.

When first we discover a trace of the soul within ourselves, there is a pause of great joy, of deep peace. This passes. The Soul, or Self, is dual, semi-material, and the material or outer covering is known as the elemental self, the Bhutatma of the *Upanishads*. As you know, Bhuts or Bhoots are elementals or spirits of a certain lower order. It is this lower self — “human soul” — which feels the effects of past Karma weighing it downwards to each fresh descent into matter, or reincarnation. These effects, in the shape of latent impulses, accompany the higher principles into Devachan, where the spiritual energies work themselves out in time. Those karmic tendencies then germinate in their turn, and impel the soul to their necessary sphere of action,— the earth life — to which it again descends, carrying with it as its germ, the true Self or Buddhi, which may develop so far as to unite with Atma, or Divine Spirit.

Now our bodies, and all the “false I” powers, up to the individual soul, are partial forms in common with the energetic centers in the astral light, while the individual soul is total, and according to the power and purity of the form which it inhabits, “waits upon the gods.” All true things must be total, and all totalities exist at once, each in all, and hence the power of the soul to exhibit Truth; hence those sudden gleams from the half awakened soul of which the occultist becomes aware as his consciousness locates nearer and nearer the center; he draws ever closer to the blaze of Light, until his recognition of it becomes enduring because it is now himself. In the earlier stages this perception is physical as well as mental and cannot be likened to any other sensation.

There is a flash, a thrill, a surge, sometimes a *fragrant sound*, and a True thought is born into the world of the lower man. It thus follows that only such forms as are total, reveal entire Truth, and those that partake of lower nature, or are partial, receive but a limited view of Truth. These partial forms participate in each other, and exist partially in those that are total. Such partial forms are the energetic centers in the astral light, are elementals, such are our astral bodies, and hence the affinity subsisting between all, so that it is only when our consciousness is located in part in the astral body that we perceive things pertaining to the astral plane. The elemental self is a partial form, existing partially in the true Self, with which it can only be really incorporated when entirely purified from all material dross, when it is no more itself, but that other Self, even as the Spirit enters Nirvana. This gross, or false self, is great in its way; it must be known and conquered. Of it the *Upanishad* says that when “overcome by bright and dark fruits of action he enters on a good or bad birth,” he dwells in the body and “thus his immortal Self is like a drop of water on a lotus leaf, and he himself is overcome by the qualities of nature. Then because he is thus overcome, he becomes bewildered, ... and he sees not the Creator, the holy Lord, abiding within himself. Carried along by the waves of the qualities, darkened in his imaginations, unstable, fickle, crippled, full of desires, vacillating, he enters into belief, believing ‘I am he,’ ‘this is mine,’ he binds his Self by his self as a bird by a net.” We are told that if this elemental self be attached to sound, touch, outer objects — in a word, to desire and sensation — “it will not then remember the highest place.” When the student thinks that he loves, hates, acts or rejects at will, he is only the manifestor or machine, the motor is the elemental Self. It must have sensation, must enjoy through the senses or organs, or it would be extinguished in the higher principles. For this enjoyment it has sought the earth world again. So it casts up clouds and fumes of illusion whereby the man is incited to action, and when he denies it one mode of satisfaction, it inoculates him with a craving for some other. When he forsakes the temptations of the outer life, it assails him with those of the mind or heart, suggests a system to ossify him, a specialty to limit him, emotions to absorb him, evokes a tumult to drown the “still, small voice.” Pride, dogmatism, independence, desire, hope and fear, these and many other qualities are its aids under mock titles. It disturbs the true proportions of all things. It cozens and juggles him beyond belief. Instead of relying upon the great All as himself, developing that faith and standing fixed by the Law, the man increases his confidence in his personal abilities, opens his mind to the thousand cries of self-assertion and puts his trust in this “will o’ the wisp” nature which strives to beguile him from firm ground. This self of death and ashes tells him every hour that he, the man he now knows as himself, is a being of judgment and power. The contrary is true; the first advance to the True must be humbly made, under the fixed belief which later becomes knowledge, that the man as he now appears to himself is to be wholly distrusted and self-examined step by step. As the physical atoms are all renewed in each seven years’ course, so a man has many mental deaths and births in one incarnation, and if he makes steady resistance to the undermining principle of Reversion to Type, carefully testing the essence of motives and thoughts, the very well-spring of deeds, he soon finds that one higher state of consciousness is succeeded by another and still others, in each of which transient conditions he temporarily and illusively lives, until he takes the last stronghold of the lower self and beholding its dissolution, crosses with a supreme effort to where the watchful god awaits him.

As the man has advanced on the animal, driving it from every subterfuge, lopping off its hydra heads and searing them with the fire of spiritual wisdom, and stands calm and firm in the equipoise achieved by the strength of his attraction for the True, then it is that the enemy makes a sudden halt upon the psychic plane, and summons to its service the grim battalions of the deadliest warfare ever known to the human race. The

Dweller of the Threshold stands revealed, a congeries of materialistic essences expressed from the man's entire past, a bestial apanage of his lower self, and this lusty huntsman, whose quarry is the soul, shouts a view-halloo to all the nameless devils of its pack and gives and takes no quarter. The conquest of the body, the dispersal of worldly interests are child's play to this struggle, where the enemy itself is still a sharer in the divine, *and is not to be killed but subdued*. All the powers of Mâyâ, all the startling vividness of universal illusion are at its disposal. It has for allies the hosts of earth and water, air and fire, terrible apparitions, horrid thoughts incarnate in malodorous flesh and reeking with desire, creatures dragged from the polluted depths of animal existence, sounds hideous and inconceivable, sensations that cast a frigid horror over the palsied mind. The man battles with misty evils that elude the very grasp of thought, he cannot even answer for his own courage, for the foe is within, it is himself, yet not himself, and its surest weapons are forged in the fires of his own heart. Thence too comes his strength, but his perception of that is obscured in this hour. The last stand of gross Matter, the last barricade before Spirit, is here, and over it the conqueror passes to the frontiers of his kingdom. Hereafter, spiritual warfare is appointed him, the ache and turmoil of the flesh are left behind. The pen refuses to deal with this first great contest, the thought falls back from it, and he who faces its issue is a madman indeed, unless he wears the magic amulet.

It should be ever borne in mind that this self of myriad deceptions is the ruler of the astral or psychic plane. Hence that plane is a play-ground of elemental forces most dangerous and entangling to man. Great intellects, pure hearts are bewitched there. Persons of natural psychic powers are easily stayed in this *cul de sac*, this "no thoroughfare," especially when those powers are inherited from past lives and have no simultaneous growth with soul in this. They dazzle and blind their possessor. Evil has its greatest momentum on the astral plane. If a man lingers too long he becomes as much intoxicated as is the worldly man with material life, for these too are only senses of a more dazzling order, matter volatilized and more deadly. It's very language, dealing as it does with subtle gradations of color, light, odor and sound, is easily misinterpreted by those who have not obtained the total perception of the illuminated Self. Some think that they have acquired this illumination and steep themselves in psychic enjoyment and action. It is the fickle light of the astral world which floods and bewilders the elemental self. This plane is a necessary experience, a passing trial, not a goal. Only Adepts can fathom its mazes as they look down upon them from above and correctly interpret their bearings. Students must observe and try to control them without acting from them or depending upon them.

So comrades, I say again, procure the magic amulet. It is pure motive. Motive is the polarity of the soul. A polarized ray of light is one so modified by the position of its medium that it is incapable of reflecting or refracting itself in any but one direction. Its polarity depends upon the parallel direction of every molecule of ether constituting the vehicle of the ray. Divergence in one affects the whole. Are you so fixed down in those unfathomed deeps of yours? Do you know to what medium you respond and its position in the Celestial? He who claims to be sure of his motive, he, more than any other, is under the sway of the great magician. How can he be wholly sure when he does not so much as know fully the constitution of the mere outer man? Dares he aver to what the action of his immense and forgotten past has polarized his soul? Can he answer for the essential Motive at its center when he comes face to face with the mystery at last? The highest keep constant watch over motive. The wise student feeds and increases it. Few indeed have the warrant to "put it to the touch, to win or lose it all." That warrant is only found at the core of the life, written in the blood of the heart. He who can give up all for All, even to his own salvation, he may confront the elemental self. There is nowhere any safety for him unless his hope is anchored in the

unmanifest, his present trust in Karma. If the soul has been deflected, future unselfish motive can in time restore its integrity, whereas to loose the ungoverned soul now is to fall a victim to its lower tendency. Rely on Karma, It is divine. We cannot escape It; we may become It.

JASPER NIEMAND, F.T.S.

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## LETTERS ON THE TRUE.

JASPER NIEMAND, F.T.S.

### III. {3 of 4}

MY COMRADES:—

As we turn our thoughts in upon ourselves, we find the good on top; the bad is below. We must set the blaze of self-examination to the task and drag out the lurker within. We think we have abandoned ambition and comfort, but we have only given up those of the lower plane, the mere reflection of the great ambitions and joys of a larger life. The rays of Truth burn up the covers we had placed upon those seeds, and then the real seeds begin to sprout and cause new troubles. Do not ignore this; it has cost others many years and tears of blood to self-learn it. Men have been deceived as to their motives up to high passages of the Way.

Indolence is a great deceiver. We trust to the sufficiency of “our Divine Spirit,” and so hope to reach the goal easily with the natural evolution of the race. We forget that the kingdom must be taken by violence. It is by no means sure that we shall make the connection with spirit in this life journey. Thousands may and do fail to make it. Your divine spirit is only yours in so far as it is that of all others equally: not yours but *ours*, making us one. The *Bhagavad Gîtâ* destroys the idea that if there be in us this higher self, it will, even if we are indolent, triumph over the necessity for effort, and lead us to find beatitude in common with the whole stream of man. “The man of doubtful mind enjoys neither this world nor the other (the Deva world) nor finds beatitude.” Sometime then during the period of choice for the race this self must be discovered, purified and set free. The period is long — but it ends. The unprogressed soul falls back: it may die, for only the spiritual monad is incorruptible. On the soul itself depends this spiritual polarity; each personality heightens or lessens it by the greater or smaller impetus given by him to the life of the lower self. Its luxurious growth throttles the true self as mistletoe devitalizes the live-oak. “Bitten by the world, like one bitten by a great serpent; darkened with passion, like the night; changing its dress in a moment like an actor: fair in appearance, like a painted wall:” thus the *Upanishad* warns us against the elemental self.

These warnings are not meant to discourage, but to strengthen. The Way is narrow, but it is there. So narrow it is, and so often lost amid the bustling highways of life, that many who have wandered far afield still think their feet are set upon it. There is oftentimes much to discourage us in the attitude of our nearest friends. They are on far shores, and when we arrive they speak of the small potato patch they tend and see nothing in our talk of what is over the sea, and of the grander interests beyond the little place they stand on. This is a blow dealt the inner man and hurts inside. Life is all up in arms against us. A letter sent me by one of my comrades goes clearly and nobly to the root of this matter:

Dear Jasper: I gave your letter to a distressed soul: she returned thanks saying it was a cooling draught to one athirst. The thanks of course are yours.

Now this lady says it was refreshment to the weary, that letter True, or she would not say it. But it was not so to me nor to you. It all seems so well understood to be so. We needed it not. But she illustrates a certain state of progress. She is not yet where we are, but which is happier? She is happier, but poorer in hope. We are not all too happy, but are rich in hope, knowing the prize at the end of time, and not deterred by the clouds, the storms, the miasms and dreadful beasts of prey that line the road. Let us then at the very outset wash out of our souls all desire for reward, all hope that we may attain. For so long as we thus hope and desire we shall be separated from the Self. If in the Self all things *are*, then we cannot wish to be something which we can only compass by excluding something else. Standing where we are, let us purify ourselves to be all things.

So being beyond this lady so grateful, we find that everything we meet on this illusory plane of existence is a lure that in one way or another has power to draw us out of our path. That is the point we are at, and we may call it the point where lures of Mâyâ have omnipresent power. Therefore we must beware of the illusions of matter.

Before we got to this stage we knew the fateful lure, the dazzling mirror of the elemental self, here and there in well-defined places and entrenched as it was, so to say, in strongly marked defenses. Those we assaulted; and that was what it desired, for it did think that it then had no need to exercise the enchantment which is hard because so subtle, and so distributed here and there that we find no citadels to take, no battalions in array. But now our dearest friends are in league with this beautiful, deceitful Mâyâ.<sup>1</sup> How strongly do I realize the dejection of Arjuna as he let his bow drop from his hand and sat down on his chariot in despair. But he had a sure spot to rest upon. He used his own. He had Krishna near, and he might fight on.

So in passing along past those stages where the grateful lady and others are, we may perhaps have found one spot we may call our own and possess no other qualification for the task. That spot is enough. It is our belief in the Self, in Masters: it is the little flame of intuition we have allowed to burn, that we have fostered with care.

Then come these dreadful lures. They are in fact but mere carcasses, shells of monsters from past existences, offering themselves that we may give them life to terrify us as soon as we have entered them either by fear or love. No matter which way we enter, whether by attachment to them or by repugnant horror, it is all one: they are in one case vivified by a lover: in the other by a slave who would be free but cannot.

Here it is the lure of enjoyment of natural pleasures, growing out of life's physical basis; there it is self-praise, anger, vanity, what not? Even these beautiful hills and river they mock one, for they live on untrammelled. Perhaps they do not speak to us because they know the superiority of silence. They laugh with each other at us in the night, amused at the wild struggles of this petty man who would pull the sky down. Ach! God of Heaven! And all the sucklings of Theosophy wish that some great, well diplomaed adept would come and open the secret box; but they do not imagine that other students have stepped on the spikes that defend the entrance to the way that leads to the gate of the Path. But we will not blame them, nor yet wish for the things — the special lots — that some of them have abstracted, because now that we know the dreadful power that despair and

doubt and violated conscience have, we prefer to prepare wisely and carefully and not rush in like fools where angels do not pass uninvited.

But, Companion, I remind you of the power of the lure. This Path passes along under a sky and in a clime where every weed grows a yard in the night. It has no discrimination. Thus even after weeks or months of devotion, or years of work, we are surprised at small seeds of vanity or any other thing which would be easily conquered in other years of inattentive life, but which seem now to arise as if helped by some damnable intelligence. This great power of self-illusion is strong enough to create a roaring torrent or a mountain of ice between us and our Masters.

Z.....<sup>2</sup>

The Path lies not in extremes but midway, like that Sun whose center is everywhere, like that Eternal Liberty which Boehme says is the middlemost and within all things. We must pin ourselves down to a rigid appreciation of the mathematical workings of Law and trace their connection with our own constitution. It would seem well to take all the suggestions we can get, but I have known travelers on western prairies who preferred to go a day's journey out of their road, rather than make inquiry of a passer-by. If the law of Continuity remains unbroken, as it must if it exists at all, and from its very nature cannot be suspended, then there must be personalities far more progressed than ourselves, somewhere along the vast chain stretching from man to the Deity. I have heard comrades repel the idea that any "Master" could aid them. The western mind detests that word; American boys will not even say "schoolmaster." And yet it is only an equivalent for Teacher, and how glorious are the teachings.

If a man's magnetic sphere be confused, however, he cannot feel the attraction of higher spheres; he does not believe in their existence. If they do not exist to his hope or his intuition, for him they are not, nor will he feel their benefit even indirectly until he shall have evolved enough spiritual energy to enable him to assimilate the currents which unceasingly flow from them to raise the powers of the race. Let every man have his mind within his own power and resolve firmly to believe. Our own is everywhere if we will only take it! We do not justly value the gifts of Truth given us without personal attestation. We clamor for persons and authorities; we have a sense of injury which cries to the echo; "if Truth be true she will sign her name." Not always: for how then can the perceptions of men be tested in the absence of genuine relations? How can those students be discovered who do not depend upon a revenue stamp to recognize a genuine article? If a man receives a gem, does he growl because the jeweler's case came not with it? What lustre can a name add to Truth? We should need no guarantee beyond the spirit of the words; the words themselves are often traps. Nothing avails us at last but the touch-stone of our own souls; it is deeply concealed in the heart, far beyond the elemental nature. It is not mind, judgment, reason: it is the fire which tests and welds.

JASPER NIEMAND, F.T.S.

## NOTES

1. *Mâyá*, i.e., "illusion."
2. {William Q. Judge.}

## LETTERS ON THE TRUE.

JASPER NIEMAND, F.T.S.

### IV. {4 of 4}

MY COMRADES:—

That the way to the Immortal lies through the heart of man, is evident to him who observes that in it arise all those feelings which drive him into thought and action and constitute the sum of his life. A primary study of the office and nature of the heart then suggests itself to the wise student, for it is far easier to sink back into the eternal than to dive. The diver must needs have power to retain breath against the rush caused by diving, while to sink back gives time to get and keep breath.

As to the office of the heart of man — by heart I mean that physiological organ which is also the psychological seat of the various emotions and desires whose total we call “mind.” “I have changed my mind,” is really to say I have changed my desire. The Hindu philosopher calls it “Manas; the heart; the internal organ of perception which receives the external impression of the senses and transmits them through the consciousness (Ahankara) and the intellect (Buddhi) to the soul, and is the seat of the passions.”<sup>1</sup> The seat of the astral soul being in the heart, that spark causes the systole and diastole of the heart by its own vibration in unison with the whole body of Astral Light. We can thus conceive of the heart as “pumping up” such light along the nervous system (just as it does the blood through the circulatory system) whence it is transmitted in rhythmic shocks to the brain, and reflected by the gray matter there to its mysterious inhabitant, Consciousness. If the heart’s action be disturbed by passion or emotion, the rhythm of such shocks is altered. These passions and emotions have a two-fold source. They may take their rise in outside astral currents proceeding from other lives: they stream into the heart, which — if it accepts the insidious suggestions — passes them along as we have seen, and the man carries them out to pleasure himself unless he controls them by his will. Or such thoughts may proceed from the Universal Mind in original purity, and be misconceived by the elemental self of man. The heart may be either (or both) an organ of action or an organ of perception. As the former, it hurries man along the bustling highways of action and fatally commits him to a return to life. As the latter, it perceives the influx of emotions and classes each as a petition of the body which the calm judge within refuses to entertain. Hence we have the saying, “Keep a steady heart,” and hence the repeated injunctions of Vedic literature. It is the object of this letter to examine into the methods of such control, but a word as to the nature of soul is first in order.

Brief statements are necessarily incomplete, but it suffices our present purpose to say that the soul has also two offices. Its higher part communicates with the Divine Spirit: the lower elemental part collects the essential experiences of earth life and transfers them to that higher self. Here is a most important link, because these selections determined the tenor of experience, its spirituality or materiality. These selections again, are governed by the heart, or feeder of the elemental self, and it has in turn the option of choice between the pure or the impure, being, however, like all other parts of man, controllable by his supreme will. As we have seen, the heart must take note of all transmissions from without, but if it remains equilibrated, neither recoiling in horror nor eagerly attracting the material, and “free from the pairs of

opposites,”<sup>2</sup> they are not recorded upon the brain with sufficient vividness to become deeds. In other words, the consciousness does not refer them to self and the man is not moved to action. The intellect has another choice: it may discover the *true nature* within all thoughts, and return them, thus raised to their highest power, to strengthen the heart. It thus becomes apparent that we must secure the entire co-operation of the heart in order to train the lower nature to submit to the diviner will of man. We must control and regenerate the mind.

The universal mind is the first production of nature, by which, I mean the eternal nature, the material (so to say and in a sublimated sense) essence of Deity. Evidently the first issuing outward or manifestation of the Unknown, was a Thought. Mind is the link between soul and body; it is a subtle form of matter, and is the vehicle of the soul, whether in an individual or a universal sense. Even a mode of motion, such as mind, is “matter” as compared with spirit. Mind serving to transmit the outward to the inward, may also convey the internal to the external. It may look forward or back. Be it remembered that spirituality is not what we understand by the words “virtue” or “goodness.” It is the power of perceiving formless, spiritual essences. It may be used for good or evil purposes. The heart may be preoccupied with the eternal or the transitory in either (or both) outward and inward, for selfish or unselfish ends. Hence the initial importance of purifying the natural. Within the beast is that luminelle<sup>3</sup> of the World-Soul, the Archæus<sup>4</sup> which is the medium between God and man, and it may be alchemized<sup>5</sup> to be the Christ or Christos which is the mediator “for our sins, and not for ours only, but for the sins of the whole world.”<sup>6</sup> Thus along the whole line, at every station and in every part, we have the power of choice, we may depart or return. While man is unconscious of his possible destiny, Karma governs automatically. When he becomes integrally conscious of it and the “moment of choice” is reached, he may turn the faculties of every organ either way. The responsibility of that Knowledge is then upon him and all his actions have a centupled power.<sup>7</sup> We must not forget that no part of his body or constitution stand by itself alone, but reacting and interacting forms a compact whole.

When the student examines his heart, he first discovers that he does not at all know it; he is not what he appears to himself to be. Perhaps he recovers from some grief which he thought would end his life or his interest in life; or he has longed apparently to end physical suffering by death and finds he has lived on because the real inner man had still the will to live, and finds the intermissions of pain as sweet as by-gone joys. Some withered part of his nature puts forth new buds, or the deadened senses resume the simplicity of youth and with the dying Falstaff he “babbles o’ green fields.”

Festus, strange secrets are let out by Death,  
 Who blabs so oft the follies of this world:  
 And I am Death’s familiar, as you know.  
 I helped a man to die, some few weeks since,  
 Warped even from his go-cart to one end —  
 The living on Prince’s smiles, reflected from  
 A mighty herd of favorites. No mean trick  
 He left untried; and truly well nigh wormed  
 All traces of God’s finger out of him.  
 Then died, grown old; and just an hour before —  
 Having lain long with blank and soulless eyes —  
 He sat up suddenly, and with natural voice

Said, that in spite of thick air and closed doors  
God told him it was June; and he knew well  
Without such telling, harebells grew in June;  
And all that kings could ever give or take  
Would not be precious as those blooms to him.<sup>8</sup>

Perhaps sudden revulsions from the path of evil or pleasure have surprised him; or at the wizard touch of realization, the lover, the miser, the votary, the worshipper in him kneel no more but pursue the nimble chameleon desire to some remoter shrine. Behold the profound wisdom of Truth, which places the ultimate forever beyond his reach!

Seeing then that he can predicate nothing of himself, the student confines himself to an observation of the feelings welling up from those unfathomed deeps. It is here that I am fain to meet him with a few suggestions, for as I watch that tidal ebb and flow within my breast I see that I tasted so much of the gross sweetness of life in other lives that I know most of it now by reason of its being in me.

It appears insufficient to restrain passion or to check action so that they are pent up within us and wait over for their chance in another life. Under the law of attraction those accumulated forces will draw themselves forcibly together within the dreaming soul and driving outward, propel it back to earth and form. So Behmen<sup>9</sup> tells us that the magnet or essential desire of nature compresses itself into a substance to become a plant and in this compression of the desire becomes a feeling or working, whence comes the growing and smell of the plant, and he goes on to remind us that if it were not for such an outgoing and working of the trinity in the eternal unity, the unity were but a stillness, and there would be no nature, no color, shape or figure, nor any world at all. This is the pattern by which all things proceed.

Neither is it wise to rush on in deliberate expenditure. While the burnt out nature may leave us in sight of the spiritual, we may stand there too exhausted to put forward the immense effort required to pass through.<sup>10</sup> It is not needful to plunge again into the mud of sensation to know it. Nor yet should we ignore those parts of us which produce such experience, but admit them and test them. We should not willingly rush back into desires of the past, but accept all situations and study them, the heart fixed on the True. Then they do not sweep us off into delirious action, but we convert them into true action. Every man may misinterpret or pervert a true ray; he may reflect or deflect. The particular disposition of each man determines the direction, the mode of expression which he may give to any impulse instilled into his mind; this disposition is regulated by the preponderance and proportions of the "three qualities" in his nature. I shall hope to show that all impulse is based upon the True. We must then carefully watch those indices of old fires which are now only banked, and try to turn their powers, by inwardly knowing them, into our service. The discovery and right use of the true essence of Being — this is the whole secret.<sup>11</sup>

The case standing thus, we ask ourselves what is the strongest motor of man. Is it not Desire? When I look out over life I see this strange potency dissimulating yet forcing its underground current along in defiance of laws and civilizations, asserting itself now and then in colossal upheaval, sacrificing health, wealth, fame, honor, love, and life for the intoxicating passion of the hour. I see also, in the arc of life, how the first fierce color of Desire, burning higher, blends here and there to purer hues in the solvent of the one light, and nerves men to sublime self-sacrifice. Then I understand that the cohesion of life is in the True, and that this force, properly understood, must be the clue to man's whole nature. Back of its multiform expressions I find one meaning — desire to be. In lovers, in the poet, in the hero's leap to the deed, in the

sensualist's longing to be born anew to joy, even in dumb brutes this vigorous stir of force means to expand one's finest essences for a new result on some one of many planes, and the truth of the eternal creative impulse, shines through the low act, as the fire soul through the opal's cloudy heart. Even in passion, tho' I find six drops of poison to the seventh, in that last drop hides the sublime counterpart. It is fed by some experience. Do not the intense sympathies for others feed and express it? I find that the desire of things is the love of them; this is the "desire which produces will, and it is will which develops force,"<sup>12</sup> and the latter generates matter,<sup>13</sup> or an object having form."<sup>14</sup> As the Deity first feels desire "to beget His heart or son," so man follows the divine example, and by transubstantiation, begets a new heart or nature, and a new inner form.

Taking up the fact that man may misunderstand his own heart, I remind you that there are in nature, three great forces.

1st. — The creative. It corresponds to "Love in man." It is "Brahma, the universal expansive force in nature;" the Creator.

2d. — The preservative. It is *Mâyâ*, the formative power of illusion or ideation; this stands for Vishnu, the preserver, and takes the form of Vanity in man.

3d. — The destructive force. *Śiva* the destroyer; in nature the great separator which annihilating forms or illusions, brings us back to the re-combinations of love and closes the circle. This force is Anger in man, and these three, Love, Vanity, Anger, are the three great gates of life and death.

As the author of "Primary Concepts"<sup>15</sup> has most admirably shown us, all things are dual or polar. The other pole of love is lust; of illusion, falsehood; of anger, justice. Duality is the condition of manifestation: without it the deity must remain forever unseen. There is nothing finally and eternally "good" save the mysterious unit. Neither good nor evil is inherent in manifestations, forms or powers, but depend upon the uses to which these emanations are put. The moment departure from Deity takes place the free-will of Being becomes apparent; two paths present themselves for choice — duality and division. Duality is the harmonious inter-action of two opposites in force. Duality in action is a trinity in unity, composed of two forces and the resultant; this is the condition of life. Division is the discordant, or disconnected working of two forces, whereby one overpowers the other, acts for a time in sterile isolation and then ceases to exist in that shape or form. This is the condition of change or death. Without intercorrelation, without attraction and repulsion, we are without the attributes of life. As the life of the material universe can thus be traced to magnetism or desire, so all our personal desires have a common aim: sensation, or the realization of life. This is also the law of the Deity!

Tracing special desires back to their causes, I find each to be rooted in the True. Ambition is a perverted love of excellence. Falsehood is a misshapen desire to create. Fame is a restricted thirst for the immortal, and so on with all the originally pure thoughts of the universal mind, which have been appropriated and misconstrued by the elementary nature of man. Division has occurred through man's forcible adaptation of a true principle to personal and selfish ends. He ate the fruit of the tree of knowledge on that day when he first conceived good and evil to be single separate modes of progression, instead of counterbalancing powers working together for the same end and confined to the expression of harmony. He will regain his lost Eden on that day when he can look at every desire in the broad, quiet light of this question: How can I give desire such vent as shall conduce to the benefit of other men? The great watchword of the True is this; in last analysis all things are Divine!

To instance such a mode of dealing with any master passion, we will take up love, itself the basis of all desire. Continuity is said to be the law of laws in the world of

effect. Love — the ethical expression of continuity — holds an identical position in the world of cause. Gravitation, polarity, attraction, cyclic necessity: hope, faith, aspiration; the sum of each and all of these is love. By this force, raised to its highest power, Masters become. Their great attainment consists in this — that they embody the law of love.

It would seem then that we should recognize the existence of this huge force of passion within us, so that we may drag it out on our mental and spiritual planes and clutch it so tight that we are master. This is not done by pretending to ourselves that such and such a propensity does not exist. All things must exist in each one of us, and we must understand them all as a figure of the real. For example — the contest of the sexes. Why do women lure men? Why do men rush after them? And do not women act with those who seek them just as nature does with us? She shows a part, and then retreats behind the bars. Then again she comes out and sometimes throws herself into our arms: this latter not so often. Al-though men and women differ much, either is to the other the mysterious undiscovered, to be conquered and known. Especially does this attraction come out when we have started upon the path, unless where a person is wholly devoid of it by nature, having burnt it out in other lives. What then are we to do? To yield is a mistake; it is the high spring of the impulse that we must understand, and then stand master of the lower form. This is the method spoken of in the *Gîtâ* as burning it out in the fire of spiritual wisdom, for being bent upon finding the True, we naturally discard these false disguises. This same fight and self-examination is to be carried on with the other traits, such as anger, vanity and so on, not referring it to self, but as sharing in the processes of nature, and for the sake of all those who are deluded by their own perversions of the True.

The heart sends out its impulses in circular and magnetic waves of feeling which surge through the man until they reach the coarse outer shell which renders them into the gross terms of matter. That does not suffice the inner man, much less the soul, for what they clamor for so loudly in that throb of fire and blood is the large sensation of those rich fields beyond the Gates of Gold. If we could catch that vibration before it reached the outer body, we should find that the inner man gave it a finer meaning, and if we will drop back within ourselves, we may by introspection come to understand somewhat of this higher language. We can arrest the ripples of feeling further and further within ourselves if we will to do it, and work off their impulse by the expenditure of higher energies which reacting, feed the soul itself. When we are attacked by an adversary, the universal mind says “separation;” the individual heart translates “anger.” When a current of invincible attraction reaches us, the body shouts “passion,” but the pure heart whispers “divine love,” and gives a thought or act of brotherhood to all. Ah, my comrades, have not we and desire come together to learn this deathless lesson — that joy enduring is not in matter and that even its most tender love can not long contain the strange, the universal heart of man? We must then readjust our comprehension to its real meanings. This great victory can be won by supreme effort, and we are preparing ourselves for it by the daily efforts we do make. We may look to the natural laws of energy and growth for further help, and these will form the subject of another letter.

JASPER NIEMAND, F.T.S.

## NOTES

1. *Sankhya Karika*, Thomson's trans.
2. *Bhagavad Gîtâ*: Ch. 2.
3. {'Luminelle' is the common name of the flower: *Euphrasia officinalis*; 'Euphrasia' is Greek for 'gladness.'}

4. *Isis*. {*Isis Unveiled*, H. P. Blavatsky.} Vol. 2, page 35.
5. *Isis*. {*Isis Unveiled*, H. P. Blavatsky.} Vol. 2, page 12. Note. — “Ether is both pure and impure fire.... The difference is purely alchemical.”
6. Christian Bible.
7. *Light on the Path*. {Mabel Collins.} Page 32.
8. “Paracelsus,” by R. Browning.
9. {‘Behmen’ is Jacob Boehme (Jakob Böhme) (1575-1624) a German philosopher, mystic, and theologian.}
10. See “*Gates of Gold*.” {Mabel Collins.}
11. {This last sentence (with “of life” added at the end, is from H.P.B.’s: *Gems from the East: A Birthday Book of Precepts and Axioms*.}
12. The magnetic force; the soul force.
13. Which is that force condensed.
14. *Isis*, {*Isis Unveiled*, H. P. Blavatsky,} Vol. 2, page 320.
15. {“Primary Concepts” was an article series in *The Path* by J. D. Buck.}

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## LETTERS TO A LODGE.

JASPER NIEMAND

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I. {1 of 9}

You ask me, Comrades, how we may best assist our fellows, not in material fashion, but along lines of theosophic thought. I have given much attention to this subject. All of us who truly fulfil our pledges to humanity find ourselves placed soon or late where we are obliged to consider it with care. By “pledges” I do not alone refer to spoken vows or promises to any person or body of persons, but also (and chiefly) to the asseverations made within our own hearts and natures. What we thus promise within ourselves, what we aspire to there, finds there a witness, a recorder, an accusing or approving tribunal. This inner nature is judge. This it is which “obliges” us to weigh all questions arising within ourselves, thus demonstrating the existence of that spiritual law which is said to “contain within itself its own executioners.” All that we do or think or refrain from has there its first and deepest effect.

Now, as students, you should know that there is in all things a natural or sequential development, according to which experience unfolds itself in a series of conditions no less regular than those of the flowers. The law of growth is everywhere one and the same. This matter of helping others is no exception; it too has its pre-natal stages. From one to other of these we pass, and must pass, if our experience be vital in the least; if we be growing, involving and evolving at all. The endeavor to observe these stages is at all times necessary. It is the means to that self-knowledge which is the parent of brotherly thought and action.

When first we asseverate within ourselves the wish to help the world, we are prone to go about with offers of help. We look at our fellows with a view to their salvation. Watchful we, to detect every need, every failure; is not our service a panacea for all these? Do not our fellows slip that we may help them rise?

Ah no, Comrades! Not we, but the Law. Are we alone that Law? Has it no other agents? Earth, air and all the seen and unseen elements; are they not full of these? The Dark, more full than all? So we meet with rebuffs. Or our service fails. Or that service results in the deeper bewilderment of our brothers, and we are shocked into the recognition that we are not saviours in the least. We have outrun the Law. Eagerness, over-anxiety to be doing, or personal habit have led us into situations not yet ripe for us, places all too remote, as yet, for any objective tread or touch. We precipitate crises; we stimulate unwise confidences; we startle unready natures into throes of untimely thought. Tangled events, confused issues, atrophied impulses, the jar of living nerve-lines everywhere proclaim our prentice hand. Despondent, we recoil, no more to involve ourselves in the strife of action.

The duration of this period of depression is governed by the reality of our wish to serve. Its fervor rallies us. We regain the base overpassed by our reaction; we examine the cause of our failure. The sincere light shows Law as being competent to designate its agents. Standing then upon our own base, we watch for a sign by which we shall know our own. Sometimes that watch is long. We are tried most by our highest aspirations, and often the answer made to him who asks only to serve is that mystic answer — “*Wait.*” Later on he learns that he serves most who most waits upon the Will, the Law. Other times we fail to recognize opportunities of service; we see them not at all, or all too late. Again the aspiring heart falls back to earth. But the heart of love is a winged thing; it has its home in the pure ether. Earth cannot stay it; it must again try the strength of its wings. It needs not to wait over-long. Some sign is seen and interpreted aright. From the ocean of life some airy form arises and beckons us. An interior prompting fills us with its urgency, or someone asks our aid. The tide of service comes pouring in. Then, when the eager hands knock at our hearts, from those hearts will arise a pure aspiration for wisdom in service.

This much-needed wisdom is slowly and painfully acquired. We learn through and by our mistakes, seen in the light of dawning self-knowledge. Yet there may be a royal road to it, if any who have learned through their own want of wisdom can point out to another the stumbling-blocks in the path of devotion to mankind.

The great source of our inadequacy is this: we think it all-important that we should be wise givers of counsel to our friends. We should read aright the omens of their present and disentangle for their wearied eyes the labyrinths of Life. This were to be godlike! This were perfected sight indeed! It is a fallacy. Hope of its present attainment, an error. We cannot clearly read the simplest life line of our own. We are of import to Great Nature only by reason of our incompetence. She needs us, just as we are, in all our weakness, to work out the purposes of soul amid coil and counter coil. Our imperfections are her means of advance.

What *is* all-important is that we should help our friends to find their own wisdom. From us, not wisdom, but self-effacement is required. Yet this is in very fact the highest wisdom.

For look at this. If we give definite advice, that will inevitably be the tincture of our own minds, the essence of our personal experience or belief. Our conclusions on another's difficulty are formed upon half-presented facts; effects, these, whose cause lies many a life — many an age, it may be — behind the fitful gleam of the present hour. They appear now on planes other than that in which they had their source; they wear an altered garb; human intellect cannot discern their underlying nature. The most reverent touch is still too rough for this strange potential fact, mighty for good as for evil in the life of our brother. Refrain! Fear to disturb the balance in which a soul trembles towards its destiny. Desire thou naught but the fulfilment of Law.

I said that definite advice or plan is the fruit of our own experience. But the questioning soul which comes to us is not improbably a stranger to the whole of that experience. Our advice will have no reality. It will evoke no interior response. Respect, or love of us, or many another impulse to action, may cause our advice to be followed. The result will be that false faith which breeds fear. Action taken without one's own hearty interior assent can only breed discord. The hidden will has never moved at all.

The subject bristles with difficulty. What then can we do?

This, as I think. By observation or by question to find out the ideals of our questioner and advise constancy to those at any cost. "Be your best! Be your highest! I trust you!" Observers of that duality which presents choice after choice to the human soul as it oscillates from this pole to that, we may side ever with the higher side of our fellow-nature. We may endeavor to broaden all ideals by comparison. Nearness to universality and unity is a good test. If our brother cannot formulate his ideal to himself, we can hold up one after another before his mind and see which thrills him to response; love will find out the way. It uplifts the banner of the mightiest ideal and gazes with its brother upon that. Or we may have glimpsed his higher nature. Dissevering that nature from the lower attributes, from the mirage of self, we can hold the mirror up to it and bid him see his worthier self, bid him fix his gaze there. He will, if we look too. "Be at each moment the highest self of which you are capable and hold yourself there." It is a blessed office, this, of reflecting to our brothers the image of their noblest possibilities. We are too often but dim mirrors; feeble reflectors of their virtues, magnifiers of their defects. We turn a microscopic eye upon the more salient details of character, and loss of proportion results. False lights ourselves, we deflect the rays of the Self; the divine rays are beaten back, seeking other spheres than ours. Open the fixed mind to them and the rays pass, dissolving our poor limited forms, waxing glorious in that self-creative power which is the appanage of the living Light alone. That Light whose movement is the Law, is the only wise maker of plans. Yet it plans nothing. It provides action, reaction and circulation; mankind calls these down now as blessing, now as curse.

There are, of course, cases where actual wrong may be proposed, and in such elementary situations we can but point out, not so much the error, as the want of wisdom. The terms "right" and "wrong" have been so misused as dogmatic whips wherewith to flog people into the acceptance of creeds or personal ideas, that to-day their use irritates most minds, as with a hint of would-be authority. This revolt has its root in the soul's sense of its own freedom. It knows right and wrong to be relative terms of an existence only partially true. But Wisdom always IS. The appeal to that implies no self-righteousness.

When we have thus done all we can, we must stand aside. We cannot participate in the unwise deed. There are hours when silence is the only aid. In these we can remember that the weight of past Karma was too strong for our brother, and has set him the hard task of learning through the want of wisdom. We can look forward to meeting him at the next turning, stronger perhaps, while we are weaker, more apt to bear our burdens than we to bear his to-day; wise in that dread, yet calm, self-knowledge born of pain, pain, ever more pain. "The karmic root of all is one and runs deeper than you know. Never judge human nature on its lowest levels, and you never know all the facts." So spoke one who too often speaks in vain. We are too careful for our own attitude. Desirers we, of perfection — *for ourselves*. Painful anxiety, ours, to be *ourselves* just and right. The spontaneous generosity which springs to the brother's aid is lost sight of in the cautious balancing of our own wise persons across the sea of sin. Would we discover any other's need by the torch of our own self-righteousness? Where were then Loyalty? Where Faith? These high virtues thrive not upon the husks of material proof. Does not the Christ light say, as of old, to the sinner: "To thee much

shall be forgiven, because thou hast loved much.”<sup>1</sup> Let us prate less of abstract perfection, abstain from so much “good advice,” and give brotherly feeling, human love of the strong, quiet sort to our beleaguered fellows. Justice, do we say? Man never has it in his power to deal abstract, pure justice to man. Our only justice is compassion, and not that personal judgment born of our knowledge of how *we* would act in some given case. There are souls of rectitude which scorn to defend themselves to doubting friends; strong lips on which the seal of silence is set; great ones too high to bend to self-defense before petty self-proclaimed tribunals. And there are also sinners so strong that their reaction from sin is like the birth pains of a new star. Wisdom comes from the abandonment of the self, and Love is her guide. Before the vast spectacle of nature in her death grapple, of the soul of the world weeping as the great human orphan struggles to become; of universal mind straining to be born again as mind divinely human, the thinker bows his humble head beneath the prayer:

“O Light of all lights which are in the boundless Light, have mercy upon us also and purify us!”

If, on the other hand, we attempt to advise as from our own minds, it must be dear that we either approve or disapprove a given course; both ways our advice is colored by our own view. We fall into the trap set by our own natures. Wrong for me may be right for you. As we are dealing with others, not with ourselves, we can only help them to find out what aspect of truth is most visible to their minds at the time, and then hold up their hands as was done for the prophet of old. All this talk of influencing others appears to me nauseating, contemptible. If we have influence, let us use it on ourselves. He helps most who influences not at all. Resist the appeal to vanity, and our fellows seek our light because their trust is in us. Well they know those who have never used or betrayed them, even to themselves. Well they know that comrade true to the evolutionary trust, who, without assumed authority as without self-seeking, ever refers them back to the law of their own soul. Of such a one the vulgar will say that he (or she) strives to “influence,” but clean minds recognize the presence of that impersonal power which is the greatest force in nature. We can only exercise it fragmentarily now, but its smallest portion may feed a multitude. The world may vivisect those faithful ones whose simplicity of service makes naught of all its plans, the incense of grateful hearts may die away, but the deep “Well done, thou good and faithful servant,” from the inner altar of their worship is all the reward they understand. The true, the universal lover, will, at all hazards, prevent in himself the expression of that haughty form of separateness which gives the death-blow to compassion by saying, in the presence of wrong: “I could not do that.” We err. In the very same position we would do the same thing, for that situation includes the mental and physical make up, the entire Karma of that other person. Every determining factor would be the same. There were no possible escape from the same action were we the same actor. Do we thank heaven we are not the same? It imports more that our fellows shall have good cause to thank high heaven that we are other.

Again, strenuous opposition often forces the questioner in the contrary direction. And too often people ask our opinion to have their own confirmed. Failing that, it is sweet to find, in our opposition, a spur or a justification, it may be, of their course. The Mâyâ of Nature is endless. It happens again that some who come to us for help, apparently, really man the lifeboat of the Law sent for our succor. They may bring to a focus some long-delayed choice of our own. They may throw, as it were, a search-light upon our position, revealing us to ourselves. “What men prize most is a privilege, even if it be that of chief mourner at a funeral.” To most of us, a privilege means the exclusion of others. He who foregoes the privilege of adviser-in-chief to his fellows begins to learn a deeper wisdom of self-control that leads to wider helpfulness in fields of hidden space. Yet do not say that we can help but little. Sympathy is a vast force,

and we develop by its exercise. Not the gush of puling sentiment, nor the blaze of emotion, but the quiet charity which is an occult power, that broad attractive current binding souls apparently dissevered. We touch the bond; they thrill response to its widespread harmonies.

I cannot make you more definite reply, yet you will feel helped, I venture to believe, because, while no definite path has been pointed out, a direction has been indicated where many paths do lie and are to be found. Each path must be freely chosen by him who is to tread it. Hence the wise guide will only indicate their direction.

There is more to it, though. Inasmuch as even two or three are thus met in the name of the universal Law of Brotherhood, or Identity of Souls, and when self has faded from sight, a very real guidance can and does arise from the inner selves of all. It arises from those spiritual spheres whose beings are selfless. Attracted by the harmonious aspirations quivering through the unseen light, they half incline, they listen, they recognize the voice of soul, they help the inner selves of men through the minds and hearts. Watch, then, for these, the descending gods.

Not men and women seek our aid, but souls. The soul, deeply buried in matter, seeks itself through the universe. Deep within us lies that soundless Aum which the Mahâtma — the soul made perfect — salutes in every human being. It lies so deeply hid and knocks. Material brain is occupied. The heart of desire cannot hear. Vainly the Voice resounds; the Aum knocks on, unheard by sinning man. But his brother may hear! On us Nature may have imposed that signal trust; we may have that gift to hear, to recognize the Aum in other lives. Then we may make reply. How? By returning trust for suspicion; silence for deeds of wrong; we may uphold to our brother the image of his creator and god. Ours it is to cause hatred to cease by love, to win for that distraught and warring comrade a moment of stillness, in which the inner Voice may be heard. When we return patience for anger, that fettered soul within his body vibrates to the universal harmony. Like a miner imprisoned within a ruined mine, it hears the signal of the rescuing party coming nearer, nearer still. It feels the hope of escape, of breaking down the walls; that light approaches from without, borne in a brother's hand, to free the inner light, itself. It leaps in its stony prison. The man feels, he hears, he obeys; the soul-light floods out to know itself, to know the worlds which are but its greatest expression. Is it not an august service, thus to assist the purposes of soul?

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Only the Teacher can know whether the soul has done well or ill. The Voice is all the guide the soul can have. It will bring it to the broad places in the end.

JASPER NIEMAND.

*(To be continued.)*

*Note.* — The Editor will gladly receive any communications, in the nature of enquiry or otherwise, connected with this series. These he will forward to the author, to be dealt with in future letters if suitable.

## NOTE

1. {Luke 7:47.}

## LETTERS TO A LODGE.

JASPER NIEMAND

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### II. {2 of 9}

You ask me, Brothers, for my thoughts respecting the Theosophical Society and its neutrality. The latter point appears to me to be one important at all times and one which should be better understood.

The Society is held to represent our ideal. It stands for Universal Brotherhood. What is that? I have heard, and I believe it true, that when the elder Brothers of that hierarchy which specially helps the West were considering the base of the T.S. — a base to be as broad as the world, free as the ether — they chose for this foundation a truth which they expressed by the term “Universal Brotherhood.” In this they followed after Nature, herself based upon that truth. The term was chosen as one fitted to convey to all minds in all languages a clear, distinct, and ethical idea. At the same time, their ethics transcend ours; the only real ethics are spiritual laws we do not glimpse as yet. So this term is held to cover and to convey in its highest sense the truth of the “spiritual identity of all Being,” on which alone can a *real* universal brotherhood, true in fact as well as in potentiality, active on all planes alike, be based. The Society is thus seen to rest upon spiritual identity, upon likeness and not upon difference, upon union and reunion as beginning and goal, and, in the intermediate spaces of Time, upon unity in diversity. Like the world-soul, the Society receives into its bosom all manner of minds, souls in all stages of evolution and involution, promising within those borders free and unimpeded development, through enquiry, to each. Thus the sole article of faith necessary for admission premises its neutrality; the one springs naturally from the other.

Let us now take up and examine the nature of this neutrality. At once we perceive that no passivity, in the usual sense, is implied. The Society does not permit the war of creeds, the attack of minds within its precincts. Members and officers are not to sit calmly by and allow the assault upon the beliefs of others to go on unimpeded. It is not permitted in the meetings; on the part of officials it is held to be a misdemeanor forbidden expressly by the Constitution. The neutrality is positive, not negative. It is active, as becomes a spiritual quality springing from a spiritual truth lying at the very foundation of Being. Rightly so, for those who sit by and allow a wrong to be done when their activity might prevent it, are sharers of the injustice which their passivity makes possible. They do not escape, by that inactivity, a really active share in the wrong. They provided a quiet shelter, so to say, for the aggressor, a field from which the evil could sally forth and take effect. We find mankind recognizing this fact at two poles, first in the common axiom: “The receiver is as bad as the thief;”<sup>1</sup> secondly, in the mystic’s code, “Inaction in a deed of mercy becomes an action in a deadly sin.”<sup>2</sup> When the machinery of the Society is put in motion to bring about an infringement of the rules of Brotherhood, we do not escape responsibility by assuming the attitude of calm spectators, or of judges ready to deal out a justice which in truth we have not to bestow, being as yet imperfect men. Neutrality is not passivity. The last is a mental inertia, the other a fixed mental attitude. The first altogether rejects an infringement of

Brotherhood, and forbids an insistence upon diversity, which the latter supinely permits. The ideally neutral attitude is that taken up by the Society. It posits for itself a broad code, a tenet wide as the fields of light and single as is the source of that light; for others it adopts an impartial neutrality. In this mental equilibrium there is no lethargy. The “holder of the balance” requires every faculty, every nerve brought into play. Try; you will not find it easy. This point of balance is the lever of Archimedes; once found, it moves the worlds. When disturbances shift the balance too far, the true neutrality consists in an effort to bring about readjustment, just as we see people instinctively throwing themselves to one side when the ship keels over or the coach careens. That is the recognition, in physics, of nature’s law of readjustment, or reaction. The Society provides for it, even to dismissal from office, if the rule of neutrality be violated, and such provision is a part of its neutrality. Ours should be no less positive. In this light an occult saying becomes understandable: “Because thou art neither hot nor cold I will spew thee out of my mouth.”<sup>3</sup> To be at either pole implies reaction in time, and so comes about circulation, or the condition of living, of evolving. To lie passively in a middle state where no action is, is to be spewed out of the mouth of nature, or manifestation, to fade out without further *personal* evolution. The Yogî is intensely active on the spiritual plane and negative upon the physical plane in trance. The same penalty would be incurred by the Society if it were “neither hot nor cold.” Its inactivity would bring about its decay.

It would thus appear that an active charity is the legitimate outcome of the sole article in our confession of faith. An *active* charity — not verbal, not inanimate, not supine. The magnificent picture given by St. Paul delineates the aspect and mode of such a vital charity from the standpoint of the adept, and portrays the inadequacy of mere eloquence, though it spoke as angels might speak, to do justice to that living quality, without which sonorous speech “were as sounding brass or the tinkling cymbal.”<sup>4</sup>

Our Society is the model, the working model in the objective world, of that body known to the mystics of all ages as The Lodge, or aggregate of spiritually active souls, embracing all the rungs of conscious mental Being.

THE LODGE is the servant of Karma. That is, its operations are guided by the laws of Being. It works along the lines of Law, using cause and effect as it finds them to its hand, provided already by mankind under Karma; using the action and reaction of currents in the Âkâśa as it there finds these. It reveals nothing. It attacks nothing. It punishes nothing and no one. It leaves all this to the Law. The withdrawal of its influence or its aid is not, properly speaking, punishment, for it only removes that which cannot be used by those who turn away from its path, the path of Law. Strictly speaking, offenders are those who have removed themselves. But it protects. It defends. It secures for its followers the right to mental freedom. It imposes no action. It offers opportunity for right action to those entitled to such opportunity. If rejected, the opportunity comes no more. The Divine is not importunate. Where honest intent and pure aim have not secured a man from mistaken action, his soul learns a broader view, a vision more intense from the pain of the mistake, and his right intent carries him onward still. The Law thus provides that intention, motive, shall count, and so they do also count with that instrument of the Law, THE LODGE. So long as a man wills to do rightly, wills to see clearly, he is helped over the innumerable obstructions put in our way (by nature), by that LODGE itself, whose mission it is to help mankind in their progress through the mire of material life.

THE LODGE has but one insurmountable barrier, hypocrisy; one crime, ingratitude; one felony, self-abuse. For conscious root in falsity under guise of truth-seeking must debar the mind from sight of the True. Denial of a gift, rejection of the giver are perjuries committed against the very nature of Life — the One Being —

itself. All who give us aught have given us somewhat of their life; that life works in and for us; when we deny that, after any one of our numerous contemptible human fashions, we do inhibit and expel it from our spheres; we do our paltry best to stifle Life and stultify its source; we deny the very mainsprings of existence, the eternal give and take, when we give back evil in any shape of denial, forgetfulness, suspicion, for the blessings of fraternity and good will. And he who destroys the nervous vehicle destroys the inner senses in the germ and cannot penetrate to that arcanum of hidden Being because he has destroyed the path leading to it, and that, too, after a fashion which affects the atoms of nervous matter for many a life beyond the life we call to-day.

The great function of THE LODGE is also that of the Law — readjustment. That is to say, bringing into equilibrium the nature — human or universal — temporarily overbalanced by undue determination to one or another pole of force. When undue stress is laid upon one aspect of life, the true servant can be helped by the awakening of energies then latent at the other pole. This is done whenever *necessary*; the good gardener does not disturb the plant until it requires his care; then he only brings to bear upon it natural agencies which he has learned to specialize. Such servants form, each in his own degree, links of the great chain of conscious endeavor which stretches from man to the angels, and beyond. Once they have served, and while they do serve, that LODGE is in the very nature of things bound to them as they to it. For such living links there is no severance unless they will it so.

Life, the Breath, the Conscious Mover, flows along the chain, *seeking and making its own bed*, choosing its own vehicles; those above cannot reject those below; those below must receive that Life by way of those above. Each put himself in his own place; not one can lose it unless he himself moves away or is moved away from that place. It is hierarchal, because the laws of Life, of the One Life in the One Substance, have made it so, fashioning plane upon plane, stage upon stage, link after link, soul after soul. “Ingratitude *is* a crime in occultism,” as the Master twice has said, for he who denies one link of the chain, one source of but a single interior benefit, throws, or would if he could, throw the whole chain into confusion. He endeavors to isolate one link from the living palpitant whole; that whole resists, and he himself is torn away from it; the great stream expulses him as debris upon the naked shore, and flows on. Brotherly help is a spiritual entity; it is of the higher order of life; it is a part of the higher substance of our being — the thought-substance, the heart-substance — and we sow it in the spheres of our fellows, open to ask and to receive it.

When, then, they turn against the giver, they do violently reverse the action of those living substantial atoms within them; the sudden reversal of force is a great shock to their own inner man. Moreover, they do then, by their thoughts, expel and cast back upon us the force we have bestowed, but a force also reversed to its other pole. By this reversal of force they drag the atoms of spiritual substance down to a lower plane existence before their time. They return hatred for love; in occult dynamics this means that they give contraction, death, bitter cold for life and love. They *may* hurt the giver, if they be powerful enough, but primarily they injure themselves. In the ungrateful man you may plainly see the horrid action of this sharp reversal; he is torn by doubt, anger, suspicion; his misery knows no cessation. Peace has no foothold within him; he is the wretched playground of forces whose nature he himself has transmuted, making that deadly which was given from the fountain of life. And Life uprears its crest against him, it will have none of him except upon the terms he himself has made, the terms of violence to the essential nature of things; no truce is given by the Law to him who has thus declared himself a foe to order and law. The Benefactor is sacred in the penetralia of spiritual truth; he cannot undo the good once done, himself; no benefit once set forth can ever be cancelled; the stream can be checked at the source but its flowing

waves cannot be recalled. Present evil cannot obliterate past good so far as we are concerned; in the universal sum of things they may tend to one benefit — self-knowledge — in the end.

Hence fidelity to that Society, at once a model and a benefit, an ideal and a nucleus capable of perfection, is a primary virtue in the would-be Theosophist. He must act the brotherhood he professes, or he risks to become a hypocrite, one of those “pharisees” of whom H. P. Blavatsky remarked that they were the only class whom the Christ constantly rebuked. The mystic Christ-light will have none of the hypocrite, for he seeks a false light, one of the numberless false reflections of the One. He must be grateful, to his fellows, his officers, to the unseen givers of the ideal, to the “guardians of the base,” to the “bearers of the flame.” Otherwise, he risks to destroy the vehicle. It is not perfect, for men can provide no vehicle which shall be better than their aggregate selves.

It is for them to perfect both. Theirs is at choice that noble part of avoiding all fixed codes, all rigid methods of comparison, all hard and fast conceptions of charity or justice or neutrality or benevolence, whereby we reduce divine fluidic lights to mere forms, models of our restricted minds. Let us watch at the springs of the spirit within us; let us wait for the dawn of compassion; let us listen for the pleading of an inner voice; for the pulses of pardon, of peace and of prayer, let us keep undying watch within ourselves. When these arise, were it by but the feeblest heart-beat, let us give way to the eternal processional of the peace bringers, the currents of divinity ever ready to flow through every man who will take down his bars and evoke their passage. We are fixed; they change ever. We are mechanical; they are spontaneous. Fatigue is ours; they are immortal, tireless, ever-born and never-fading. We are the slaves of our own poor preconceptions of conduct and virtue; they are servants of the Divine Dark Children of the Father of Lights, teachers of men who yet are — if they will — themselves. Through and by our Society, that concept of spiritual and charitable identity, we may both receive and give these boons *if so be we abide by the spirit itself*. We shall learn and become that truth than which no grander ever was set forth:

“As the one fire, after it has entered into the world, becomes different according to what it burns, so the self within all things *is different — but it exists also apart.*”<sup>5</sup>

Now this is an epitome of the *real* neutrality.

JASPER NIEMAND.

(*To be continued.*)

*Note.* — The Editor will gladly receive any communications, in the nature of enquiry or otherwise, connected with this series. These he will forward to the author, to be dealt with in future letters if suitable.

## NOTES

1. {*Lectures to My Students*, Charles Spurgeon. As found: “Remember that, as the receiver is as bad as the thief, so the hearer of scandal is a sharer in the guilt of it. If there were no listening ears there would be no talebearing tongues. While you are a buyer of ill wares the demand will create the supply, and the factories of falsehood will be working full time. No one wishes to become a creator of lies, and yet he who hears slanders with pleasure and believes them with readiness will hatch many a brood into active life.”}

2. {*The Voice of the Silence*, H. P. Blavatsky, p. 31.}

3. {Paraphrase of Revelation 3:16?}

4. {1 Corinthians 13:1.}

5. {*The Light of the East*, October 1895, Vol. 4, p. 34. As found: “As the one fire, after it has entered the world, though one, becomes different according to what it burns ; thus the Self within all things becomes different according to whatever it enters, but it exists also apart.”}

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*The Irish Theosophist* – January 1895, Vol. 3, pp. 49-53.

## LETTERS TO A LODGE.

JASPER NIEMAND

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III. {3 of 9}

COMRADES:

You ask me for a fuller interpretation of the idea that the White Lodge acts on the expanding force, and the Dark on the contractive. I understand this as follows:—

The spiritual forces, following the action of the Great Breath, flow outwards and downwards periodically, and periodically withdraw into their own center. This is known as the “descent and reascent of the gods.” It is for men to lift themselves in aspiration towards the descending gods. When the spiritual forces are in full play of activity they are to be felt on *all* planes, even on the physical and most objective, where they are not indeed always sensed by men who may yet act with them from some interior perception not cognized by brain-mind. Of course you will see that this is again quite different from the action of those amongst mankind who do cognize the spiritual activity, in any degree whatever, and who apprehend the meaning of right action at such periods.

Following the method of that Planetary Spirit who imparts the vibration of truth for the Manvantara, the White Lodge acts with the expanding force, and, like it, and with it, withdraws into its own plane and center, to work no more actively (externally) when the contractive force is on. On the spiritual plane there is always activity so long as the Great Breath is in manifestation at all. Roughly speaking, at such times the Adept of the White Ray, the white sexless Unity, acts in Samadhi, &c., only. You will see that when the spiritual expansion is on in great force all planes of nature feel it, according to the higher or lower evolution of the beings of that plane. But when the spiritual currents withdraw, each plane sets up its own action and reaction in the substance of that plane.

The dark powers, on the contrary, act with the contracting force. That is to say, they act with and increase the action and reaction especial to each plane; such planes are the physical and lower astral.

Master has said: “It is impossible to worship both sides of nature at once.” The word “worship” should be deeply underscored. For by “worship” is meant exclusive devotion to both Eros, the One Ray, the expansive compassion, and to the differentiated action and reaction of Jiva-prana especial to physical nature. Some great occultists have erred in this respect. As take the example of Paracelsus. Such men have thought that they could work on the higher manasic and other planes at favorable cyclic moments, and could then act in the body in separative physical and other extremes, supposing that by this they were copying the example shown by the manifested duality. They failed to discern Karma as a universal law, and to learn that

Reaction really means that the spiritual forces are withdrawn to their own plane, to their own center, and that the action then observed by men in nature is an action of a differentiation of force common to nature alone. Hence these men failed to reach the great truths.

When the spiritual forces expand from within outward, all nature thrills responsive; even the hierarchies of lower powers can only assert themselves on those among mankind already predisposed to their influence. But the word Reaction is one which covers, in fact, that action referred to as coming from the unprogressed Planetaries, with all their hierarchies down even to the unprogressed elementals, with tendency to limitation, to fix and arrest thought-molds, as to fix and arrest the worlds hanging suspended in minor pralaya.

Heed now the danger of this spiritual current to those amongst you whose thought-forms, whether of creed or plan, or what not else, are fixed. Were such a current forced into a sphere largely insensible, so far as mind may reach, to noëtic action, the result would only be that these erroneous ideas of rigid mold would more actively vibrate, would more vividly impress the brain-mind. Herein lies the danger of forcing the evolution of a man. Even when Karma permits, this process is one dangerous to the co-ordination of the various bodies; and danger, great and grave danger, is incurred either to the physical body or in the reaction set up in the mind itself.

In the case of some the danger is in large part that of the physical body. They may feel reaction in the mind also; but forewarned is fore-armed, and if they have been taught — and in some measure have grasped the teaching — to observe this reaction in brain-mind as the action of the dark quality in nature (tamo-guna); to check pictures, even thoughts, and not to regard this effect of reaction on the lower mind as an expression of the real self, they have lessened little by little and in part the tendency to be carried away by it.

In other cases the danger lies less in the physical than in the brain-mind, which may feel the reaction of which I speak, in so far as there may be these mental pictures of rigid mold, which require time ere they can be dissolved in that Light which fluxes all things, and which works to more rapid purpose as men increase its power by looking to it alone. The dark powers can make fierce assaults in ways not generally understood, but which are felt in the form of terrible mental reaction. That reaction awakens the pictures of erroneous ideas to fresh life, and casts their vivid images anew upon the brain: bewilderment results. If at these times we set all down to the reaction common to nature, and induced by the force of our aspirations, avoiding meanwhile our own fixed mental preconceptions, we soon find that a time comes in which the Readjustor does his great work. This Readjustor may be the Higher Self, its messengers, or Karmic circumstance, or a Master, and even our own inner man: in all these cases it is the Self.

On this plane the dark powers rely upon their ability to create a Mâyâ. If they see that we are not to be trapped in the prominent lines of work, they lay their hands where our currents exist but in some very small matter. Let me suppose a case, and one common enough. X. may have indulged in some criticism of another, small, and coupled with sincere and kind thoughts up to his lights. The dark powers could seize upon these pictures (vivified already by sound and its objectivizing power), could dress them up with more subtle matter, could enlarge them, enliven them with elementals and also could assume X.'s image, making all appear very large and bitter to the brain, whose nervous matter they would then proceed to impress with these images more than half their own creation. The object is to make it appear that all these things came from X., and the impression of other minds and repetition by them causes the evil to

grow and spread. How are we to avoid this? We should refrain from all criticisms, especially in times of disturbance, when the etheric tension is great, and when all our spheres are tense as harp strings which feel every stir of the air. We must not manage, precipitate, nor force. We may work on and leave results to the Law and its wiser servants. Let us each assume that the others do not think harshly nor critically of us, but put it all against the dark powers of lower Nature. We may and must defend others, when necessary, but let us do so upon a basis of principle and fraternity of *the whole*. By gentleness, detachment, strict attention to duty, and retiring now and then to the quiet place, bring up good currents and keep back all the evil ones. There must be silence in heaven for a time, or the dark ones rejoice to so easily get good, malleable images for annoying us. Remember it is the little things this work is done through, for they are not noticed and their effects are not traced to them, while larger things draw the eyes and minds of all, and hence are not good “blinds.”

Self-abnegation and charity may yet save the day for that nucleus of the Light, that child of the cycle and of our hope, whom we have created to give forth the great blessing of the Spiritual identity of all being, and will project the T.S. into the next century as a living wedge to cleave the darkness of the darkest age. Watch then and stand, but not as men who stand in a desperate cause. Stand as those stand in whose hearts the living Light has awakened, has burned and has borne witness to the truth. Stand calmly, stand serenely; bear witness yourselves to that Compassion which is that Light itself. Give heart to those feeble ones amongst you whom the time and great Karma may well shake, by a fraternal quiet support which is beyond all loud asseveration, which needs no defense of self, but which waits upon the Hope of the ages, the Spiritual Light which “lighteth every man in the world” if that man will.

Beware of brain pictures which partake of the chains and delusions of matter. Their oscillations in the form of brain-mind action and reaction we may largely avoid. When you are not sure, stand still. Turn the peaceful heart away from all sharp clamor and await the hour of right action, resting meanwhile on the duties of the moment. Thus shall we baffle those hierarchies which have place in the duality of manifestation, upon which the great White Lodge cannot expend those high energies of which it is the guardian and evolver, since those powers must disappear with nature when the Great Breath shall be manifest alone. But it is *our* part to wage that war, since we have given them within our spheres a home, dwelling places and a power. Ours to evolve every atom, to drive the dark dwellers from their homes dissolved by the fluid mind which yields readily to the spiritual influx, and to the changes it brings in the akasic substance. Masters have long since left that task — once their task, too — behind.

Neither should we judge those who have interpreted events, bewilderment, suffering according to their karmic tendency. Enfold them also in the divine Compassion. All we have to do is to work and to wait in silence of the lips and of the brain. If we succeed in this, ours will be the great reward of hearing more clearly from that Light within ourselves which will guide us to action when the right moment for that action shall have arrived.

Do you not now see that power is only attainable by man on condition of his being able to work with either one pole of force or the other? With spirit which finds manifested fruition only in going forth, and not in withdrawal. Or with nature which fructifies only in so far as she is able to contract, indraw and to retain some portion of that ever-acting spirit. Man, having power to choose, makes the first right steps when he acts only through the heart-perceptions of fraternity, resignation, patience, courage, altruism, all evolved by the high magic of the great name of Humanity; all strengthened and broadened when attained and used for love of that race which shall be the temple of the Spirit if it will, and by the help of those amongst us who have the ideal of service with and for the Elder Servitors. Otherwise you strengthen the intellect only; intellect

the perceiver of form and formulated ideas; intellect whose proper service is to verify in Nature the *facts* of the continuity of spiritual laws, as intuition holds the office of verifying those laws with the Buddhi eye when Nature sleeps in man. Thus in every act in life you have a choice; each tells for or against spiritual evolution. Each choice is a step: the aggregate of these steps impels you to or from right choice in all the crises of great tests when the karmic hour strikes. You should use all the knowledge given to you to interpret the action and reaction of life about you. Thus only can you have a real and living compassion, thus only can you draw nearer to that ever-living Spirit contained by no molds but container itself of the whole. Faithful to this trust you shall be able to understand the perplexities of events, letting “action and reaction have place in you, the body active, the mind as tranquil as the summer lake.” Interpreters, without being judges in the least, you shall stand firm on ground of your own, amidst the tide of the world, able to remain yourselves inactive until the inner voice shall indicate the presence of the descending gods. Then listen greatly, will greatly, and obey. This done, the blessing of the great White Lodge shall indeed be yours, won by you in that service in which they won the right to bestow it.

JASPER NIEMAND.

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## LETTERS TO A LODGE.

JASPER NIEMAND

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### IV. {4 of 9}

COMRADES,— While I am glad to answer the questions which you put to me in so far as I may be able to do so, I cannot of course pretend to say the final word upon any of them. You must judge for yourselves of the relative value — if any — that my replies may have for you, while my part is to say what I have been taught and have verified to a greater or lesser extent; the extent varies according to the various matters dealt with. You ask:

“What is the difference between the ‘psychic faculty’ and the ‘psychic power,’ to use a current phrase?”

*Answer.* — The “psychic faculty” is that which is born with any individual, it inheres in the Skandhas, in such astral atoms as have been brought over from previous lives. It is a rudimentary trait, undeveloped, latent, or semi-latent, and its exercise is not controlled by will.

The “psychic power” is the trained and developed use, through will, of that faculty latent in all mankind.

The “faculty” is native, inborn, and arises from the evolution — in the race — of a more complex nervous system. The “power” consists in expanding, grasping, educating and governing that faculty.

“The difference between a man born a psychic and one who is made is that the former is a rough, unpolished jewel, reflecting light superficially (and usually they do not wish to learn), while the other has a perfect polish all round, reflecting equally on

all sides; each man must polish himself. The inborn psychic faculty, being more sensitive, comes in contact with more force in Nature.” (*Letter of Master K.H.*)

The haphazard awakening of the “faculty,” due to mere sensitiveness of nerve fluid, makes of the born psychic a playground for astral forces. The orderly unfolding of these microcosmic points of contact with universal forces (which gradual development can only be had by one whose mind and will have been developed and purified), provides for the safety of the individual.

All mankind is destined to evolve to a point where the psychic life or germ will manifest, more or less, through the physical body. A few among the men and women of each century lay hands upon their inheritance and train themselves into “power.” They are, as I said, those whose will and mind have been *previously* evolved through purification and concentration. Hence arises the occult saying, “the psychic plane must be entered from above by the white adept;” *i.e.*, from the *higher* Manasic plane. Entering by will-force from the lower or physical door is the Hatha Yoga of the black magician. Here the term “physical” includes all the gross lower astral plane, all below the “divine astral.”

2. “Can one discriminate between the person possessed of the psychic faculty and one possessed of the power? If so, how?”

*Answer.* — That depends upon the identity of the questioner. Some can; some cannot. There are two ways of so discriminating, which two ways may be combined in one person. The first way is by the exercise of common sense. The second way is by knowledge of occult training. (You may also *know* the rules of training and not have the mastery of them as yet.) In regard to the first way: the born psychic may be of any grade of morality and intellect, just as any other person may be. But usually the powers of endurance, the will and self-control — especially control of self-esteem and self-seeking — are absent in the person of the psychic who is born and not made. He is minus, and not plus. Correctness of psychic vision or what not else is no proof; the psychic may be correct as a photographic plate is correct — because it is sensitized. But such a psychic will not be possessed of knowledge of life and character: there will be no control of events touching the personal life, nor will he correctly interpret what is seen. After all, it is indescribable, but surely you and I can tell a practical carpenter from the amateur by that indefinable but distinct something — the “*je ne sais quoi*” which radiates from one who knows what he is talking about. A book written by a man who has been in a country has what the critics call “atmosphere” and “local color,” which are never found in the writings of one who describes what he has not himself seen. Of course I have my own tests. And you must have your own, and mind this: first test your own tests before leaning too blindly upon them. You will come to better them too, if you yourself are upon this path. But the tests of another avail little or nothing *as regards this way*.

In regard to the second way, the way of knowledge, there the tests are indeed precise, exact, scientific. All who have passed an examination in, say mathematics, not only know the man ignorant of them, but they can also give you their reasons. Let me particularize, by illustration.

You tell me that you heard of someone who claimed to have a “psychic power of looking into people” and seeing what they really are. You do not name the person — and perhaps the person is imaginary — which leaves me free to criticize the phrase. So much the better. For this phrase displays ignorance and pretension, whether conscious or unconscious. Let me tell you why.

No *psychic* examination, that is, of the mind, or of the moral nature, or the emotions; in short, no examination of anything above the mere *physical* body is made

*inside*. The clairvoyant who wishes to ascertain the state of health of the whole or a part of the physical organism, looks *inside*. The term physical organism here includes the nerves and blood and all the fluidic contents of the body belonging to the material plane.

The trained psychic who looks at the character of a person, the thoughts, the moral and evolutionary status must have: (a) control of the third eye, to some extent, at least; or, (b) control of a certain other center in the head corresponding to the matters of psychic planes up to and inclusive of lower Manas; also, (c) knowledge of *what* to look at and *what* to look for. The person looked at, so far as the physical body is concerned, is, by an effort of will, brought before the eye quite flat, like a figure in a camera; this figure is not looked at. Regard is had to a certain emanation and to certain things — let us call them motor-changes — in that.

In some cases of partial training, the student-observer does not sense these changes as occurring in an image outside himself. He sees them as pictures of motor-change and so forth inside a center of one of his brains (in the head). I cannot explain further. The use of the expression “inside” or “looking *at*” persons, or inside them, or at their “magnetic aura,” at once shows the ignorance of the speaker.

Moreover — and this is of vital importance — no student who would speak of doing such a thing would continue under training. It is psychic spying, psychic pickpocketing. It would never be permitted except in certain instances for just reasons, and speaking of its exercise or results would promptly entail cessation of training.

As to appearances of Masters, about which you also ask. Voice, form, all can be simulated. There is one sure way by which it may be known whether such manifestations are from the Master or not, but H.P.B. apart, I never met but one person who had ever heard anything of this scientific way. This person, needless to say, is Mr. Judge. He did not tell me of it. Can I give you any hint on it? Well, just the least hint. If you have opened a reflector within yourself, it reflects back an image of its own plane and only that. It is a deep question of mysticism. As to the Thought-Body of a Master, few persons living in the outer world could stand the energy pouring from that, unless an Adept were with them to temper the force to the atmosphere of the looker-on. Otherwise the pranic energy would have disastrous results indeed.

In my next letter I will reply to your further questions on this and upon the question whether Masters work upon this plane.

3. “Mr. Judge in *Irish Theosophist* for January, 1895, p. 55, says that those who have not made a connection with THE LODGE by 1897, will not afterwards be able to make one. Does this refer to audible hearing, to clairvoyant sight and the like?”

*Answer.* — Not at all. All these things are misleading unless the one who uses them has had at the very least seven years of rigid training. They may exist *pari passu* with the real “connection,” but would not be relied upon. The real “connection” is not to be described. It is interior, it is Manasic in its operation so far as *objectivized* to the one who has it. Its root is in “Buddhi, active,” more or less. I have known two cases where the person had a Lodge “connection” and did not know it to be that, but took the “connection” to be a very high order of inspiration, and, in another case, it was not realized at all by the possessor. Of course it was quite patent to *trained* observers. The “Companion” is always known by certain indubitable signs. The Masters speak through the *inner* (higher) planes of Being. It is better not to ask whence a thing comes, but examine whether it be good. If it comes from the Higher Self, it comes from the Masters, for *the* Higher Self is the One Self, the same for all. “It is a state, a breath, not a body or form.” “The Master Soul is one.” Under such inspiration of “The Presence,” only one trained can consciously be and consciously *enter at will*. But many a man and

woman, both within and without the T.S., are helped by the Masters in their work for the world. May we all reach up *consciously* to this Power, for connection with it, aye, and later, to become it, is our birthright and inheritance as souls.

Comrades and all, you, Companions, I salute in you the *embodied* Law.

JASPER NIEMAND.

(*To be continued.*)

*Note.* — The Editor will gladly receive any communications, in the nature of enquiry or otherwise, connected with this series. These he will forward to the author, to be dealt with in future letters if suitable.

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## LETTERS TO A LODGE.

JASPER NIEMAND

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V. {5 of 9}

COMRADES,— This moot question, as to whether Masters (Mahâtmas) descend upon or manifest upon this material plane, is at present acting as a kind of ferment in many minds. And I would, in many cases, let it continue to ferment in order that students may, as is beneficial, reach their own conclusions.

Yet there are members of the T.S. who are undergoing much searching of soul upon this point, a point which, it appears to me, has been raised artificially and before its time. And it was not improbably raised for controversial and destructive purposes. This probability appears to me as very great, for the reason that members who have spoken to me upon the subject have in every case gone on to say that decision upon points now in controversy hung upon the answer.

But we shall never arrive at truths relating to spiritual evolution by seeking for them as controversial weapons. The cause of search, the spirit in which any search is undertaken and the thing really looked for (whether truth, or mere argumentative success), will infallibly color the result, as Mind colors all it looks upon. It is not with the Mind, but with the Intuition that spiritual truths are discerned. Mind reports what Intuition has seen, in cases such as this.

It would appear sufficient that the student should accept the idea of the existence and functions of the Mahâtma in evolution as a bright hope, a light in the darkness, a beacon upon the hills of the hereafter. Whether They do or do not descend upon this plane would seem to be of small moment to him, as he, assuredly — were he of the student nature in the least, were he ever so little of a seeker after truth — would not expect their aid to extend to matters purely of this material plane, at all. This is to some extent true. And being a half-truth, it is used to color the personal conclusions of some minds, and to lend to incomplete expositions a weight not properly their own. Yet the question is raised before its due time, in my opinion, and for this opinion I have the following reason, to wit: Almost all Theosophists are content with the ideal of the existence of Great Souls who help the upward course of the race, and I find them

caring but little about the exact plane from, to or by which that help comes. Students who are striving to live the life, to help themselves and others, mystics seeking deeper and ever deeper, ever more inwardly, for the hidden Self, are very rarely scholastics or precisians. The Mahâtma *is*. Intuition has revealed thus much to Mind. The humble seeker bends his head, reaches upward and inward, aspires, loves and believes. What to him are planes? He knows that he *is* helped, and knows no strife to verify the exact point in Mother Space from which that god-like aid descends to fill his brimming soul. He hears that the Mahâtma may be that help and yet be also a living man, and in the fact — if fact it be — he sees new proof of great Nature's mysteries. Withdraw the fact — he feels no sense of loss; you have withdrawn from him a body, not a soul, and it is Soul he seeks, and would penetrate, even to those hidden deeps where the All-Soul merges into the One-Spirit.

Thus the mystic who seeks alone. But all mystics do not seek thus. Others there are who received the initial impulse from without, rather than from within; some soul in casement other than their own passed on to them the vibratory music of the spheres, causing them thus to tremble into consciousness of their interior world. This office was filled — for many of us — by a Soul whom we name H.P.B.

It will be evident that those who have followed such a messenger, whether as followers, as students, as pupils or as observers, will be more or less affected, according as her office as witness and messenger is clear or obscure to their eyes. And H.P.B. did most clearly assert, both in print and in private letters, that the "Masters" were also "living men." The present denial of that statement has its origin, as has so much else, in a more or less organized effort to destroy H.P.B. as messenger. Let us, therefore, keep this fact well in view. I have myself seen letters from India which put the statement very clearly as follows: "these high beings do not ever descend to this plane." The pupils of *modern* India are also repeating the statement in writing and otherwise, and it does absolutely contradict the teaching of H.P.B., which teaching I accept.

It is necessary to put this point very plainly, for the reason that it explains why I shall not put forward any statements by H.P.B. at all. Nor shall I quote from eastern literature. This has been done before; moreover, translations may be questioned. Long ago I pledged myself to speak only to you of what I knew; that is to say, of things discoverable within my own consciousness, coupled with an explanation of their bearing and the method or mode of their existence, as this came before my mind.

Now I believe that the Mahâtma is possible; that He is necessary in evolution; that He exists; that He may or may not be using a human body amongst men. It is, to my mind, quite true that the Mahâtma, *as such*, does not descend upon this plane; but you must lay stress upon those words "*as such*." Atma, spirit, does not *directly* function upon this plane. What does that mean? It means that when you are dealing with the things of Spirit you are not dealing with this material plane, nor yet when you are dealing with the Intuition, nor when you deal with Mind, nor even when you deal with nerve fluid. None of these things are of this physical plane. Take a sentence attributed to a Master; "Buddhi does not act on this plane, where the acting agent is Manas." This is simply saying that the action of Intuition — any grade of its action — is not of the material plane, and that the Intuition acts through the Mind, which again is not of this plane, but is an acting agent for this plane, just as Intuition is an acting agent for spiritual truths. The Mahâtma, or great Spirit, touches from afar the fire-soul of man, and truths are born into the womb of the hidden, mystic brain. Whether the Mahâtma is or is not inhabiting a human body in full and conscious volition, this mode of action above described is the same. You and I deal with one another after the same fashion, though so far less potent for good. Mental intercourse, spiritual perceptions, the widening experience of love or art or duty are none of them attributes of the material body; they are seen by the Mind, they are verified by mental experience, they are not of

the earth, earthy. On the physical plane, as such, they are not observable. Occultism also teems with examples of bodiless entities, disembodied entities, minds of a kind, all invisible to us, yet all eyes, as it were, to see our surroundings and our physical selves. Is it not, then, clear that, in very truth, the Mahâtma *as such* descends not to this material plane?

This does not mean, however, that the Mahâtma may not be using a human body. I take it that the conscious and perfected soul may use and does use some particular body, or several bodies in as many different places. It is a question of degrees. The Spirit acts through Intuition, and that through Mind, and that again through body by means of a reflecting mirror, or brain. Just as the Breath may or may not have condensed itself into a planet or world, formed and visible, so the Maha-Atma may or may not have adopted a human form.

There is a reason for this adoption and a very simple, because a very natural one, having to do with evolution. The races evolve, but require the aid of the Spirit in evolving. The Elder Brothers turn and help. But how? Not all men are to be reached by purely psychical and spiritual methods, making of the world a vast forcing-house and developing a race of irresponsible mediums. The self-evolved and self-initiated (though really naught is done by self alone), require to be met at a certain point with instruction in the orderly training of the bodies and the minds they use. It is clear that, if we omit from the chain of human development which stretches from man to the Archangels or Chohans, one stage of development which we may call a perfected soul using a body and acting upon and for men with that body, we miss out one of the links of that chain. It is as if we missed out Buddhi acting through Manas; as if we omitted Manas and said that Buddhi must act through body or not at all; or that Mind, having freed itself from the trammels of bodily necessities and limitations, must become Atma without passing through the fire-mist of the electric Intuition which alone receives from Spirit the light of the world.

There is a further reason. A perfect body is at once a reflector and a dynamo. The fully conscious soul inhabits it, and observes through its medium all the currents affecting the race. In even the most perfect body there is, locked up in its molecules, that force which represents the karmic tendency of that race. Upon the mirror of the body these forces and currents are reflected, and the Great Soul is "*in touch*" with the men of the race. He does not identify himself with his body, not in the least; but it is to him as a harp upon which the cyclic forces play and by means of which he is able to verify the notes which move the human beings of that race and period. It is a difficult idea to put clearly, but you can all the better work it out for yourselves. Body — a house to dwell in — is at first useful to the evolving soul itself; later on body becomes, to the fully evolved soul, a thing useful to the evolution of other souls, a medium by and through which to act upon and aid them. While there are men living in bodies, they will be accessible to psycho-physiological force; they cannot neglect it, it is one of the steps; hence the need, on the part of a Great Soul intending to meet and help them at a certain given point, for a storehouse or dynamo.

All the same, that Maha-Atma is not *itself* acting upon this plane or descending upon this plane. It is like a general who acts through the private soldier by means of a graded series of officers. It is also true that the *highest* office of the Mahâtma lies upon the spiritual plane and is not experienced by the disciple *when in the body*. True, too, that a man may live with or near a Mahâtma — say as a servant, being a man of a type and order as yet quite unevolved — and never come in contact with the Mahâtma *as such* at all. This servant may be, so to say, one of the necessities of the situation, as much as food, or clothes, or a shelter may be so. Undoubtedly there are Mahâtmas who need none of these things; they are appendages to certain conditions of life, which conditions are, in their turn, necessary to that situation which I have called being "in

touch” with mankind. For to touch Maha-Atma you must be Maha-Atma. You only touch, in the Mahâtma, those planes which you have developed within yourself.

We think at once too much and too little of body. The soul *needs* no body. Some birds need no nests. Yet the body and the nest are alike necessary to a certain set of conditions. Those whose most interior need it is to help the evolution of mankind, atoms of that One-Spirit-Soul which evolves all things, require a vehicle of action, a means of communication, of a certain kind, because at certain stages of progress some given evolutionary link is necessary, and the free, perfect, conscious Soul, acting through a series of vehicles of which body is one, is just that specified link. Of course these bodies would be very perfect engines and of a higher order of “matter” than that which we take up in our present bodies. And it is one of the duties of the Great Souls, one of the many duties which arise along the pathway of evolution, to evolve just such perfect atoms of “physical” matter by becoming their indwelling force or evolver; which atoms are taken up again and again by the building forces, ever at work to provide forms composed of a higher order of matter for the higher orders of men as they evolve.

For “body” is a term for a congeries of forces; the human body is the highest achievement of the building forces, and by the means of a perfect body these builders themselves may be guided (by the perfect and conscious Soul indwelling) to a still higher development of their building powers. These powers, too, must evolve; building higher and still higher forms for the evolving races to inhabit. Do not forget that Soul owes a duty to matter; that these physical atoms, so-called, are not really physical at all and are Lives, and that the sublime and perfect Maha-Atma owes a duty to all that is, for all is Himself and He is, not body or soul or even spirit, but That Self; That thou art.

JASPER NIEMAND.

(*To be continued.*)

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*The Irish Theosophist* – May 1895, Vol. 3, pp. 129-132.

## LETTERS TO A LODGE.

JASPER NIEMAND

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VI. {6 of 9}

COMRADES,— One of the first questions which meets us upon this path of ours is the question of right action. Into the many details of this question we will not at present enter, but we will occupy ourselves with one aspect only, to wit:

How shall we learn to discover and to encourage that Intuition which alone leads to right action?

Now there are three phases of consciousness which students are prone to confuse with a fourth, which is Intuition. These three are Intellect, Impulse and Instinct. What we require is some clear idea of the distinction between these and the Intuition. With Intellect it is easy to deal, for we readily distinguish its action in the reasoning faculty. Intellect has so little in common with Intuition that no danger of

confusion arises here. To study, to reason, to debate, to analyze, to think in detail — all this is not Intuition and we are in no danger of mistake.

A real difficulty arises when we come to Impulse. Very many students mistake their impulses for intuitions. Yet the distinction is really very marked.

Intuition is the synthesizing faculty carried to its highest power. Facts are marshalled and synthesized in a flash; their array passes too rapidly for the brain consciousness to take note of separately; it notes the sum total alone, as the optic nerve sees the ray of light only when it becomes objective and — so to say — stationary, and not during its long journey towards the eye nor in its many millions of vibrations. The Intuition is *Buddhi-Manas*. It synthesizes and perceives. Also it informs. Very often its light falls upon some truth of which in this life we had no previous knowledge, for Intuition gazes directly upon the Real. It is, in fact, itself a ray of the One Light, and one of its highest aspects is, as you know, the *Kundalini* force. But to-day we are only dealing with that form of Intuition which the ordinary man and woman can trace in themselves.

The distinguishing trait of Impulse is an interior propulsion towards action. It differs from Intuition in that this is a seeing, is apperception, while Impulse is invariably a desire to do. Impulse is wholly *kamic*.

Instinct, on the contrary, is largely *pranic*. It is the interior selective faculty. By it the lower mind takes what the physical and animal self most needs in life. By it the cells on their plane select, reject, assimilate. By it the creatures live, move and procreate. From its action comes the automatic self-preservation which we notice even in states of unconsciousness. By its action also does the astral or vital body of all creatures attract or repel that which is needful or harmful to its preservation and development. By the aid of instinct the *kamic* principle chooses what the intellect most desires — or what it wills — be it high or low. By it also the purified Soul seeks the real source of Truth and Light. For Instinct is of all planes and is the unbiassed servant of the Mind and Will. Where these are not as yet evolved, the Instinct is guided by the Life principle and by *Kāma*, which is pure in the pure and mindless creatures, and in the lower elementary lives, animal, vegetable or mineral. Instinct is one and undivided, but desire is manifold. Desire — and later on, Will, if all goes well with man — is the driver of Instinct.

The chief difficulty, therefore, is to distinguish between Intuition and Impulse. The best present guide for the student is the fact before named, that Intuition sees, while Impulse drives forward. Intuition is the seer. Impulse is the actor. Instinct, and not Impulse, should be the vehicle of Intuition. It would be so if our minds were free from sensuous desire. For our Instinct would be guided by Intuition toward the higher life. Or to put it differently, what Intuition sees, Intellect should establish and Instinct should carry out. For Intuition sees by its own true light, it is self-luminous, and the Instinct of men who have developed their Intuition is of the same order of life and gravitates by its own nature towards that light which it needs in order to live the life desired. When the purified mind instinctively discovers the true path, the path of its true needs, this path is from time to time illumined by flashes of Intuition. Intuitive ideas rise, full-orbed and flashing, upon the expectant mind.

Impulse is the vehicle of human desire. Its invariable tendency to action shows this. We never feel an impulse to sit still. We may feel an instinct to do so.

Intuition carried to its highest power is, of course, *Buddhi*. In manifestation upon this plane it is *Manas*. “*Buddhi* never acts on this plane, where the acting agent is the *Manas*.” It is moved by the will-force of occultism. That *shakti* is a spiritual force which sets a certain center (in the case of *Buddhi*) in motion. But, as was before said,

we are not now concerned with this highest form of Intuition. Few are they who even know the approaches thereof.

The developing Intuition may be known by a flash of a certain color in a certain center, accompanied by an impression of knowledge, of a sure conclusion, upon the brain. A great mystic once said that the Intuition might be known from the simplicity of its utterance, which was always, "Thus saith the Lord." Its action is instantaneous; it illumines the darkness of the intellect. It is *unaccompanied by any feeling or emotion whatsoever*; note this well. The flash is in the head center: the stir arises in the heart as a rule, and is thence flashed into the head center. But no hard and fast rule can be given. Such intuitive knowledge is a partial recovery of what the soul has seen during sleep or trance, or what it knew "when journeying with Deity." For the pure Soul is pure Light in its own nature and is itself the Truth which we seek. The flash spoken of here is the moment of registration of this intuitive knowledge, or recovery of Truth, upon the brain. This registration, in cases of trance, is said to occur at the last moment of the passage back from the spiritual state to the objective state, and through this registration the knowledge gained is "brought through." In the cases of students not adepts, the knowledge has more difficulty in getting through; it may occur some time later and is but partially recovered, and usually mixed with error, for reasons pertaining to scientific occultism into which we will not at present enter.

Many persons who might hear all this about Intuition might say: "Oh, yes, I know that Intuition." But it is far less frequently known than is supposed, because few discern its action from that of mere brain flashes ("flashes in the pan" literally), which often arise from a variety of causes, even physiological ones. The light of the Manas is not the light of Buddhi. Neither its color, its mode of motion nor its action is that of Buddhi. But even were I able to fully describe these, I would not do so, lest they be falsely imagined to exist where they do not.

Of Impulse again it may be said that the student will find it to be of an explosive nature. That is, an outward propulsion of force takes place, usually attended by more or less heat or warmth spreading suddenly through the body, and, sometimes, a sudden heat in the brain. A swift quickening heat and an attraction towards action; thus can Impulse best be described by me.

Of Instinct again it may be said that the upper brain appears unconscious of its action. This action is felt in the lower brain, the center of automatic action and the real "Home of Isis," if mankind only knew it. The self-preservation of the drowning; the leaping aside from a danger before the brain has cognized the fact of danger; the going unexpectedly to a place or to a person where we meet what we most desire, all these are instances of instinctual action. Generally speaking, we are led by Instinct just as we breathe the air, without conscious thought. Instinct is pranic and wholly impersonal, which Impulse never is.

The Intuition is only true for the average man when judgment, heart and conscience verify it. These three are the witnesses of Intuition. But Intuition is Lord over all. It affirms; the witnesses only attest.

JASPER NIEMAND.

*(To be continued.)*

## LETTERS TO A LODGE.

JASPER NIEMAND

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### VII. {7 of 9}

COMRADES,— Replying to a former letter of mine, you say that some persons have advanced the following argument, to wit:

“That Masters may use bodies, but they never interfere, or notice, or take interest in temporary affairs.”

This is not an “argument.” It is a statement of belief, unaccompanied, as you put it, by reasons. It would not be noticed among people of good breeding, for the reason that it expresses a dogma, a creed, a personal belief, and one would not criticize such, any more than one would criticize the dress, or the manners, or the features of another. There is a good breeding of the spiritual plane — little as some may think it — and it exists in ethics as well as in psychical life, and everywhere it forms a part of the mental equipment of true souls, freed from the shackles of self-conceit.

If, however, anyone were to ask whether my experience agreed with that statement, I should frankly reply that it does not. Even upon its face it is illogical and against reason. For why should Masters have or use bodies — which bodies are governed by two brains — if all questions relating to the physical plane are to be excluded from those brains, the engines or motors of this plane of human life? There is some truth in the statement, I believe, but it needs a discriminating care. And I must admit that a feeling of indignation will, at times, arise in my heart against the cruelty — that worst form of cruelty which seeks to fetter the mind — exercised by those who make a veiled statement of that kind, knowing that other minds will be entangled in it, while they themselves, the only fit guardians of the truth in their own eyes, are saved from falsehood, and also from laying the truth before the multitude, by verbal double-dealing.

It is true, and may well lift our hearts, that Great Nature always recompenses. Those who bring us to doubt and despair become angel visitors entertained unawares if, through the pain to which they bring us for purposes of their own self-seeking, we learn to think for ourselves. The race has not yet learned how to think; Manas is too recently acquired and is not yet fully involved by that race as a whole.

Let us, then, set aside interlopers and thresh out this matter for ourselves. We understand the “Mahâtma” to be a perfect Soul. And by the term “Adept” we mean one far advanced in practical occultism but not yet a Mahâtma. It is stated on the authority of H.P.B. and also in letters from himself, that Master K.H. was not yet a “Mahâtma” at the time when he wrote the letters in Mr. Sinnett’s *Occult World*. It would appear unwise, a waste of energy, that one of the very rarest products of Nature — the Mahâtma — should do work for which less advanced members of the GREAT LODGE are fit and able. And this is true, *as a rule*. But just as there is no gap in the ladder of Evolution, so there is no gap in that of the GREAT LODGE, and we may hence expect to find, and I believe that we do find, some one Great Being whose duty it is to preside over all that relates to the evolution of men, from our present plane on to the highest planes, and to assist, both by his own powers, knowledge and action, and by those of

his hierarchical supporters, assistants and pupils, in that great work. For to THE LODGE this is the greatest work; it is THE WORK. Those who are engaged in deepest spiritual research, wholly remote from this earthy plane of ours, still pursue that arduous toil for man; Man, the final word of the manifested universe and the first promise of Spirit — perfectible Man and Man perfected. If the Mahâtma, in his duly appointed place and work, is to help man, he must take interest in this plane, of which man to-day almost wholly is, in which he lives and from whose chains he must rise. There always have been and there always will be natural distinctions, departments, duties in the universe, just as white light can always be decomposed into rays. There are Mahâtmas whose specialized function it is to watch over the East and others who watch over the West; there are those who watch on the starry confines of this globe and those who watch its teeming interior; there are those who search the Light and those who question the Dark; but each has evolved to his place and his duty and all pass along the rounds of universal duty, all great and none less. Else analogy has no voice and Law — or the sequence and order of Being — no meaning.

It is my belief that the Master, or Mahâtma, whose special function it is at this period of time to watch over the involution of Manas and its evolution by and through Egos now embodied in the West, is He whom we call Mahâtma Morya. But name Him as you please, or let Him — better still — be nameless. Regard Him as a Great Soul known only to some advanced men “BY ITS LIGHTS,” and to others by its influence. We may be sure that matters *not* having to do with the evolution of human souls engage him not. Buying and selling, marrying and burying, the mart and the home, all these countless details of human interest are but effects of previous causes, and the Master deals not with them, but the Law runs its course. The Master deals not with them *as such*. But also, we do not know when, precisely, any given matter has to do with the evolution of the soul. A man is a fool who would limit the action of a power he does not fully understand. We may know, and some of us believe this, that the Mahâtmas occupy themselves with all men and movements tending towards evolution, by which I mean tending towards universality. It would be strange indeed if they did not. He who climbs helps those below him, else he risks one day to stand upon the peaks of solitude. In such an interior solitude the perfect soul will never be found. So the Master would naturally — *i.e.*, in virtue of his own nature — help the leaders and workers of a spiritual movement so long as these were capable of being helped at all. But he would do so upon strictly hierarchical lines, by duly appointed means and agents and agencies, all evolved to the point where reception and comprehension were possible. Observe the processes of Nature. In Nature, “gratitude” has its cosmic expression in that law by which a stream makes its bed along the line of least resistance and follows that alone.

In the Tao are these beautiful thoughts, sent to me by a friend. “Effecting difficult things while they are easy, and managing great things in their beginnings — this is the way of Tao.... Therefore the wise man takes great account of small things and so never has any difficulty.... Transact your business before it takes form.... The tree which fills the arms grew from a tender shoot.”

The last part refers to the mind, and its purification and wisdom, for from it all actions spring. But also it is very true that in very small things, unobserved by the crowd, lie the great results of the future. And why? Because all exists first upon the astral or etheric plane as a nodule, or embryo form. When these forms first come into activity upon one plane — and it is usually as what we call “thoughts” in human minds — they appear trivial; yet the right impetus can make them great. And that man or woman who has power to evoke the soul, and the high qualities of the soul, in others, that person has touched diviner things. Moreover, the life elementals are less obstructive while the grosser energies are inactive or subdued.

There is not space for me to extend these suggestions, but you can do that better than I. Yet one word more.

There is far too much talk of proving things of the spirit and soul by the things of sense. Would you smell, touch, hear, see the perfect Soul? When you know that Soul, there may be further lessons for you in the way the vibrations of its ethereal body or its thought-body affect your nervous fluid; but you will never prove the independent existence and perfectibility of the Soul to the world by any such means. You will only fall amid jeers and laughter. Rather say boldly: "I know the Soul by its touch upon my soul, and the Spirit by that which is nameless among men." In *The Voice of the Silence* we find that all senses must merge in the *concealed* sense before we can find the Master.<sup>1</sup>

Moreover, such appearances are more rare than you suppose. In a letter published in *The Occult World*, Mahâtma K.H. says how very rare such an appearance is, that it is only in great crises. The ocean rolls between me and my books, but seek the quotation for yourselves. And the use of physical terms is forbidden to Chelas in this connection.

You will find, I think, that in most cases the Teacher teaches through the mind. He may, and doubtless does, instruct his special agents in other ways. But the appearance of his form is so rare because the student's mind creates an ideal image in his own mental sphere, which image can be made visible. The Master can use it as a vehicle of communication, but a special training on the part of the student is necessary before he knows how to *form such an image out of the proper grade (or plane) of nerve fluid*. In this secret lies the whole difference between right or wrong interpretation of the message sent through that form or vehicle, which may appear to speak, so far as your eyes and ears are concerned. Consider a moment. The "message" is vibratory, if real — a vibration sent along the Âkâśa. If the atoms of which you have composed this image are not atoms of a very highly evolved etheric substance ("light," as the occultists call it), those atoms do not vibrate "purely," *i.e.*, in consonance with the vibration, and you get a sense impression which is incorrect. It is for this reason, among others, that at least seven years of scientific training are required before the pupil can even begin, and far longer before he can be exposed to the energetic play of the real Mâyâvi-Rûpa of a Mahâtma unless there is an Adept near at hand to protect him without undue waste of energy. In *The Path* for June you will find more upon this theme.

JASPER NIEMAND.

(*To be continued.*)

## NOTE

1. {*The Voice of the Silence*, H. P. Blavatsky, p. 16.}

## LETTERS TO A LODGE.

JASPER NIEMAND

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### VIII. {8.1 of 9}

COMRADES,— What you ask me of pertains to the mysteries. Therefore I must make answer in parable.

You say: "Who are the companions?"

It is said:

*Before the aspirant can become one of the Companions, he shall have taken the vow of Poverty. Now this Poverty shall be intimate and interior.*

*And what one of them is attacked the Companions shall defend him, because he is their Brother. But they shall defend him without malice and, without aggression, because he is their very Self.*

*In that Self are the aggrieved and the aggressor; the minute and the inexhaustible; the good, the evil and that which is the Cause of both.*

Therefore the poverty of the Companions is that great humility of soul which manifests itself by the abandonment of results. It is not what the world calls humility, which is but another form of vanity arising from intense self-consciousness. By this is meant consciousness of the false self as "I," or perception confined to a reflected and distorted light. Study the laws of light on this plane and a clue will be manifest.

When the Companion turns his face to the world, he will not be seen to be in a state of great sweetness and light. What the world sees as such qualities are but rays proceeding from the false and refracted lights. THE PEACE is not objective; it is not a state of *human* serenity; it is a Consciousness of the Universal. A Western mystic, Thomas à Kempis, has bidden men beware of this mental state of sweetness and false satisfaction, which is one of the more subtle snares of Mâyâ. Those *who know*, in facing the world, wear the gathered brows of self-restraint and have a power of silence. When the light of the Master Presence is upon them they are only seen by one another. Yet there are many who are of this company and know it not; they will know when their lowliness of mind has dispelled those mists which throw up the mirage of the false self.

A Companion passed through the Hall of Learning, the rock corridor leading to THE LODGE. All must pass through its various stages, but none should linger.

Where the spiritual consciousness is fully developed, the psychic consciousness exists also, for it is the vehicle of the higher consciousness, for use, *when trained*, upon lower planes of Being. He who has the whole, has the parts.

There are sentences written in light upon the walls of the Hall of Learning. They sparkle out as the neophyte advances. Some fade; they are not for him as yet. Others sparkle out and engage his attention. These are the clues by means of which he may pass safely through the labyrinthine Hall. They are in cipher, but this cipher makes their meaning known at once to the brain in any language. A first difficulty is that the neophyte is prone to strive after those sentences which fade as he approaches and to neglect those which are obvious and easy to be had. The evanescent lures and bewitches him, while any time will do for the sentence so deeply graven there, as he

thinks. This is a false concept, for all things have their karmic hour. Let him take only that which is his own.

A Companion saw this:

#### THE TRUE MASTER.

*The true Master is felt; He is not seen.*

*When He who was unseen is seen, He disappears.*

*Then the spiritual Presences are gathered into the Unity; they know not one another, but they are the One Self.*

*In that Darkness there is but One.*

*In that Silence there is no knowledge, but Being — which is all — is fulfilled.*

*This is the path of the true disciple.*

*Before man, the lowest immortal, can find the true Master, he must lose Him; that loss is pure gain. To lose Him thus, is to find Him indeed.*

*This should be known: the disciple who finds Him on the plane of the senses has objectivized his Karma; he loses The Master after a higher fashion.*

*When He speaks through the soul, the ignorant disciple says, 'it is I myself;' he rejoices to be so wise.*

*Know that there is only the ONE SELF, THE MASTER, and lose thyself also to find Him who is never found until He has been lost.*

*When He is lost to every sense then the One Flame arises, pure as before the beginnings of worlds.*

*This thou shalt never know; thou art It.<sup>1</sup>*

1. There are many and serious mistakes made on the subject of so-called appearances of Masters. The voice, the form, the "Lodge perfume" of the Masters, all can be parodied or simulated. All exist as pictures in the nerve-aurea of individuals, for the brain, the wonderworker, has fashioned them out of nervous matter only one degree less gross than the matter of the physical brain, but many degrees more subtle and dynamic. The play of energy, liberated by Thought, upon these pictures, sets them in motion, and their vibrations, communicated along the lines (or media) of nervous ether, causes the brain to receive their reflection. Anything which (a) inhibits physiological action; or (b) which heightens nervous action; or (c) which causes increased tension in the etheric field (such as, for example, (1) the creation of vortices or currents therein, whether by magnetic passes, music, sound or concentrated thought, and also (2) the control, by a magnetizer, of the mere physiological senses of any person or persons), would cause such voices, sounds, odors, forms or what not else, to be visible or to be made visible in the place where they exist, to wit, the aura or magnetic sphere of man, or in the nervous ether of the earth. The more evolved elementals — as well as consciously dark powers among men — and intelligences could also clothe these pictures, so existing, with grosser matter, thus causing these to become visible and for their own purposes. There is thus both (a) evocation and (b) automatic action tending to objectivization of these pictures.

Consider these lines of *The Voice of the Silence*.

"Allow no image of the senses to get between its light and thine...." {p. 7.}

"Silence thy thoughts, and fix thy whole attention on thy Master, whom yet thou dost not see, but whom thou feelest." {p. 16.}

“Merge into one sense thy senses, if thou wouldst be secure against the foe.” {p. 16.}

The one sense is the sense of *feeling*. With eyes closed, ears stopped, we know the presence of one friend from another, all untouched by them. We have sensed the aura. The true Master may be truly known by the aura, read esoterically, The Companions know Him “*by His lights*.”

There is but one safe mode by which the disciple of at least seven years training (and it is usually far more) may know the Master. This means is by the seventh (esoteric) principle; it is the highest âkâśic differentiation. To sense it, or rather to have the apperception of it, you must have developed to some extent, at least, a rudiment of the same thing in yourself. The path leading to the Master is “that sense alone which lies concealed within the hollow of thy brain” (*Voice of the Silence* {p. 16.}); to put it differently, the Master’s aura can only be “felt” in that *hollow spot* which is the “home of Mother Isis.” This purely spiritual quality must be, to some extent, developed in the seer before he can “feel” it’s like. There must be, in his own sphere, a conscious center of similar âkâśic substance to receive and register (*i.e.*, feel, or get the impression stamped upon it) this highest âkâśic vibration. This hidden center, the Isis home, is made “white” by will; to this refer all the sentences in the *Voice* about cleansing the “mind body” and also paralyzing the lunar body; the lower vibrations of the nervous ether are checked and the âkâśa in the hidden spot of the skull held “white” or negative, plastic, by will-power. It is a matter involving a distinct knowledge of noëtic action in a high grade of substance, and how to prevent the atoms, or monads, from throwing up those pictures which they hold, as already impressed upon them by the action of energy. This is the difference between the medium and the disciple. The one makes his nervous ether and brain stuff passive. The disciple rolls back all currents from the secret hollow and “whitens” (*i.e.*, intensifies its tension) by a supreme effort of will-power. But this will-power must be intelligently directed *and it must be fire-born*.

Most of the forms of Masters seen are these mind forms made temporarily visible by increased vibration, as that caused by a train, or by the etheric tension in an audience, or in many other ways. The Master might use these pictures as a vehicle to impress an idea to those seeing them; so, also, may the dark powers in Nature or among men. By “dark powers among men” I mean and include those persons who merely work for some end to which they are partial. Hence Masters by preference, in cases where there is no Adept-guru helping on the physical plane, prefer to speak “through the inner planes of being,” which are the soul and mind. But mere sentiment and religious gush are not within the Master Mind.

As I understand the matter, the thought-body (Mâyâvî-Rûpa) of a Master (which is himself) does not visit any but a highly trained disciple, unless an Adept be at hand to modify the great vibrations coming from this energetic “body” for the unprepared (by long training) disciple. As in the case of H.P.B. when Colonel Olcott first saw the Master. Otherwise the energetic volume and force would injure the physical and nervous body of the perceiver. The training extends over many years and even many lives. It differs in different races. Embryo students of less than seven years’ training in any one or several lives, and without the aforesaid “spiritual quality,” are unable to tell whether an appearance of a Master, or any of His manifestations, down to letters written by His order, are genuine or not genuine. Seven years are required for each new body, even by an Adept. Those who have evolved certain centers, and can cause them to “breathe” (*i.e.*, intensify and vibrate) at will, at a spiritual rate far beyond any known to ordinary men — only such persons can “feel” the Master. And these persons will never be found to use terms of the senses to describe “The Presence,” even “feel” being a blind or substitute for “tremble” or “vibrate.” Nor will they endeavor to prove the spiritual Presence by terms of sense to the material mind. The Companions say fearlessly:

*The spiritual is its own proof. Only to Consciousness can Consciousness be known.*

A large proportion of men and women know what absolute, interior conviction is. To such, the first rudiment of the real Consciousness is known. It would be wise to trace it *to its source* in ourselves; a clue lies there.

Consider also that paragraph in *The Secret Doctrine*, where the seer is depicted as watching the first differentiation of a milky “spiritual substance.” The human process is an image or model of the world process.

JASPER NIEMAND.

(*To be continued.*)

## NOTE

1. {*The Path of Attainment*, D. N. Dunlop, p. 16.}

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*The Irish Theosophist* – September 1895, Vol. 3, pp. 209-212.

## LETTERS TO A LODGE.

JASPER NIEMAND

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VIII. — (*Continued.*)

{8.2 of 9}

2. *What He who was unseen is seen. He disappears.*

Those who come to rely upon appearances (or sounds) of a Master, such as may be experienced by physical or psychic (lower) sense, soon lose touch with His true and real Being, for the cheating powers gladly rush in to deceive that person. Are we not warned against *lingering* in the Hall of Learning? All must pass there, but should not “linger” (see *Voice of the Silence*)<sup>1</sup>. The noëtic is one mode of atomic action, from within outward. The psychic is another, from circumference to center. The atom must have both in-breathing and out-breathing. It should in-breathe — from circumference to center — only from the spiritual world; “the breaths” are drawn from that world; it is the world of the highest energies or force, and not, as some think, the world of religious sentiment. It is not by means of religious emotion that Brahman formed the worlds. It was by Yoga concentration — or intensified vibration.

The atom, drawing in its breath from the spiritual, should breathe out into the world of form. It should take from the spiritual and give to the psychic, which animates or informs the physical. The reverse is what most frequently takes place. We take from the (lower) psychic world instead of giving to it.

The terms “psychic” and “astral” are too loosely used. They have become terms of reproof and of offence. There is the higher and lower psychic, the higher and lower astral. The pure psychical plane is that of the pure ether. A nervous body formed of such pure ether is a necessary vehicle. The pure astral is the plane of the highest starry influences. Beyond these is the spiritual, the innermost. Let us discriminate and avoid offence. We shall thus avoid (to some extent) ignorance, which is only inoffensive to itself. The psychic is no proof, but it is an indication: when purified it is a vehicle of the

Nous, the noëtic. Those who know the noëtic action will not harshly judge the psychic plane, however they may warn.

When the Master Himself uses such forms as His temporary vehicles or modes, reaching a man by the only avenue as yet opened by that man, He trains the disciple to the use of the “spiritual quality,” and the disciple is soon beyond the need and reach of form and sound manifestations, in the usual acceptation of “sound” and “form.” In other words, the disciple is helped to enter that condition which is the One Master, Alaya’s Self. It is described in:

3. *The spiritual Presences enter into the Unity.*

These Presences are Atma-Buddhi-Manas. Gathered into the Unity, coördinate and one, they are the Higher Self. “The Higher Self is a state, a breath, not a body or form,” wrote the Master. It is a state of Universal Consciousness. “The Higher Self of one is that of all.” It is far above sense registration. Its first indication is “a sense of freedom;” this is not one of the five physical senses; it is a consciousness of freedom. In the Unity, these Presences do not know one another, *i.e.*, as separate one from another, but they are the One Self.

4. *In the Darkness (and Silence) there is no knowledge...*

That is, no knowledge of external manifestation, or of anything external to the Self. Knowledge implies a knower and a thing known, two distinct and separate things or states of Consciousness.

*...but Being, which is all, is fulfilled.*

In pure Being the states above named become one; there is only the One Self. Along this path is led the true disciple. He is not misled by the senses or sense appearances in super-sensuous matter. Behmen said, as did Paracelsus, that the spiritual sense was one, it was Sensation, pure and simple. That is to say, Consciousness of the spiritual Breath. In the next stage that Consciousness of the Breath as external to ourselves, or separate, passes away; the Consciousness and the Breath are one, are pure Being. The Breath is the spiritual energy in Spirit-Substance. This is the path of the true disciple; he becomes that path himself.

If we talk of appearances which are satisfying to the physiological standards, we fall into a trap.

There are sentences quoted from letters of Masters which seem to give point to an opposite view. It should be borne in mind that these referred to chelâs in training under supervision, and also that they are to be taken, often, in a spiritual sense. “Form an image of the Master in your heart as a focus of will-power.” This does not mean that you shall make in your mind a little picture of a Master’s physical body and try to drag it into your physical heart by an effort of the imagination. It means that you should dwell in thought upon the great qualities of the real Master, the perfected Being (not his house, or form, which he uses) and do this until your imagination warms to the sublime conception of absolute justice and wisdom, and the heart (the inner heart) kindles and emits its energies; the divine conception, immaculate, invokes the Soul; it arises in majesty and goes forth to find its own.

To take in a literal sense the directions given to disciples living under conditions quite different from our own is to make a grave mistake. We live where gross magnetisms, lower psychic action and low grade emissions of nervous ether make up picture-forms which will vibrate into objectivity under the play of currents corresponding in grade wherever and however such currents arise. Therefore let us arise and go unto the Master *within*, the Father of Lights, in whom is no variableness neither shadow of turning.

5. *Man, the lowest immortal.*

That is to say, the lower quaternary. It is only immortal when Lower Manas is transmuted. The three aspects are not immortal. Lower Manas, identical in essence with the Higher Manas, is alone immortal of the lower quaternary. Before it can find the true Master, it must lose all preconceptions of Him as aught of sound and form. Abandon form and sense. Look for the first traces of the Master in the purified thoughts of the lowest immortal. Thus the false conception may be absorbed and the real Presence found.

6. *He has objectivized his Karma.*

The Karma, or action and reaction of the less evolved atoms in his sphere, cause the living pictures he has impressed upon these atoms to become visible, and the more he depends upon them and their false voices the more he puts aside all opportunity for communion with the Master "*after a higher fashion.*" He grasps at the form and loses the touch of the spirit.

7. *The ignorant disciple says, "It is I myself."*

When the first promptings of the Master Self are felt in the mind, the disciple does not recognize them to be such. He should know that all which is universal partakes of that higher Consciousness which is the same to all who reach it, though each attains after his own fashion. Trance is not that state. Trance, as the term is generally understood, has nothing in common with that state. All lower, personal tendencies of mind must be uplifted and enlightened before man can himself become the path on which is found that Master who is never (really) found until all sense preconceptions of Him have been utterly merged and lost. When they are indeed lost, then Buddhi (center) becomes action and the *one Flame arises*. But also it must be *pure as before the beginnings of Worlds*, that is, forms or bodies; pure as before differentiation into crystallized form. It can only be thus pure in the absolutely pure mind. In occultism, "pure" means wholly free from sense of self, from the concept of the false self as being the real. The beginner is adjured to leave every sin behind before he sets his foot upon the lowest rung of the mystic ladder (of the spinal cord).

8. *This thou shall never know; thou art It.*

The disciple can never know that Flame, for in knowledge is duality. In Being there is unity. When we are the Self, consciously, we cease to observe or to know it as a separate object or state, for we are the One Self.

*Now when he is seen to shine with "Great Glory," the Companions rejoice. But when "Divine Dark" enfolds him, that highest they have not seen, save as they have become That.*

*Not knowing, thou shall deem it ever possible. Salute in every man this divine possibility. But in thyself await it not, but create it.*

*Create the Uncreate by awakening "Great Glory." Upon that follows the Darkness, the Not-to-be-named, the Unknowable.*

*For Knowledge cannot contain Being. Can the drop contain the well-spring?*

*Can man, the spark, know the Flame? Not so, yet all men are That.*

May the Flames, the devourers of the gross, arise! May they purify our lowest immortal ones! May we become wise! May we see as we are seen! May the Aum resound!

JASPER NIEMAND.

## NOTE

1. {*The Voice of the Silence*, H. P. Blavatsky, p. 8.}

## LETTERS TO A LODGE.

JASPER NIEMAND

IX. {9 of 9}

DEAR COMRADES,— These letters which have had from you a reception so kindly are now come to an end, and it only remains for me to answer questions which have arisen in the course of their reading. Some of these questions have had direct and personal replies, as requested; a remaining few are here dealt with.

One friend writes me:

In THE IRISH THEOSOPHIST of May, 1895, p. 1, paragraph three, of your interesting and helpful article entitled “Letters to a Lodge,” you speak of Intuition as being frequently confounded with three other states of consciousness, viz., Intellect, Impulse and Instinct. It brought to my mind cases which probably may come under your head of intellect; cases in which certain impressions from other minds or from thoughts in the atmosphere around one were mistaken for intuitions, and more especially with sensitives or mediums.

For illustration. A woman, Mrs. W., engaged her passage in a European steamer while her best friend, Mr. S., was lying ill. As soon as she did so her conscience began to trouble her, although it was important to her interests that she should go abroad at the date fixed upon. She did not like to leave her friend ill. She did not know what to do about it. She waited, as she said, for her intuition to decide for her: but day after day passed by and no light came. Finally, one morning she seated herself quietly, holding herself passive to her inward voice, as she expressed it. Suddenly, in a flash of intuition, as she felt convinced, the idea was graven upon her mind that her friend would die, and that it was her duty to give up her intended trip and to adopt his only child, a little girl three years old.

She had not hitherto considered her friend seriously ill, nor had the idea of adopting his child ever before entered her mind; but she felt that strict obedience to so unmistakable an intuition was her only course, so she at once changed her plans.

She proceeded to the house of her friend. As she reached the door there flashed instantaneously before her a vision of him lying dead upon his sick-bed. She was admitted and sorrowfully proceeded to his room, but was surprised to find him living and better. In sum, he entirely recovered, and she went abroad at the fixed date.

It appeared that the two women who attended the sick man fully expected him to die, and had freely discussed the subject of the child’s future, deciding that it was clearly Mrs. W.’s duty to adopt her. It seems clear that she, Mrs. W., being *en rapport* with those two women, their thoughts were easily impressed upon her sensitive mind.

Now, the falsity of what Mrs. W. received was to her a conclusive proof that it was no intuition. But if her friend had died she would always have mistaken those mental impressions for intuition, and many cases daily occur, in

which the only proof of genuine intuition will be in a more intimate knowledge of our inner constitution and its workings.

The above is an excellent example, to my thinking, of the way in which psychic instinct is frequently mistaken for intuition. The mistake is at once detected in the words, “holding herself passive to her inward voice.” Unless she had been trained she could not know *how* to hold herself passive, in the first place. With untrained persons this sitting for passivity implies throwing the whole body and nervous currents into a relaxed and quiescent condition; this prepares the sitter, like a sensitized plate, for the reception of astral pictures and astral currents; those first received are, most often, the pictures and currents in their own sphere, either consciously or unconsciously engendered by themselves. There is a biblical and occult phrase, most unpleasantly translated, which expresses what is really done by the sitter: “returning like a dog to its own vomit.”<sup>1</sup> In our spheres are echoes, reverberations, refracted lights, the psychic mirage and what not else, cast off and out by the mind; to these we oft return.

Now body and astral (nervous) body are the appointed receptacles for forces of the psycho-physiological planes, which are their own planes, and if you render them passive what can you expect but that “their own waters shall fill them,” to use the mystic phrase? Note that I say receptacles; not vehicles. Vehicle, with me, has quite another sense. Receptacles of the *pure* force of their own planes they are intended to be, and when thus filled with force pure to its own plane — relatively pure — they should then become vehicles for the higher forces, just as a vessel filled with pure water purely reflects the sun’s brightness in a dazzle of rays, while a vessel filled with dark and turbid water gives forth a dense image contracted to a formed orb, which form gives a false idea of the true sun, while the darkness dims the radiance and obstructs the electric dazzle, absorbing the light into its foul depths, instead of giving it forth.

This explains one source of error. Another fact gives another facet, to wit: there is a certain spot, and one spot only, which is to be “whitened” or “held for Mother Isis” by the trained seer. This act involves a use of some of the highest forces in Nature, spiritual forces, be it said, and is a power never attained except by the highly trained disciple, who by its very use becomes and is an Adept. He who can use these forces at will “in the home of Isis” can perform phenomena equally at will.

What then of ourselves, seekers after truth, catching now and then glimpses of real intuition? Are we to abandon all hope of such because we are not now in a time and place where we are able to lay strong hands upon our birth-right?

By no means. Abandon no hope. Do not sit for passivity nor stare into mirrors; but purify your motives, seek to do The Will, and your Father who seeth in secret, himself will reward you openly. Do not forget that the Self uses whom it will, and that flashes of truth can be, and are, sent to us. Positive meditation on sacred themes will help you. Not that you will receive the intuitive flash *at that time*, for you more probably will not, but when you are going about your daily work, then you will receive them, entertaining angels unawares.

We are told in *Isis* (and I cannot quote the place, being absent from my books)<sup>2</sup> that the activity of the physiological senses alone prevents our cognizing the unseen truths. Many students have found that while these senses have mechanical employment, such as walking, dressing, copying, any occupation which holds them to a given point in a positive and not a passive manner — that at such times the intuitive flash will visit the brain all at once. When we have referred some question of the inner life to the Self, the Father of Lights, and have asked to know and to do the Will, we may go about our duties in serene confidence, dismissing from our minds the question

asked, sure that we shall know the doctrine if we live the life. Only be sure that we are living the life so far as we do discern the Will. He who submits himself in thought and desire to the will of his Father in heaven, need have no fear that he will not know all that is good and necessary for him to know; let him aspire ardently and go his way peacefully; the Law in its entirety works for him, it provides him with all that sustenance for which his nature is now ripe.

Another question opens up another phase of the same subject:

I have just been reading your "Letters to a Lodge, VIII.," "The true Master is felt, not seen." This brings up a question I have often thought about. Take the case of, say, Emerson or Carlyle; to me "all that Narada and the seven sages knew" is found in the *Essays* ("Oversoul," "Spiritual Laws," etc.) and *Sartor Resartus* ("Everlasting Yea," etc.), and this they both learnt inside, directly, from "the light that never shone on land or sea;" so that I would be most strongly inclined to say that if any men ever felt the true Master, these two did. Yet one hears nothing of any "Lodge connection" in the case of either of them, or of their knowingly coming into touch with any "adept," "magician," "occultist," or what you will. So that I think they were "children of the Kingdom" in a very real sense, and yet would have understood nothing, for instance, of what W.Q.J. wrote in THE IRISH THEOSOPHIST about "making a connection with the Lodge before the end of 1897," indeed would hardly have understood anything of the technicalities of occultism, as you put them forward in the "Letters to a Lodge" and elsewhere. Now the question is, had they fully and satisfactorily gained the one thing needful? or, on the other hand, is it that they ought to have done this, and not to have left the other undone? or, to put it another way, must the inner light be supplemented by an adept, the Holy Ghost *in partibus* be helped out by the Holy Ghost particularized and brought to a focus in some other person? or to put it yet another way, is it necessary to be *consciously* a "member of the Lodge" in order to be in reality one of the "children of the Kingdom?"

In order to reply to the above I must in some sort utter a personal Credo, and to one who knows as much as I do on the point under discussion. Would'st trap me, friend? But if my mistake might serve to illuminate thy knowledge, were not this tired old world by so much the richer? I adventure my Credo, thus.

(a) With the writer, I believe that all such inspiration comes from that source which we are agreed to call The Lodge, or the Oversoul, which Oversoul is specifically and fully embodied in the Sages of all time, is less fully embodied in the inspired ones variously working on this plane, and which "exists also apart." Emerson I regard as an especial instance of such inspiration. It is recorded that Emerson carried with him "as a *vade mecum*" a work of Jacob Boehme's.

(b) "Yet one hears nothing of any Lodge connection ... or of their knowingly coming into touch with any Adept..." Italicize the words "*one hears nothing*." So; and did you expect so to hear, friend? How, and in what formula? Turn again to our well-beloved Emerson. There is that which he wrote of great teachers, sages. In our literature you yourself have pointed out to us his utterances as to the reality of those perfected men whom we call Masters. How did he know it, think you? Whence came the vision, the certainty? Believe me, many there be who touch, and consciously touch, that body of high Knowledge and Being known as The Lodge, who do not formulate their belief to the world because that which they touched was formless. Yet in his heart each gives it a name, and bows him to the sun.

(c) What Mr. Judge wrote in *THE IRISH THEOSOPHIST* (to the best of my belief) had reference to a specialized connection with that specialized Source or Focus of Knowledge known as the Lodge, which connection may be recognized or unrecognized by us, but which is recognized on the part of the Lodge.

(d) Then you ask if these men “had gained the one thing needed, fully, satisfactorily.” Nay, friend, the plenitude thereof were Perfection’s self; that is the one thing needed, these men are on the way to it. In the fullness thereof, in that only, is full satisfaction to be found, but it disappears as a sense of satisfaction because Being is complete, undivided, fulfilled. We pass along through many incomplete stages towards final Perfection; in one such stage — a Manâsic one, I take it — these men were. But they have not told us what passed in the inner closet of prayer, the meditation where the Father was met, although Tennyson, Emerson and a host of others have left word of a trance-like state and incommunicable visions.

(e) I do not think it necessary to be “consciously a member of the Lodge, in order to be in reality one of the children of the Kingdom.” The poor, the ignorant, the helpless, and those who deem themselves forsaken of God and man, and those who know not the mystic terms, and those who dimly, dumbly strive to follow some sense of right which vaguely stirs the breast; all, all these and many another uncounted and unnamed, lost among earth’s myriads yet seen by the light of their own heart rays, are of the glorious Kingdom; our friend is there, and there, too, many an honest foe. For the children are the doers of the Will, in so far as they are conscious of It. They pass through successive stages of Being; in time their Lodge connection, from being general, becomes specialized; thus, life after life, these lift themselves nearer to conscious Divinity.

There comes at last an hour when those who have learned, in the very depths of their nature, to merge the personal in the impersonal, and who can henceforward be trusted to work on with impersonal and greater Nature, must now begin to learn as a science that which has (to some extent, at least) been mastered as a devotional or religious truth. Those powers they traced in earth and sky they now must make their own, specializing now their connection with Mother Nature, who shall now become their helper as she was erst their instructor, for the powers which are most immediately helpful to the human race are those which are guided and wielded by perfect man. They do now require a wise guide, and of such each one has opportunity, whether he accept or reject it. His choice is conditioned only by his own mental limitations. If he has long ago abandoned his personal will and inclination, he now tastes the sweet fruition of such abandonment of the self; the eyes of the mind are not blinded by prejudice and erroneous belief. When the great day of choice arrives, foregone conclusions and fixed mental concepts muster in to drag the soul of man back to the errors of its long, long past; he who has fettered the infinite possibilities of Nature by a rigid conception of *THE IMPOSSIBLE*, now mistakes the false guide for the true; his false beliefs lead him captive and Nature from her fastnesses mocks her would-be enslaver who is the prisoner of himself. This is why we find H. P. Blavatsky fighting creeds above all other things save, one thing only — the most microscopic meanness in the earth-scale — the hypocrite. Both fetter the mind. The teacher of false doctrine is a poisoner of the worst description; the injection of mental virus infects the whole Mind-Sphere.

(f) In the “True Master,” I dealt only with one key among seven keys, reading the sentences as from the standpoint of one who had entered upon the cycle of definite instruction. My purpose in so doing was to afford a glimpse of the real methods of the higher occultism as opposed to mistaken ones, and this with a view to counteracting some statements — dangerous because foolish — now being put forward elsewhere. Folly is more dangerous than vice, for vice is obvious, salient and more swiftly defeats

itself in fierce reactions, while the airy thistle seed of folly floats unregarded on the ambient air and sows itself unseen to strangle the crops of the future. I do but tell that which I have heard, and let me, as a final word, point out the obvious fact that I or anyone might have information of the real methods of scientific (because higher) occultism, without having necessarily reached that point where the cycle of training is definitely begun. Carrying out the idea of specialized vehicles for special states of Being, we can throw further light upon this subject in our minds, which light it would be difficult to voice correctly.

Another questioner, signing himself “A.S.,” asks what I cannot answer. Reply involves controversial matter, into which I have not entered and will not enter. If he will give me an address, I will reply in part by giving certain facts which he and all are entitled to have of me, but I will not influence another; I cannot descend to that level. I can answer in the amplest negative the two questions, viz., “Does Judge teach psychism?” and, “Is Theosophy, as viewed in the {United} States, largely psychic in its tendency?” Mr. Judge most strenuously combats, in all parts of the world, that psychism which will arise wherever men and women are evolving the double nervous system which will characterize the bodies of the new race. These absurd statements called out a peal of merriment from the Eastern to the Western coast, and wherever it was known, as it is widely known, that the accusers numbered several most urgently remonstrated with by Mr. Judge on account of their psychic practices. Poor human nature! Like Yorrick,<sup>3</sup> it is a fellow of infinite jest! The only psychic teachings I have ever seen originated with the chief promulgator of these rumors, and was instruction — among a page of other stuff — how to meditate on the stomach and other organs and “get in touch *with the dreadful inhabitants of Kâma-loka; this state is very dangerous; Master will protect you*” (!!!?). This precious script was sent me from a foreign country, and with several such missives from similar sources will make a very pretty Theosophical Nonsense Book, which I have in preparation. Ah! good friends, our gentle brays betray us to the world’s derision, despite the too short lion’s skin we borrow. Let us bear with one another, for the world will not! As to the theosophical movement in the States, it has been and is of a firm, steady growth, increasing from month to month, from year to year. From the central headquarters comes over a firm propulsion towards the Philosophy. In rumors, as in fevers, there are types; I classify these two as “MALIGNANT.”

A last question: “What is the ‘power of Silence’ spoken of by you? It seems more than refusing to speak.”

It is more. Anyone who has no answer ready can look down their nose and keep quiet. This is a frequent trick of polemics, a “common or garden variety” of Expediency, used by those who know that silence is a weapon difficult to parry. Intense personal pride is often the cankered root of one order of silence. The true *power* of silence is an interior quiescence; an interior stillness invisible as such to the world. Thomas à Kempis warns that when we are in a state of sweetness and peace (to ourselves) the true peace is far away. This silence consists in a firm attitude towards the personal self. You ask: “How can I judge who has it?” Where is your need to judge? “Who art thou to judge another man’s servant? To his own Master he standeth or falleth.”<sup>4</sup> Our need is to develop it within ourselves, and it is that which maketh the bearer of that power “to appear as nothing in the eyes of men.”<sup>5</sup> And now, may the Law lift us ever nearer to that ideal Light of which we have a constant pre-science, while yet we are too rarely able to see it.

JASPER NIEMAND.

## NOTES

1. {Proverbs 26:11. As found: "Like a dog that returns to his vomit is a fool who repeats his folly.}
2. {*Isis Unveiled*, Vol. 1, p. 42.}
3. {*Macbeth*, William Shakespeare.}
4. {Romans 14:4.}
5. {*Light on the Path*, Mabel Collins, p. 5.}

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*The New Californian* – May 1892, Vol. 1, pp. 337-340.

## LETTERS TO A STUDENT.

JASPER NIEMAND, F.T.S.

{1 of 6}

MY DEAR SIR. — Your letter has been read with great interest. It is not much that I know, but it is always at the service of my comrades, nor do I speak of aught outside my own experience.

The trials of which you write differ with all and always take the shape most trying to the especial student. Why? Because, arising from himself, they are that which he most dreads. This is one of the paradoxes of the occult, and life is the greatest of them all. Bulwer wrote in *Zanoni*: "Dread the phantom most when unseen." He did not only mean that invisibility added another horror, but also that when we relied most upon our apparent integrity the unseen power spoke in our pride and fancied self-confidence and lured us on to a false security. In all writings on occultism there lies a meaning under the words, which in itself cannot be given in mere words, however plainly they seem to speak it; it is well to look for this meaning which speaks to the intuition.

This power you conceive as without yourself. It is, and it is not. All powers are included in that larger nature which is your kingdom, your waiting inheritance. If in the soul were no germ allied to these horrors, they could not fasten upon it: you would know nothing of them, save as forces subject to your purified will.

The situation is really this. The soul, in its duality, has this lower earthly nature: the long past of animal existence has strengthened it. When the man awakens to a desire for the true he presses upon his diviner part, he arouses his vital essence into action and the natural or baser part first asserts itself, because it is being starved and attacked. The elementals who have found their life in it are all aroused and act; they are the man's own elements, and then, too, they find allies without. Man will always have elements while in the body, but the alchemized, purified soul will only have good ones. In the letter you allude to, I state plainly that the foe "is himself, yet not himself" — this last because only the higher nature is eternal if he gives it immortal life by uniting it with the spirit, and as he is able to change these elements they make up a false self subject to his higher will. No one can really help him because he himself, in aspiring higher, has conjured up his baser nature. His first battle is to conquer that enemy. Understand that it must be aroused, or how subjugate it? In the soul lies the vital essence of Being, which we seek. When found, what we first see is the scum thrown up; those impurities nearest our earthly lives. Some men terrified, draw back; some go mad. The true way is to feel that we have gone a step on our way and to master these forces by not yielding to their suggestions, by relying upon the diviner part covered by

these foul obscurities. He, whom Goethe says will clean them, is the Higher Self, the Spirit, the “personal god.”

Great help is derivable from this fact. The stronger the soul, the stronger this trial. True strength is one; the stronger one part of the nature, the stronger the other. What we seek is that equilibrium which nature ever seeks; the harmony by which the natural serves the divine, instead of ministering to the enjoyments of a false self. As you live and watch, you will see how you change from day to day: the constituents of mind and body are never the same. Which then of all those men, all those “I’s,” was the real man? Evidently he above them all, whose consciousness now only speaks through aspiration and will to become.

The question of food matters little save at certain stages preparatory to initiation. Were you there — even self-initiated — you would be told it. What avails absence of flesh in its gross form from the system, when its subtler essence, strong in the indulgence of ages, pervades every pore and is the lower half of the soul! Even the Deity has his material essence, which is in Him pure undifferentiated cosmic nature; we cannot escape the natural, but we can and must purify it. How? By doing away with the false idea of self.

The “pure motive” of occultism is not that of the world. It is far beyond many of us. In this view, only that motive is pure which has no tinge of self, is not conscious of any isolated existence, does not even think of desiring “to be saved, *per se*.” “He who would save his soul shall lose it” means that he who thinks of himself as isolated, and works for the salvation of that self, is trying to immortalize what is not eternal. *Light on the Path* says you will lose yourself. When Buddha desired to have all the sins of the dark age fall on him that men might be saved — that was the magic amulet. Difficult? Yes — but a thing to be tried for. All high things are supremely difficult. Are we infants that we cry for easier tasks? How are we to become as gods without strength to overcome nature? Since the goal is unity, and that alone is pure in truth, nothing restricted to a false self can be pure. While we act from ourselves, for ourselves, we prolong our own trial. You will “be through” — and I shall be through — when the higher nature has conquered the lower. These rules are not set by anyone. They *are* in the nature of Being. The “lesson of humility” is always needed so long as we have false conceptions, and the Spirit teaches it. “Clean clothes” — yes indeed — but we have them not yet. To turn in horror is no use; the rebound comes then from the horror, for had you none of this foulness in you, you would not know it: so horror perpetuates: evil is the husk of good; you can turn these essences, this power of Being, to good: but not if you turn in horror and refuse to see it as yourself. You may judge and refuse it, but with the calm of knowledge. It is not a question of “utility of trial:” it is a natural necessity that the lower nature must conquer or be conquered. As Arjuna in the *Gîtâ* fights those related ones, the “Kurus” (passions) with the aid of Pandavas (his intelligences) so must we do.

If you will permit me, I would advise your studying Thomson’s or Chatterji’s *Bhagavad Gîtâ* — corrected with notes, now in *Path* — and getting Sinnett’s tracts on the Higher Self. So you will understand the real constitution of man and the instrument at your command. It contains all potencies, and you want to be able to control all. This is more needed than facts external to yourself.

The world of spirit is the world of cause, and “mystical” in so far as hidden, but it is open to all men. The obscure is not always the supra-natural, and all these things look real enough when you are there, because the only realities.

Practically, therefore, when these trials occur, use your will to overcome and order them away calmly, relying on your greater self, and mentally taking refuge there. Say to these horrors, “You are myself and I control you.” Every added moment of

resistance is a step gained. It is at these times we grow: times of quiet are pauses. A constant effort to bring the unity of existence home to your mind and sink it into your understanding enables one to survey the unseen evils with calm at such times, and frees us more and more from the delusion of separation in which their real power to terrify us consists. An old man once said to some scared children: "You will never see anything worse than yourselves." Profoundly true, and the reverse is true: we can bring the divine in us to light.

Should the trials continue and master your will increasingly, you might write to Zadok. (See Oct. {1891} PATH). While the effort must be yours, if any one can suggest more, he can, I feel sure, from his already published replies: personal ones private.

I thank you for your confidence my dear comrade. If I can serve you further, command me, and pardon this long sermon. Fraternally Yours,

JASPER NIEMAND, F.T.S.

## NOTE

1. {Matthew 16:25 & Luke 9:24. As found: "...whosoever would save his life shall lose it."}

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*The New Californian* – June 1892, Vol. 1, pp. 376-377.

## LETTERS TO A STUDENT.

JASPER NIEMAND

{2 of 6}

MY DEAR COMRADE. — I feel much sadness in your letter. We often fall into this because we have expected too much. We reach up higher in hope than we do in effort; then we fall, of course. Again, we forget how vast are the steps, how immeasurable the heights, and as we shall never know any end, as all life is a becoming, I ask myself if it would not be well to accept the present becoming, the instant degree, and to only mount each step as it comes, without crushing the heart by considering the long flight, and fainting because all is not done at once. If you are living up to all the light you have, in every minute, you are doing all that an Adept can do, and this procedure will one day bring you to where he stands.

Chelas are warned that they cannot see their own progress and should not think of it. If they do Karma punishes. Let us then push calmly on, alike in storm and sun, to the light. I do not know anything about blue and red marks in my letter. Sometimes Z. sees my letters and makes useful notes in them — as he is privileged to do, I take it they were his.

Do not be discouraged. All our work is for the race and must tell. We can rise above all these personal clouds if we give our thoughts over to Ishwar and wait his next behest, welling up from within. We can only sow, like nature, a billion seeds everywhere. But ever above these clouds our true commanders are with us. They are working and waiting; we are never alone. May the Ineffable Presence shine upon you.

Fraternally Yours,

*Jasper Niemand.*

{The third installment of *Letters to a Student* was not found in either *The New Californian* or *The Pacific Theosophist* magazines.}

## LETTERS TO A STUDENT.

JASPER NIEMAND, F.T.S.

{The third installment of *Letters to a Student* does not show up in either *The New Californian* or *The Pacific Theosophist* magazines and likely does not exist.}

(Continued from *The New Californian*.)

No. 4. {3 of 6}

*Dear Sir and Brother:*

Since my return I find not only your letter, but also the sad word that our sister has passed from our sight, though still visible to the heart of love. Such beautiful natures as that of Mrs. B. come to us in their sweet and uncomplaining faith as revelations of heights we may reach and, reaching them, couple such love with knowledge and power. This she will doubtless do when she returns; such achievement is not for one life, but is reached through many lives. It almost seems as if she bore her karma for our teaching. I cannot think her afar, but seem to see her pass with some bright meteor down the sky, going from the invisible to the invisible, and caught by us on her bright track for a moment, with hearts that remember and hope.

It seems sad to lose them thus. Yet it is at the behest of nature. How far sadder to lose them otherwise, as we have lost ... But that was at the behest of nature, too. We can only view all alike with calm, garnering lessons and experience from all.

How vain it is to reach “higher in effort than in hope.” And we do not — we cannot.

He who thinks so knows not himself. What prompts or sustains “effort” if not the hidden hope? The soul force is not reached by the mind. We do not cognize the *concealed* will; only when it becomes self-conscious can we know it, and then the man at first thinks it is something beside himself — some mysterious regent or governor entering and ruling him — just as clairvoyants have mistaken their own auric body for an angel. In last *Path* I have given some hints which may help you to see that, unknown to you, the inner self is guiding — and perhaps, too, thwarting your plans for its wise purposes.

It is not *money* the T.S. needs. If that were all! Don’t you see that what we need is *devotion*, true and earnest devotion, union, harmony, a sense of absolute identity with all and with the Cause? If we had this, money would sufficiently come — as it comes in other poor societies more devoted than ours because they have a *form* to cling to, and the average man still needs the prop of form and creed. He does not really, but thinks he does, and makes it so. If we had ten millions to-morrow we could not do more than increase our propaganda and sow the *intellectual* seed. That never reaches the heart, nor changes the life. What we need is to show an example of Brotherhood and union, of a calm, strong, kindly spirit, untouched by any personal wrong, oblivious of personal fault, reckoning not with man, but with the latent Divinity in man which makes every Adept salute each man as “*Aum!*”

So I regret to see you still holding on to this idea that money is greatly needed and bearing disappointment because of it. You thus engender energies which are contrary to your growth. They stunt and warp the soul-body. Understand me — I do

not say money would not help; I say it is not our chief need. Our chief need is individual example and brotherhood. I do not say it is no help. I say nothing can advance us so long as we maintain our present attitude of separation.

My brother, I know that sadness well. I myself am always tasting its bitterness anew, and I believe many others are. When we offer all, it seems hard not to be accepted, or to be put under service. Well, *we are*. The first service is patience and faith; the next, to *sense our orders*. We are always getting them in daily indications, inside and outside, in a way to test and develop intuition; but, absorbed in our daily plan, we do not always see them. On rising, I make no plan; but as I wake I say: "What is to-day's work?" Every circumstance then presents itself. If not, I know I am to study and to grow — perhaps to rest, though this is rare.

Fraternally yours,

JASPER NIEMAND, F.T.S.

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*The Pacific Theosophist* – September 1893, Vol. 4, pp. 23-25.

## LETTERS TO A STUDENT.

JASPER NIEMAND

No. 5. {4 of 6}

*Dear Sir and Comrade:*

By your favor of May 13th, I am sorry to see that you have met with a reverse which must naturally try your patience.

We are *all* channels through which Ishwara flows, and if we live up to the light we have, no more is asked.

Many are the Karmic tests, and one lesson we have to learn, and a hard one, is that "They also serve who only stand and wait." While waiting we can purify the mind and heart from error; such purification alone will make us useful to our fellow men.

I think we often miss little things nearby which we might do, by looking further off for great things which the law has not yet set as tasks for us.

"Pure devotion if persistent will always bring knowledge in time" as I understand the matter. But a certain amount of Karma must first be exhausted. "Great is the slayer of desire." Here "great" is used in the sense of real greatness. Only the selfless man is truly great, and hence truly useful. "Sow with seeds of merit, etc." These seeds are elsewhere shown to be patience, submission to the law and so on. *No* Karmic law condemns us to inability to sow.

We have brought about our own present ignorance and helplessness, but we can still sow seeds of patience, and of right thought, and it is only by accepting whatever comes as best for us at that time that we can progress in the least. Instead, then, of bewailing our present locked-up condition, we should take it as a thing to be borne with, studied, understood and even used. I say this for myself as much as for you, for like all, I too am in darkness and long to serve more than ignorance and circumstance now permit. The Buddhi principle lives on a plane beyond our knowledge; I mean our mere brain knowledge. Man can "break the walls" and "invite its action," and by will power it is done.

But that man must be far more selfless than we are; his consciousness must center *within*, so that he may know his own powers. None of us are fit yet for more

than an intellectual appreciation of these things and, could we awaken the power it might kill the body through an ignorant misdirection of it. The really selfless man is he in whom the sense of personality is really killed, and not one who says in sentiment or heart "I am one with all." The selfless man has another consciousness from ours. These things are *away beyond* as yet; but we may hear them and meditate on them, and await our turn. The real "Will Power" meant is a force we do not yet develop in us.

We may think we open our hearts to the divine Power but we mistake; we do so in sentiment only; we have not done so in actuality until the sense of personality can be paralyzed in both bodies; until then, our heart, in fact clings to egoism and personality. To feel an emotion is *not* to be that thing its real self. The Eternal is all powerful. It is we who are weak.

We must win the Divine for ourselves, each into his own center, but it helps. It does not do all because to make it truly our own we must work towards it; and in reality, we go to it, and then it does all. Our *whole* being does *not* wish to commune with the Higher Self. If it did, the thing were done, the bond established. It is precisely because parts of our nature yet to be conquered do not wish for it, but incline to material life, that the communion is not established. We have our moments of mental wish for it but that does not suffice.

We need to conquer every organ, every cell and fill each with that wish. Brother, you under-rate the task. It is one of ages. We cannot look for much now, but we can learn patience and we can work for the rest. Such work can be done by study.

I know well the condition you speak of "than which death is more desirable." I have no panacea for it; I seek one. I find help only in stern disregard of all my lower mind says, and in going on as best I can. The best is lame enough. If the soul within desired to quit material life we should die in this body at once. So it is only the lower mind which desires it. That mind each must fight. Our own thoughts are our worst foes.

We have to learn not to accept our mind as judge and umpire, but to look aloft to intuitive faith. Mind suggests all these doubts and fears. We want silence then with the cry "all's well." You look for too great results, and so you despond. Well, I have done it too.

Self-control is the first great step. It is the only step for, when it is complete, we know all.

I also think the "Voice" more to the point, as we at present stand, and its teachings of submission and devotion are for all.

Not so easy either, and, till we learn them, progress is barred. We have to comply with inner conditions before we can do much with self.

I think the word "lost" in relation to him who "knows not the hidden powers of self" refers to that disciple who should undertake to awaken their forces without knowledge and due preparation of and for them. I mean they can destroy the body of the rash seeker who knows not how to guide them and has not purified his whole heart. That is — it means this to *my* mind. Disinterested workers are much needed always. Bear patiently, as you have, with the present silence. The Light will shine again. Our doubts, our sad hearts, obscure it and then we wonder it does not shine, above us, it *is*, in endless splendor. All your efforts and your aspirations are known, are registered and must prevail, and our unseen comrades are ever near us with hearts full of sympathy and courage.

Thanking you always for your confidence and in belief that you will soon find a way station of more peace, I am,

Faternally Yours,

JASPER NIEMAND.

## LETTERS TO A STUDENT.

J. NIEMAND, F.T.S.

No. 6. {5 of 6}

*Dear Sir and Comrade:*

It is true that we do not really rejoice, for we have not yet reached that state of resignation, when all is viewed in the calm; if we had, we should attain. But one thing we can do — and we are wise if we do it — that is, to constantly study all things in the light of this philosophy; to know what we do and why we do it, and what it is in us that causes these thoughts. It is useless to make an intellectual affirmation of a thought, however frequently, unless we can transfer that thought to our *heart* and live it there.

I find that the brain causes much of our sadness. Of course, much arises from ignorance. More comes in the shape of mental suggestions, sensed by the inner man, and instilled from the astral pictures of the dark Thought of the age. At such moments, if we try to go down into the heart, or to concentrate all our attention in the breath, and to *feel* there, we find a sweetness rushing up, a feeling or a sense that is pure joy in itself. It does not take the shape of concrete consciousness; it does not suggest some thing or fact about which we are joyful. It is pure gladness in itself, undivided by objects. It is a fountain of force, which flows forth, sweet and strong. *Being* is pure gladness, and, in such a moment, we taste its essence. The more we try to get to this point, and to stay there, the better for us. It helps us, for it develops devotion.

The real value of mantrams lies in their combinations of sound.

I believe that there is also great usefulness in embodying some central idea in a word or sentence and keeping it before us. A mantram of the first kind will be found in the words — impressively said — “What is your object in Life?” It rouses and stimulates. I have good authority and good ground in experience, too, for saying this. It awakens and helps young men, rouses them to thought. Another of the second kind is this: “Consider, when thou speakest, whether thy words will promote love; if not, speak not.” If we fix this sentence in our minds, we find it recurring frequently, and it helps develop true fraternity. It is from the Oriental sage, Kapilya, and the vowel sounds must be peculiarly combined, for I find it has great force. Some combinations influence some men more than others; the matter is one of vibration and synchronous relation. You know how some sounds haunt us, and with elevating or depressing effect. At this time, a good mantram for T.S., and one which seems to recur with force and to be needed, too, is, “Blessed are the peace-makers.”<sup>1</sup>

At all times I find inspiration and much teaching, if I *concentrate* on this. “Every good and perfect gift cometh down from above, from the Father of Lights.” — and then I hear an echo within — “The Father of Lights, Father of Lights.” Deep thought upon this Elder Light reveals some hidden things. What and Who is this, and Where hidden? To reflect upon it, after we have found that fountain in the heart, gives a new, intangible strength. And then I find that if I try to help others, while in this state, I give them a real aid, which is above my human powers, and which must come from beyond, or deep within — from that Father of Lights, that Elder Flame Primordial. For it gives them new hope and a real spiritual aid; to at once use for another whatever we receive is the secret of redoubled strength.

I do not “infer” anything from your letters. But I answer what you say. We do not always know ourselves, and I think you let the practical disappointments weigh far more upon you than you think you do. If you were to review your own letters, you would see it. We *must* stand alone — in the sense that we get to a point where we cannot convey what we feel, and where no help reaches us. It is useless to pretend to be where we are not. The soul itself has to outgrow certain tendencies, and we only know our minds, and but part of what we call “mind;” our souls we do not know. The best possible plan now is to observe all we do and think, as if done by another, and to study its bearings in the light of the *Gîtâ*. (*Bhagavad Gîtâ*). In this way, we come to realize our duality, and that thought, when instinctive and fixed, helps to form and to develop the astral or thought body, the vehicle of knowledge.

We are not taught how to concentrate because, in our present state, such rules would only injure us, so long as we have not a Guru to readjust us, nor are we self-initiated in the first degree. In consequence, any effort at concentration, which acts by generation of forces, might generate the wrong ones, and we should develop negative concentration instead of positive concentration. There is a *great* difference. Enough hints are thrown out to help those who have developed the interior power to any degree. When that power is developed, men are ready, and they are taught *from within*. When they are ready, nothing *can be* withheld; so runs the law. But, before they are truly and interiorly ready, they can only develop into mediums and go to ruin. When devotion and resignation are perfect — that is, when nothing but calm arises in the heart; when it is calm to the very depths, and always so; when calm is a fixed quantity, then the messengers of light appear out of The Light. Until this state is reached, devotion and altruism are our best helpers. Rules to concentrate might be given, but not right understanding of these rules, nor yet knowledge whether we are using them properly or mistakenly.

The Roman Catholic Church has an opposite aim to that of Theosophy. The former teaches her own authority, and so gives all the aids that will bind you to her, and bring you under her dominion through your faith in her. Theosophy teaches that men must grow, and that real growth is from within outward, and so urges you to make your own effort and throws you upon those efforts. The Church teaches obedience. Theosophy teaches development. Hence, we best attain when we learn to look within, and there to get deeper than the brain thoughts, into the *intuitions*, through calm. The way is taught to each from within, and not in hours or years.

Fraternally,

J. NIEMAND, F.T.S.

You are doing splendid work on your Coast. Congratulations and greetings to all.

Don't you see I cannot teach you how to fix *your own* thought? It is for you, by will, to control it. Fix it on what you will or can, but hold it. If you were ready, if you could — you would know of yourself, without any help. *Think* it out; thought will tell you how. Fix your mind on the *how*.

J.N.

## NOTE

1. {Matthew 5:9.}

## LETTERS TO A STUDENT.

J. NIEMAND, F.T.S.

No. 7. {6 of 6}

*Dear Sir and Comrade:*

Your “panacea” is known to me, and well; but “*perfect* trust,” “*utter* disregard of self,” “*divine* carelessness,” and the rest of your formula if obtained *in reality*, would make an Adept. So it is evident that we have not got them.

Man has the power of choice. He can awaken the spiritual will or not, as he may choose. In the *Secret Doctrine* it says, the Higher Self is powerless *on this plane*, and may be mastered by the lower principles *on this plane*, unless the mind of man conquers these lower principles, attunes itself to those higher planes above it. They are *planes of force*. The body has *its* Samadhi, and every organ has its. That is, the trance or quiescence into which it must be thrown is, *to it*, what the higher Samadhi is to the higher Principles. And all this is effected by the generation and use of a dynamo-spiritual force, to be generated in the magnetic inner body and mind. Every individual must grow himself, but the right growth of one helps all. Common sense is highly valued in occultism. Even learned students may err in their methods and are not authority.

Pardon the haste incidental to absence. I hope you continue well. I should not feel as you do about silence at Branch meetings, for each should have his turn, and due proportion of time to speak, as all views are in the All, and are useful as lessons.

Fraternally,

J. NIEMAND, F.T.S.

{The *Letters to a Student* series continues after this one, but the authors are changed to various names, such as “Chakra,” “Panchajanya,” “Che-Yew-Tsang,” etc., and I have not included them as I do not believe they are by Jasper Niemand.}

## LINES FROM LOWER LEVELS.

J—.

Many will turn from this heading. Whether they really live upon the upper levels or only imagine such to be their dwellings, these words are probably mute to them. A laggard in the great race, one who has only just rounded the starting buoy in stress of weather, here signals to his unseen companions amid heavy seas. If a score of blind men, turned loose to beat the city’s by-ways, should meet and compare mischances, some light would presently dawn among them. We are not isolated in spiritual experience. Though Falsehood wears myriad masks, when Truth looks in, she turns the same face on all.

It is of the beginning of the Way that I speak. Confusions and perplexities beset us. Most of these are of our own conjuring. The insidious canker of Doubt is first, is worst of all. Better stop right where you are for a lifetime than advance with this moral

leprosy unexterminated. It will spread through future existences until it has eaten the heart to the core. Now it is in our power. Wrestle boldly with every doubt until you have converted it to a certainty; thus you force it to bless you in departing, as Jacob did the Angel. Why should we doubt? The day on which I first heard of the Wisdom-Religion is for me set apart like a potent jewel in the crest of Time. My thought salutes its messengers with the grand old words,— “How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings, that publisheth Peace.”<sup>1</sup> The Peace of this religion is the proof absolute of its Wisdom. Our vitality is exhausted with the life struggle; it seems a dead pull against the current. Reason tells us we ought to be able to move with the stream. Man has a false idea of his own requirements; this is why possession satiates all. We are ignorant that the desire for Unity lies hidden in the deeps of every human heart. This is the Truth at the bottom of the well; it is the basic need of all mankind. Recognize it, and you may sweep unwearied along the resistless current of evolutionary progress. We begin to realize the inability of existing creeds to sound and explain our Being. Every one of us craves a belief which shall not be a formula, but Life itself, which shall develop and complete the constituency of lives.

Our religions violate the golden rule of Architecture,— “Ornament construction; do not construct ornamentation.”<sup>2</sup> Their slight framework is florid with theological detail, garlanded with the varying ideals of centuries. Not so does the Master Builder plan. Yet the keystone of each arch is the Truth manifest in the Past, that Truth which still bears witness to Divinity to the new Age.

When men meet their belief in every department of life, when it assists them on every plane, so that they eat better, sleep better, love better, create better and die better by it, then will it be a vital law to them, not a garment to be laid aside on work days. Theosophy does all this. It informs every deed, makes of each fact a new revelation, and testifies to more religion in one chapter of Natural Philosophy, than in all the sermons of next Sunday. Study these grand similitudes and we find how single is Truth, so that the three great laws of Motion are also those of Emotion, and Newton spoke for my heart, as well as for the universe. All life is thus related; if you doubt the validity of theory or action, test them by this law of correspondence.

Do I revolt from the rule of gentle procedure in the teeth of wrath or abuse. I recall the axiom of mechanics,— “Motion seeks the line of least resistance,” — and my moral force proves itself perpetual motion by its avoidances of friction. *Truth is the same in every part.* You shall pass every beam of thought through this prism; if it is a pure ray each component will have its distinct value on its own plane, and all will blend again to Light.

Sometimes we are chilled as by a sense of isolation from the main body of our kind. This is imaginary; you shall not think we are few, or stand alone. Even now the thoughtful listener hears the souging of the rising flood of Public Opinion. This was the mainstay of Science in her late tilt with the Church. The People, weary of barren Theology demanded in facts, in laws, the manifestation of the Divine. Now it begins to call Science to account for her limitations. Do we doubt the bubbling interest in Psychology? We should scan our newspapers, novels, magazines, boudoir gossip even, to feel the pulse of the general tide. Science yields so far to the pressure as to explain why she cannot or does not make thorough and sustained psychical investigations, and with a blunt,— “so much the worse for you,” the public turns expectantly to the broader or younger men who better gauge the tendency of our time.

This tendency is to cooperation, to unification. Science and Religion are one, are Truth, and blindness is the portion of those who dismember her kingdom. A pertinent case is that of a physician well known to New York clinics who used his mesmeric power in putting patients to sleep in the presence of his students and maintaining their

complete unconsciousness during painful operations, thus carried to successful conclusions without the dangerous drawback of anesthetics. Less gifted confreres frowned down the “irregularity.” This is a thinking Age, and men are losing confidence in the judgment of scientists whose biased attitude would bar them from jury service in the pettiest court of the land.

Again there are those who are tried by the mistakes, the treachery, or the public misunderstanding of other adherents of Theosophy. What does it matter? The world swung on while Galileo recanted, and though a disciple betrayed his Master, the Christian world still kneels. Our noblest opponents are often unconscious Theosophists, judging them by their fervid search for Truth. When *their hour* strikes, they will find her; meanwhile Wisdom needs no converts. Man passes; *Truth is*, and needs no concern of ours. Do not think either that the Wisdom-Religion is only for the strong or the intellectual; it is for all. Food is meant to sustain life, and Love to develop it, but excess in either may kill. So those whose nature is morbid, exaggerate the aspect of Truth and go mad of their own phantasms. Every Science, every Art, every Religion has its list of these moral suicides and those who confront you with it are like the old nurses who scare children from the jam closet with “bogies.”

I said that we breed our own perplexities. Take the first day of the new life, when with fledgling resolves aflutter we come glowing and resolute down the stairs. We had ordered a spartan meal which Love has spared us. Frowning, we order the dainties away and sit reflecting on the encumbrances of earthly affection; wounded, it leaves our side. Our plain food comes; it is ill cooked and the simple servant has a scowl which we resent: the household jangles and jars. The meal has not refreshed us, and the lack of the soothing but condemned cigar brings our irritability to a head. We hasten to lock ourselves into the study for meditation; but a bird sings in at the window, and Love’s voice pleads at the door. We shut out the song and chide the syren. Why is our heart so heavy now when bent on eternal things? Knocking! We open with a martyr face. A friend is there, a dogged churchman; his salvation is in our hands! He chats of the weather, our club, state politics. We broach a higher theme, we denounce, cut and thrust, argue. Surprised he listens in courteous silence, and as he leaves us we remember too late that he too cherishes his religion, we curse the follies of the wretched day and call Theosophy for the nonce “impracticable.” Brothers! the man of creeds who can hear our dogmatism with self-control is perhaps nearer the Essential than we are. He who plunges into restraints which unhinge and irritate him is no better than the man who loses his reason through drink. Both lack moderation, the result is the same, and we have only to do with results. Devote your thoughts to ascetic meals, and no Lucullus of the town is more prostrate before his viands than yourself. Moderation declares the sage. Accept all that comes with equal content, the thought held high above all. When the daily functions are fulfilled I have done nothing; the soul is no participant in these. Advance towards the Eternal and the Transient will imperceptibly drop away from you. No shirking of the duties of our position avails. *Comrades! The battle field is there where the long roll finds you standing.* Your past acts enlisted you under just that flag; fight it out there! The universal charge is carried through the vigor of individuals, each acting from his own headcenter and not from that of another. “The duties of a man’s own particular calling, although not free from faults, is far preferable to the duty of another, let it be ever so well pursued.”<sup>73</sup> On this plane we are a body militant; on the next plane we shall transform this activity, but as long as individuality exists, it would seem that each must move in an orbit of his own. There is as much egotism in snatching at the burden not meant for us, as in refusing that which is. Do all necessary acts promptly and with your best ability, abandoning at once all care for the result. Do you say this is not Theosophy? You mistake. True Theosophy is everything that elevates or aids mankind, were it but the singing of a ballad to lighten

another's toil. "It is not that you must rush madly or boldly out *to do, to do*. Do what you find to do. Desire ardently to do it, and even when you shall not have succeeded in carrying out anything but some small duties, some words of warning, your strong desire will strike like Vulcan upon other hearts in the world, and suddenly you will find that done which you had longed to be the doer of. Then rejoice, that another had been so fortunate as to make such a meritorious Karma. Thus like the rivers running into the unswelling passive ocean, will your desires enter into your heart."<sup>4</sup> Drop this concern for ephemera and forms; heed essentials only. Get to the center of every vital fact and live there as at the heart of an opal, darting forth prismatic rays of Love and Faith upon all created things.

If we set out upon a journey to lands unknown, we should observe the inhabitants, gathering the spirit of their laws from their manners, ourselves courteous yet cautious with all. So in this passage to the unseen, that which is essential is the spirit of things. What affair is it of mine if this man glows with gratified desire, or that woman shines in undue laces and coquetries? Do I know the principles of their constitution? Can I vouch that these errors are not the mere husk of habit, which dropping off may reveal a larger kernel of Virtue than I possess? Nor will I hastily become the spiritual bondsman of him who stands above me. He has not exhausted the sum of Truth; to-morrow I shall find a fraction of my own. All these finical distinctions are not of the Eternal. The substratum of all things is Wisdom. The twist of Failure has its strands of silver. The pratings of the fool dissuade men from folly. I have never done anything of myself: a clarion impulse commands my best deeds; high thoughts radiate to me from I know not what sphere. Ask yourself before friend or foe,— "How does the spirit manifest in him?" For above and below it manifests equally. The undeviating brute, true to its every principle, has a volume of teaching for us. We cannot read until we know the alphabet and Nature holds our primer daily before us. Do not hawk Truth about to the careless crowd. Not because you belittle it, (that is impossible,) nor yet yourself, (that is immaterial,) but because you must hold fast in silence to all that you possess to support you in the tests of the future. Nor is Truth a nostrum to be forced down the unready throat. Thereby you disgust a man with Truth; who covets that responsibility? Ah, gentle hearts and virile minds! Are you wounded by the wantonness of those you long to save? These errors are perhaps their appointed teachers in your stead. Error is not exempt from the law! Can Love check a cyclone in mid-career, or does Reason outrun the whirlwind? Desire has a lustier voice than yours. Let these errant ones wisely alone. Presently when success is at an ebb, or the complacent Ego is stung by pride or pain, they will hear the low plaint of the soul. Then, their state related to yours, they will turn to you as the heliotrope to the sun. Trust to the law of spiritual affinity. He for whom you have a thought will be attracted to you for it; he will in some way ask it of you. Distrust the intellect in these replies. Only the dwellers of the upper levels draw their thought crystal pure from the Fountain-head of Mind. Below, sympathy is the universal solvent; its ardent fusion welds mankind. Speak to me in our common language; it is that of the heart. You cannot so much as tie up a straying rosetree without sympathy. Try it, and the tender shoots are nipped as by a frost. Do you say that it is hard that you should not help others? Perhaps you only want to help them in your own way. The difference between loving a man for himself, and loving him for myself, is the difference between "heaven" and "hell." There is no hell but that which we create in our hearts, and selfishness is its yawning portal. Effort for Wisdom is help for all; he who thinks wisely does a deed of beneficence. Beneath generous yearnings lurks sometimes the wish that this "I," shall become influential or admired, have clients and suitors in the anteroom. Lest I deceive myself I will mutely speed my good wishes to all. Only when we have learned how to preserve a wise silence, will the first stammerings of speech come to us.

Speak then from your own knowledge, simply, without trying to adorn Truth. Many of our most valued writers are at times too transcendent, too erudite for us of the lower level. As the great orator or actor sees one face grow towards his from out the vast field of faces, and concentrating his burning purpose into that focus, sees streaming thence the homogeneous force which electrifies the throng,— so I would have each writer among you address his thought to some especial comrade within his mind, that you may drop this mantle of remoteness, and let us feel you tense and vibrant with helpfulness, pressing close to our side. The West needs a more ringing note than the mystic Orient mind. Let the spirit of your nation speak through your work and to your fellows every word will be an occult charm.

Why are we so impatient that we do not receive the accolade of accepted duty from those Royal Souls who proceed us on the Way? “They also serve who only stand and wait.”<sup>5</sup> He who cannot wait contentedly may be sure he cannot serve. We must master the diurnal before we can overcome the spiritual. Some say that a heroic deed is easier than submission to pinpricks. We may survive Niagara when a drop of water per second on the brain is madness. Friends; the struggle for the Eternal is not one daring deed nor yet hundreds of them. It is a calm unbroken forgetfulness of the lower self for all time. Begin it on your present plane. You have within you the same guide that the Masters possess. By obeying It, they have become what they are.<sup>6</sup> Hark! A voice resounds within. “Know thy true Self; it is thy guide.” If the voice seems silent, it is perhaps because you ask with the mind only, which is a higher kind of curiosity. When a spiritual need cries out within you, the answer will come with a flash to the reverent listener. But in all the three worlds there is no power to save you but your own. When we have exhausted the possibilities of growth on our present plane, we rise naturally to a higher level. If here we find a Master, it is because we have come into the region where he dwells. Better than desiring to deserve is deserving to desire. Of this be sure. All that is rightfully yours will come to you. So reads the Law.

As a mountain climber leans forward, treads zig-zag, counteracting gravity and the air's resistance, so shall you walk with care. We do not know what moral resistance we arouse, what unseen evil lurks near, what stone our passage may loosen to fall on those below. We do not know the delicate adjustment of this aerial world. Keep eyes and mind fixed on the heights above, lest the yawning abyss from which you rose, attract you. Distrust your emotions, your thoughts above all. An insidious thought, like a traitor in the fortress, tends outward to the legions of evil and would deliver you up to them. Who knows where the ripples of a hasty thought may end? We are pledged by our theosophic vow to do naught that can dishonor our Society. What more dishonoring than unjust, angered or vagrant fancies which corrupt the atmosphere of others and may breed a moral pestilence. “He that hateth his brother is a murderer.”<sup>7</sup> Perhaps there are times when this is literally true. “If he does not love his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God, Whom he hath not seen?” Pass this word along the line;— “Eternal vigilance is the price of safety.”

You who are inclined to dispute these thoughts, do better; ignore them. They are a life experience, not meant for you who have it not, nor are you once named herein. They are true from one standpoint and for those upon the same plane. Hereafter all must alchemize virtues and vices alike. Be not discouraged at these necessary transitions; they do not convict you of radical error. Give me an unknown seed; its potentiality is a secret from me, but in faith I plant and tend it. As it waxes to the budding glories of branch and flower, and thrills with the fecund boon of fruitage, I am no whit the loser, and hidden at the root of this larger heritage, the same seed remains life bestowing and true. Thus Knowledge is not final; it must expand and germinate or it is but a dead thing. “Veil upon veil shall lift, but there shall be veil upon veil behind.”<sup>8</sup>

Does he who writes thus always follow his own teachings? *No!* A hundred, a thousand times, no! Deluded, he climbs by devious paths and from the very brink of attainment, falls!

“Jove strikes the Titans down. Not when they set about their mountain piling, but when one stone more would complete the work.”<sup>9</sup>

Then with toil and pain he rises and cons the chart once more. Beloved Brothers! — and there is nowhere one so lost, so estranged, so low or so great whom this name does not call — he will have received these blows to a benign purpose, if their teachings shall roll away a single stone from your upward path.

J—.

## NOTES

1. {Isaiah 52:7.}
2. {“The Grammar of Ornament,” Owen Jones (1809-1874), British Architect.}
3. *Bhagavad Gītā*.
4. {*Letters That Have Helped Me*, William Q. Judge, 1:1-2.}
5. {John} Milton. {“On His Blindness.”}
6. {Referenced in *The Esoteric Tradition* — G. de Purucker, Theosophical University Press, (1935) 2013, p. 570:

Training cannot begin too early, and this is as applicable to the child as it is in the training for chelaship and its lifetimes of preparation. As Jasper Niemand wrote:

The struggle for the Eternal is not one daring deed nor yet hundreds of them. It is a calm unbroken forgetfulness of the lower self for all time. Begin it on your present plane. You have within you the same guide that the Masters possess. By obeying It, they have become what they are. — *The Path*, Dec. 1886, p. 268.

One of the main objectives of such training is the stimulation of the moral sense to become so strong in the life of the disciple that the voice of conscience becomes the instant and relatively unerring monitor indicating which path at any moment the disciple should follow. Coincident with this is the training of the intellect to become keen, instant in action and, under the guidance of the moral sense, virtually unerring in judgment.}

7. Bible. {1 John 3:15.}
8. *Light of Asia*. {Edwin Arnold.}
9. {Robert} Browning. {“Paracelsus.”}

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## THE LION IN THE PATH.

JASPER NIEMAND

At a certain era of theosophical study and practice, we reach a point of pause, of silence. The mind appears saturated with the new and wonderful teaching; insensible to

fresh impressions, it can take in no more. The heart that once bounded so elatedly in all the vigor of renewed life and stimulus has resumed its normal beat under the pressure of daily trial, to be met, as it was not heretofore met, with self-forgetfulness and altruistic endeavor. Slowly we seem to fall into a deadness, a lethargy of all the nature. We act, we plan, we fill the groove of circumstance, but we do it as though we walked in sleep. A blank wall rises before us seeming to bar further progress, and a pall falls over the inner life.

When this point of pause is reached, students say in their hearts that their progress is stopped, that they can advance no more. They have met a lion in the path, and fall back before its grim aspect. What causes this stop, this silence? First; we have learned more, intellectually, than we can use up in practical daily life. Head and heart have not kept pace. We know, in large part, what we should be in all relations of life, and why we should be it, but we have not attained the power of acting always and at once upon the lines of altruistic endeavor. And by a law of nature the brain cannot assimilate and digest the mass of knowledge received until it has been used up, to some extent at least, in the experience, any more than the stomach can receive and digest fresh food before the assimilative processes have been undergone with respect to food previously taken in. All the teachings we receive on the line of natural law (or spiritual law; the terms are one) are based upon the fact that motive determines energy and the value of energy, in a way touched upon by an adept in *The Occult World*. There is "good and evil in every point of the universe," and the motive for which force is evolved, and in which it is used, must then qualify it. "Kundalini" may make or may kill. Apply the same rule to concentration. The *passive* fixation of the empty mind produces a passive magnetic condition of the physical body, well indicated by the sign —, and facilitates the entrance of adverse lower astral influences and entities; these are helped also by the quickened activity of the inner body under the said concentration. The *positive* fixation of the mind upon some worthy object, such as a high Ideal, the Higher Self, the image of an Elder Brother if one is known, renders the outer body positive, or magnetically +, and reduces the activity of the inner body by casting it into the mold of the mind occupied with this image. The doors are barred to all lower influences; a vibration far above their own effectually excludes them. In the one case we have lowered our spiritual vitality; in the other, we have raised it. To the aphorism, "A medium is an open door," might be added this,— "The positive idealist is a closed temple." "The image of the Master is the best protection against lower influences; think of the Master as a living man within you," says an MSS. This refers to the mental image of that master, who may be either an adept or the Higher Self. Patanjali says that the mind flows out and molds itself upon the object seen; mind makes form.

In these brief hints may be found some explanation of our clogged mental processes. Those who participate so actively in theosophical work as to have little, if any, time for study, do, to my personal knowledge, make greater progress than other more learned F.T.S. Unconsciously (sub-consciously is a better term) they draw upon the Source for whose greater diffusion they work; they empty themselves and are filled, through the unfailing regularity of natural processes. Their motive predetermines the quality of the fresh energetic supply received. I do not pretend to constitute myself a judge of progress, but that must be advance which sweetens, regulates, and clarifies the nature; absence of these and presence of harshness and disturbance must imply some degree of retardation.

Even such workers do not escape the point of pause. The Lion confronts them; upon his forehead is branded the grim name of Doubt. Despair is the lair to which he conveys his victim.

In using the word Doubt, I do not restrict it to its conventional meaning, but apply it to all phases of mind that are in opposition to a wholesome and calm

confidence in the reign of Law, to a full assurance that all is as well, with us and with the world, as it can possibly be at this moment. The evolutionary wheels never stop; we all progress as particles of air are said to do, through advance and recoil; and as sound is propagated along their line by just that motion, so the life wave, with its currents of progress, runs through individuals and through worlds in the same rise and fall. Progress is *always* being made at some point of our greater and of our individual being, so long as we try at all, so long as we do not deliberately retard the methods of nature.

Why, then, should we yield to this despondency? If I have anything to say upon the subject at all, it is because I have passed along that road: I have reached the point of pause and confronted the Lion. At first there seems no escape. We can only close the mind, throw ourselves into a vortex of practical altruistic work, and hold on, with stern determination, to the ideal now behind the clouds. We cannot lift our hearts to it; we are too dead-tired for that; but we can insist that it still shines behind the darkness and will reappear. Habit is the parent of Doubt. We have some special failing, some specific trial, some rock closing our path. That is what we think, laboring desperately to remove it, squandering all our strength upon the one obstacle. We mistake. No one thing has power to bar advance in all our being, on all its many planes. There are other causes, operative as obstacles, of which we are unconscious. Let us, then, accept our selves just as we are, and work on, trusting to work for others and to the influx of light which that brings for better comprehension of the lower self. To use up all our thoughts and most of our strength upon some personal failing is a fatal mistake. We do not kill our faults. We outgrow them. This growth can only be had by a study of spiritual law through the inner nature of things, and by its application to all the issues of life, above all, to the tendencies of the lower self. A clearer idea of philosophy and more theosophical work are what we most need.

It is not to be supposed that our faults are to be wholly ignored. But they are to be viewed without emotion, calmly, as an excrescence upon a tree, a blight in the midst of nature. No student should ever forget to look at things in that aspect which they wear on the plane of force. Anxiety, there, is an explosive; fear contracts, hope expands. The affection which trembles for its object, however legitimately to the outward sense, acts there as a disintegrating force. The thinker may increase the list for himself. Consequently, the agonizing repentance of the sinner is a deterrent if it continues longer than is necessary to the first stirring up of the inner nature. What we should do is more scientific. We should practice the substitution of mental images. Make deliberately in the mind an image opposed to the habit, or the desire, or the too influential person, whenever the idea which you desire to expel shall arise. You do not even need to *feel* this new form at first; just bring it up and consider it; hold it as long as you can. You will come to feel it. You will react to it.

In the very hour of defeat is the germ of victory. All things go on to a climax; then reaction sets in. We are generally exhausted when this natural impulse arises; we fail to grasp it, to encourage and increase it. We can bring it about more speedily by increasing the momentum of any given feeling or course, so that the climax shall be more speedily reached, but such is not often the action of the wise. They await the proper hour. A caterpillar's nest caused ravages in my garden. The wind was high, the vermin active and spread abroad. I could do nothing then. I cultivated other parts of my garden. When night came, and the wind fell, and the vermin collected in the nest, I burned it. He who waits quietly, patiently, studiously, working for others where he can and substituting higher mental images for low ones in every idle hour, consciously making these etheric forms and clothing them with ever increasing energy; he who calmly waits the crisis and then vigorously, promptly takes the reactionary current,—he will know what is meant when the *Voice of the Silence* enjoins us:

“Chase all your foes away ... even when you have failed.”

Create your own reactions. It is done by thought. “If thou wouldst not be slain by them, then must thou harmless make thy own creations, the children of thy thoughts, unseen, impalpable, that swarm around humankind, the progeny and heirs to man and his terrestrial spoils.” You have stamped those thoughts upon energetic centers in the astral light until they have become your habits; they inform, propel, and nourish the Lion in the path. Efface the old impressions; bathe the sensitized centers in the biting acid of Will; create new thoughts daily, automatically if you cannot do it with love at first; love will follow; all things follow Will. Ruskin says: “Do justice to your brother — you can do that whether you love him or not — and you will come to love him. But do injustice to him — because you don’t love him, and you will come to hate him.”<sup>1</sup> Justice primarily demands that we cease to poison the *milieu* in which men live, which souls exhale and respire, with our personal fears, desires, and all the haunting shapes of self. Man legislates against poisoning of the air, but nature prohibits the infection of the soul atmosphere, the ether. “Doubt is Self,” she cries. “Thou art the Lion in thy brother’s path; destroy it, and it will not bar thine own.”

JASPER NIEMAND.

## NOTE

1. {“The Crown of Wild Olive: Three Lectures on Work, Traffic and War,” John Ruskin, 1866, p. 28.}

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*Lucifer* – July 1891, Vol. 8, pp. 382-385.

## MADAME BLAVATSKY AT A DISTANCE.

J. CAMPBELL VER PLANCK

It was in the Spring of 1885<sup>1</sup> that I first heard the name of H. P. Blavatsky and the word “Theosophy.” We were at luncheon, and my hostess began opening her mail. She tossed one pamphlet impatiently aside, with the remark:

“Why do they send me that? I am not a Theosophist.”

“What is a Theosophist?” queried I.

“A follower of Madame Blavatsky’s Eastern teachings.”

“And, pray, who is this Madame Blavatsky?”

With an exclamation at my ignorance — an ignorance caused by circumstances which had removed me from all touch with the world of thought — my friend handed the discarded pamphlet to me, saying:

“Read that, and you will know her.”

Prophetic remark! “*That*” was the Report of the Society of Psychic Research, and through it I did come to know her. Read with care, it left two distinct impressions upon my mind.

First. Its amazing weakness as a verdict. My people on both sides had been lawyers for generations. I was accustomed to hear testimony discussed. The circumstantial nature of the evidence; its fragmentary character; the insufficiency of testimony; the inadequacy of proof; the fact that a single witness, sent out for the *purpose* of discovering suspected fraud, and a witness whose account of his proceedings showed credulity and want of equipoise, all combined to fill me with surprise that any body of men should consent to issue matter so feeble as their deliberate judgment. The

Report bore no evidence to my mind save that of an immense prejudice, a predetermination to arraign and condemn.

The second impression left upon me related to Madame Blavatsky herself. I saw trace of her immense activity, her intellectuality, her work, and her influence. Evidently here was a power, whether for good, or for evil. Either she was an adventuress far surpassing all the world had ever known, an original adventuress who slaved for intellectual progress and rule as others slave for nothing, not even for gold — or she was a martyr. I could see no mean between. The force of her character took hold upon my imagination, and caused desire to know what were the teachings for which this woman braved — not alone obloquy, poverty, and persecution — but also the laughter of two continents, that laughter which is the deadliest weapon of the nineteenth century. So great impatience was engendered in me, so intense was my interest in the problem before me, that I went that same afternoon to hear a talk given by Mr. Arthur Gebhard in a private salon, and all I heard convinced me, as by illumination, that the Theosophical teachings filled a life-long want of my nature; that they alone could reconcile me to Life and to Death.

As these teachings shed their beneficent light upon my path, I abandoned, so far as conscious thought was concerned, the fascinating Blavatsky puzzle. The attempt to solve her character ended. I had started upon an intellectual amusement; I had found a great Truth, found a hint of the Holy Grail, and all else was forgotten in this. "It matters not what Blavatsky is," I exclaimed; "Theosophy is the Truth. And Truth is what avails; its adherents are nothing." It was only later on, as the philosophy opened out before me, at once the lode-star and consolation of my life, that I discovered within myself, quite by chance, as it were, a profound, a passionate gratitude to that messenger who had dared all things, given all things, endured all things to bring this priceless and eternal gift to the Western world. She was my spiritual mother, my benefactor and my guide. In the light of this thought all lesser ones were swallowed up. The need of understanding her character disappeared then, to emerge later on. For the moment she was only, to me, that soul to whom I owed the most. This indebtedness, no less than knowledge of her untiring and enormous labors, seemed to spur me on to such imitation as I could compass. Forever the idea that the only possible return I could make to my benefactress was to give to others that bread of life which she had given me, urged me to steadfast action. I seemed to feel, across the intervening distance, the vast surge of her activity, and as a thing to be sensed in all ways. It was as if what she had given was so vital that it germinated within me; a life-impulse was imparted by her soul to mine. I never had the same experience with any other person or teaching. Only those who have passed through it can know the reality of the "multiplication of energy" as possessed by certain great souls. That which Keely has demonstrated to modern science — that the friction of inter-etheric action, and the play of molecule against molecule, atom against atom, *liberates* force instead of decreasing it, was here proven to me, upon the psychic plane and from a distance, by the energetic action of her soul upon mine. It was tangible, verifiable; it had a pulse, ran through a scale; alternated but never waned.

It was only at a later stage that the desire to understand Madame Blavatsky returned. The immediate cause of this emergence was attack made upon her. I felt a need to justify her, not alone to the world, but to myself. That is, I believed in her. But I wanted to be able to put the ground for that belief very clearly, to give reason (as well as intuition) for it. I found myself amply able to do this, and for a very simple reason. It became at once evident to me that the explanation of the personality of Madame Blavatsky was to be found in the philosophy taught by her. Message and messenger are one and the same thing in the laws of the supra-natural, where, as Drummond puts it, cohesion is the law of laws. A person may *teach* a truth and yet may not *be* that truth, by

virtue of living it. But he cannot impart a truth in its vitality, so that it fructifies — an energetic impulse of power — in other lives, unless he possesses that life-impulse by reason of his having become it. He cannot give what he has not. For example: after deducting, as unproven, a number of reports concerning H.P.B. — reports which time has abundantly disproven — I found that those hints of magnetico-etheric laws given by the Eastern school, would explain many of her words or ways, as endeavors to set up, alter, contract or expand given vibrations in the nerve-aura, or in the ether, both of which are dynamic agents of vast power when acted upon by certain sound-combinations known to the Adept. It was not, for instance, the philological meaning of the word she spoke which she intended to take effect upon the hearer, but its tone, or its sound, or its vibratory ratio, which set up effects upon the inner planes and met conditions therein existing which she alone could see and use to helpful ends. She always acted from the plane of the Real, and we had only physical senses wherewith to gauge her spiritual action; hence our failure. The fact that soul is independent of body, and may absent itself from the body, leaving only a residuum of force and reflected consciousness to run the body, accounted for other peculiarities; and so on through the list. Nowhere could I find incongruity when I studied her from the stand-point of the inner and less unreal planes, and when I could not follow her mighty nature, I could still discern that, being what it was, it could only exist by virtue of going with the Law and not against it. When, in addition, I allowed for my own ignorance of Law and of those sub-rays called nature's laws or forces, the problem was answered. The fact of her existence thus became the most powerful factor of mine. Where I did well, she inspired me; she, and what she gave forth. Where I did ill was where I departed from the philosophy and from her example.

I never met her, I never looked into her eyes. Words cannot picture regret. But after a time she wrote to me, of her own precedent and motion, as one who responds from afar to the longing of a friend. Prompt to reply if I asked help for another, silent only to the personal call; full of pity and anguish for the mistaken, the deserter, the suffering; solicitous only for the Cause, the Work, so I found her always. Although she had a lion heart, it bled; but it never broke. The subtle aroma of her courage spread over seas, invigorated and rejoiced every synchronous heart, set us to doing and to daring. Knowing thus her effect upon our lives, in its daily incentive to altruistic endeavor, truth and virtue, we can smile at all alien testimony. Only from kindred virtues do these virtues spring. She could never have strengthened us in these things if she had not been possessed of them in abundant measure.

To quote the words of one who lived in the house with her; "They may say what they please about her personality. I never knew a better one. It had the sturdiness and dignity of the druidic oak, and she was well expressed by the druidic motto: *'The Truth against the World.'*" Although in the flesh she remained unknown to me, she alone of all the world's Leaders gave me Truth, taught me how to find it, and to hold it "against the world." The soul that can work such a miracle at a distance is no minor ray; it is one of the great Solar Centers that die not, even though for a time we miscall it Helena Blavatsky.

J. CAMPBELL VER PLANCK.

## NOTE

1. {The year listed in all of Julia's biographies herein is 1886.}

## MAN AS A FORCE.

JULIA W. L. KEIGHTLEY

In moments of reflection we understand the saying that we are not single nor full of light. Almost always we are plus or minus. A man may be more or less than himself, than that middle nature upon which we too rarely take our stand, but rise and fall with tides of thought, passing and repassing that central point.

The act of reflection is not alone a mode of thought, but is an act of meditation, of stillness, in which the mind is a reflector of truths apprehended, truths lying all about us in the serenity of the invisible, caught and mirrored forth by the quiet mind. When we thus pause upon the middle ground of our nature, getting into touch with it, it appears to us as a broad, underlying ground from which the whole field of action is surveyed. It is that spot Arjuna called his own, from which he might with calm descry the battle. Not ours, as yet, that other point in upper regions from whence the soul entranced beholds the interchange of Life so far below: that heaven is not yet the prize of fervid "violence." As yet we can but secure a breathing space here in the midst of the fight.

While the tidal Being both surges to and fro across the objective field and has its eterne tuneful play in the etheric spaces, so man also finds himself to be rooted in this ground of Nature, the base and supply of all his powers alike. When sages have said that Mother-Nature is but the veil which the Absolute throws over Itself in periods of manifestation, have they not pointed out the way to this central ground of man?

In this Nature we take sanctuary. It ensures a pause, an interlude for the closer examination of Life. Departing from this, we are tossed back and forth, now degraded, now exalted, never at rest. When the jaded sense wearies of these alternations; when the saturated mind rejects all thoughts and experiences alike, there comes a moment when the man sees suddenly by the flash-light of intuition that there was no need to depart from this substratum of Nature, which, like the ocean's bed, receives all tides unmoved.

Why do we not stand there, receivers and containers of all? Why do we adventure forth to drift or to surge past the pivotal point from which all currents arise and in which all are swallowed up? Is it that man thinks he must join in the march past in order to know it all? He cannot know it in the beat and press of action, but only when, like Arjuna, he stops and surveys the field.

If in truth this fontal Nature contains the whole, were it not wise to seat ourselves more often at this source, waiting to surprise the secret of the ever-welling waters? Perhaps we should then discover that while the tides of force play to and fro, the mind and feelings of man follow them in a futile effort at self-identification. These tides are not himself; they are the emanations of his nature, the forces to be used at his will. His initial mistake is made when he takes them to be himself. Who has not seen in noon-tide fields the small brown bird on seemingly broken wing, luring the too curious traveler from her secluded nest? So Nature acts with every wayfarer, essaying to divert us from her hidden, creative seat.

This point demands mental recognition: it is vital. Man continually strives to identify himself with Nature, and as continually fails. Why does he fail? Evidently because it is to the interest of Nature that he shall fail if she is to remain unconquered and supreme — as she must and shall remain until subdued by that unrelenting will to

which alone she yields. Yes, she yields then, for that will is her integral, her higher, innermost self, a ray of that Will divine of which she is but the veil. The spiritual will is the only conqueror of Nature; is it possible that we too should triumph if we identified ourselves with that? It must be so. Nature at the same time defies and allures man; she is his trap, but is as well his opportunity and aid — at his choice. Let all the cheats and lures thrown out to beguile the man but sharpen his will, so that her supremacy is overthrown by a soul of power, and lo! captor and captured are one, passing together behind the veil of Nature.

The moment of necessary calm is to be found in the uncolored mind. For the mind of man is as yet over concerned with the passage of mental phantasmagoria; these shift with that universal action and reëction which is the law of Nature. Man needs not to adventure with them. His mind may occupy that pivotal point whence both the tides and the unchanging ocean-bed are seen, and can the mind but make its report uncolored by a false view of self, then victory is assured to the waiting soul behind. But if, false mazes, false proportions and relations are exhibited by the mind, the soul is confused and bewildered and lingers where it might have leaped.

So great is the effect of the report of the mind upon the out-looking soul, dazed by the bewildering images brokenly held up to it, that it becomes clearly of the first importance to readjust the mental action. To turn from these distorted images to the underlying facts is the work of an instant; it is done when the mind all at once sees man as a force, or a congeries of forces and itself — mind — as a generator and disposer of force. With this changed aspect, all changes. Man, the unit, no longer identifies himself with the thousandfold current of feeling, desire and aimless thought. He sees all that he does and thinks as so much force generated and disposed of by him, and in so doing he glimpses the secret of his power and his destiny. He sees that he is dual, existing on two planes of being at least (to roughly classify them); that the forces emitted from his sphere tend earthwards or heavenwards; externalize themselves or are spiritualized by his aspiring will; he sees that these forces make for unity and harmony or make for discordant division.

The great advantage to be derived from adopting this point of view is that it enables us to look without emotion of any kind on that which we are. Force itself is colorless until we color it; the human mind colors it at choice. And where free choice is ours no further cause exists for emotion in this connection; we may be whatever we will to be, and take the truths about ourselves with unmoved heart until life gives them a wider and a higher meaning. This is much gained, for all this grief and fretting wear away our powers.

The merest glance at the subject shows that force is limited by its vehicle. Each one of us has so much force at his disposal. The brain of man takes up the gross energies of Nature, distributes or transmutes them, refines them or returns them grossly to the grosser earth whence they sprang. As to the transmutation of force, the matter is a simple one, for every grade of force is polar. For example, there is no such thing as “righteous anger,” for anger is an explosive mode of force; it shatters and rends where it cannot freely pass and loads the atmosphere with a moral effluvium — the fevered breath of the soul. Anger is the great disturber of Nature’s harmonies; it is but the explosive mode of that gentle, constant outgoing current which we call love or compassion, whose other pole is that lust which rushes forth in a desire but to grasp, reach and retain.

As desire puts forth its tentacles to snatch the object of its lust, we see it to be a contractive mode of force, hardening the fluid sphere of man, and spasmodic of necessity, dropping the coveted object when its force has been extracted only to clutch after another victim. Fear: what is that but a swift contraction, astringent and

paralyzing, a force erstwhile useful to Nature, where rocks must be held together, but one to be abandoned where larger life sets in? Doubt has a turbulent and chopping motion disruptive of all harmonious mental action. Under the chill breath of distrust the magnetic currents turn to ice and close every avenue of approach. Even so, Nature's wisdom shines forth; she needed ice and stones; the poles of force are all her own. Over against love, the positive, she set fear, the negative; only she called it not fear. In her vocabulary words are things. That contraction which the mind of man misuses and converts to fear, or lust, or spasmodic anger, is in her larger action turned to universal use, and rising in the scale of force holds men and worlds alike in rounded orbits of their own.

The sage is the man who finds employment for every mode of force, uncolored and unperverted by his own mind. He identifies himself above, and not below, with Spirit and not in Nature. Guided by the intellect he falls; guided by the heart he often falls, but falls to rise. Every failure passed through the heart is alchemized there and in time becomes success. Man has his workers — all his elements which make for Life eternal. Man has his destroyers — the elements, the qualities, the tendencies which gravitate to the animal plane of Nature. Yes, let us confess it; an elemental devil growls at the bottom of human nature: it must be faced sooner or later. He who recognizes this creature of self in himself; he who sees its misuse of his forces, its countermining of his will; he who refuses to accept it as himself and so treads it underfoot, he it is who will tear from this thing of self its manifold disguises of "self-respect," personal honor, proper pride and all that brood of deception.

The lower self seeks to "take its proper place." But the true occultist has no place and is intent only on the truth of his message. To what end do we think to appear great in order to make an impression on the mind of another? Is it not as if we concluded that our message must be great *because* we are the bearer? So we cause too many of our hearers to think of our greatness, who should be thinking, "How fortunate am I to have some small part in this work for man." We must watch and crush this tendency. It is a barrier. Often it comes from a desire to serve, but with the false image added that to serve we must be esteemed, appreciated, honored; that we must be "in place." It is a shadow cast by this world of shams upon the soul's one outlook into matter.

Like all unwise methods, it defeats its own ends. Observers are many and soon sense an effort for personal recognition.

The wise student contemplates the purposes of Nature. He makes her motive his and with that motive works. He breathes, now out, now in; now expands, and now contracts in thought intense, interior. He uses naught for self, but simply and naturally gives himself over to the purpose of Nature; he becomes that harmonious purpose, that inextinguishable unshaken tendency towards the evolution of myriad lives, of untold selves. Meeting the subjacent devil eye to eye, he treads that underfoot and all is well with him and his workers. He passes into closer touch with the starry self: he meditates on the divine unity of soul, on the indifference of temporary estimates formed by man. He lends his heart's ear to the great chanting voice of Nature, and in those vast harmonies forgets all thought of self, of other selves, of time, place, circumstance, of praise or blame, of joy or sorrow. He becomes a force in Nature and the indwelling Spirit breathes upon him also and makes him its own.

JULIA W. L. KEIGHTLEY.

## MARTHA AND MARY.

JASPER NIEMAND

*Now as they went on their way, he entered into a certain village: and a certain woman named Martha received him into her house.*

*And she had a sister called Mary, which also sat at the Lord's feet, and heard his word.*

*But Martha was cumbered about much serving; and she came up to him, and said, Lord, dost thou not care that my sister did leave me to serve alone? bid her therefore that she help me. But the Lord answered and said unto her, Martha, Martha, thou art anxious and troubled about many things: but one thing is needful: for Mary hath chosen the good path, which shall not be taken away from her.*

(Gospel of St. Luke, Ch. 10, v. 38-42, R.V.<sup>1</sup>)

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As we read this brief narrative, most of us are prone to sympathize deeply with Martha. We are transported, in thought, to that ancient day, and see this woman, cumbered ("distracted" the Greek version is credited with saying) with many matters; anxious, even as we should be, that this wondrous guest — "the Lord" — should be adequately served. We realize that this was indeed "*distraction*" which prompted Martha to bring her domestic troubles to the holy guest and to ask for his rebuke upon her sister. It is under the reproach of this latter fact that we begin to question the matter, to investigate this situation of Martha's, asking if it were indeed so burdensome as it appeared to her to be. Even upon investigation, it has, to some extent at least, our sympathy.

Sympathize with Martha we well may do, for her position is ours to-day; and yet we may easily see that she and we have erred together.

It was not alone for the right service of the Lord that Martha was cumbered. She was troubled about "many things." And in her anxious, "distracted" condition, she would seem to have lost sight of all sympathy for Mary; of all toleration for Mary's view; of all broad-mindedness. This intolerance worked within her heart and bred anger there, as intolerance always does; from anger, as the *Bhagavad Gîtâ* points out, comes "loss of memory," so that Martha forgot the rights of others besides Mary; she intruded upon her guest, the resting Lord, with the request that he should rebuke one to whom his rebuke would come as an unequalled blow. We have been in some such case ourselves, upon forgetting the "one thing needful." And we may esteem ourselves happy if the Lord's reply has come to us as clearly, echoing down the centuries, reverberating within our hearts as a reminder of the one necessary thing.

In this parable of the two sisters many theosophists see the meaning to be that there are two minds in man — the upper mind and the lower. The upper or higher mind is intent upon the Soul and its Light: tranquil, therefore; watchful; sitting ever "at the feet" of the holy inward messengers, ready to be taught of these or of the Teachers, and the "spiritual pastors and masters;" ready to receive as it may, knowing well that the highest knowledge is as yet beyond it, thankful to receive "at the feet" — or in its lowly condition — all that the Lord may give of such teaching as he knows it can receive. Obedience. Trust. Attention. Concentration. Devotion. Hope. Love. These are the spiritual attributes of the higher mind.

The lower mind of mankind, on the contrary, has lost hold of faith and has entered into anxiety and fear; it has forgotten that "one thing needful," complete

attention to the teaching of the Soul. Alarmed, confused, distraught, void of trust, empty of obedience and charity, it assumes an over-weening importance for its own point of view, and, asking for the rebuke upon another who is contrary-minded to itself, it draws down upon its own conditions the gentle but sorrowful rebuke of the Soul.

The Lord did not say that Martha did wrongly in pursuing her avocations. What he told her was that there is “one thing needful;” that, naming this, Mary “hath chosen the good path, which shall not be taken away from her.” No rebuke of His should fall upon that concentrated and patient attention, that watchfulness of His behest, or, failing that, of his silence, more eloquent still to the expectant disciple. Could not Martha, then, introduce into her associations, occupied as she still was with the affairs of the outer life, that one needful thing? Called still to serve upon the material side of life, was attentive trust forbidden her?

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If we are candid with ourselves we come to see with startling clearness that this is not forbidden us, this precious, necessary, unique thing. Our duties are here, at banquet, bed and board; in squalor, in wealth; in the mart, the counting house, the hospital or the Senate. Everywhere our life duties, the true guardians of our veritable freedom, go with us side by side. They — they alone, at first — are our guides, our teachers, our angels; their ready hands hold the keys to all our perplexities and difficulties; could we but view them largely, attentively, impersonally, as parts of a great, continuous whole, we should see in them our revelations, our rich opportunities.

The ceaseless activity of the lower mind obscures this clear vision. Anxiety, doubt, impatience, intolerance and the rest of that astral brood are forces; forces which throw up deadening mists; foul miasmas; the blackness of night; the breath and sounds of hell. Endless clamor; nerve-wracking jars and discords; debate, dissension, struggle with the stillness of the attentive higher mind, intent upon one thing only, the one thing needful; *the meaning of the Master-Soul*. Surely we can carry into our daily lives the earnestness of this attitude, bringing to bear upon our confusions, and apparently, impenetrable night, the clear, sweet light of the attentive heart. Not that we should abandon a single duty, but that we should enhance every duty; not that we should cease from action, but that we should discover that jewel without price — Right Action, in Soul-light. “If you have patience and devotion you will understand these things, especially if you think much of them and meditate on them, for you have no conception of the *power of meditation*.”

When the Church says: “Let us pray!” are we then so sure that she does not mean: “Let us meditate?”

One, after meditating, said: “The moment we *go inside*, we feel that deep, strange sense of adoration. Even the surface is affected by it, and is more composed. Not serene, as yet, but now and again mirroring some great heights before the ruffled mental surface breaks up the image. One way in which this manifests is, in a greater sensitiveness to ‘small’ duties; to the ‘little’ things. Outwardly, one is here, where one is, perhaps, quite alone. But really, one feels that no moment need be without *some* work for the Master (who *is* the Soul), were it but a smile bestowed in that name; a flower given with the thought of his great bestowals; one’s heart gluttled, one’s mind controlled, for his sake! It is the love with which a thing — any mortal thing — is done, or prompted, which counts. One is far, far from feeling such love as is divine; and yet one has conceived of it, one reaches towards it, one has taken the first step along the path leading to it, the moment one begins to realize how short of that holy love one falls.

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“We are laborers, each one having his own small plot to till, a slice taken from Nature and possessed partially by each, full of strange seeds, and weeds, and some — perhaps a very little — grain, mixed with chaff. This plot is ‘mine,’ we may say, but is not ‘myself.’ Therefore I will not identify myself with this, my chosen (or appointed) plot of lower Nature. I will till it, looking to the Master-Soul and not dwelling upon its imperfections. If I consider *these*, allied to the might and power Nature, I were utterly undone. However short it may fall, however great the shortcomings of that laborer who is my inner self, I will not dwell upon these weaknesses and shortcomings but — once for all acknowledging them — I will put them by, lest the mist of my own grief dim for me the vision of His face.

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“It reminds me of Mary — who would seem to have left some things undone, God wot<sup>2</sup> — and under the reproaches of Martha, to gaze into the Master’s face and hear His word. One sympathies with Martha; doubtless there were many things to be done. But if, in the doing of apparently necessary tasks one were to lose the vision of His face! The one thing needful is to look to Him; each must find his own way of looking. That in us which yearns towards Him is divine in essence — that I know. I had rather keep on looking at that, strengthening that, feeling that to be His call in me, and not identifying myself with the lower forces of Nature as these sweep temporarily through my consciousness and invade my mind. ‘I am not the emotions, the passions, the desires.’ So why harbor a sense of guilt, of sin? That, too, is folly; for self is the one Great Folly, *The Sin*. ‘I will arise, and go unto my Father.’ I will attend to the teaching of the soul within the small round of my daily life and push on calmly, without confusion, as without discord or fear.”

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This voice rings clear and true. It is the lower mind — the Martha of our human nature — which imports discord, waste and doubt — with wrath — where earnest *attention* to the still small voice alone should be. Light upon each problem, each care, is there, were it only the light of an attentive, watchful calm. In calm is all. *Poise* is the attitude of the soul ready to take its flight into heavenly regions. And to that meditative and constant calm, let us add cheerfulness. For it is true to-day, since it is true for all time, that “the Lord loveth a cheerful giver.” Aye, “*loveth*,” that is in very truth the true word.

JASPER NIEMAND.

## NOTES

1. {Revised Version, of the Christian Bible.}
2. {“God wot” = God knows, God says, or God made. From the poem “My Garden” by Thomas Edward Brown (1830-1897).}

## MEDITATION AND ACTION.

PILGRIM {PROBABLY JULIA VER PLANCK}

{1 of 2}

It is the fashion now-a-days, with those who write about ideas which lie beyond the world of sense, to express opinion in very guarded terms. In contradistinction to the old priestly dogmatism, it has of late years been considered “good form” to handle these subjects in so tentative a manner as almost to imply agnosticism. It is a frame of mind that has eminently suited the time, and was a worthy set-off to the old superstitious intolerance.

But when a new revelation is bursting on the souls of men, when the error and the ignorance, alike begotten of the ancient superstition and the modern incredulity, are so powerful as to defy all but the best aimed shafts of the most cogent Reason, the tentative hesitation of the groper after Truth is no longer an appropriate attitude.

We have no desire to soar into the lofty region of metaphysics, where we are sure to be met with the assertion that truth about these ultimate realities never has been and never can be formulated or uttered by man. Let us content ourselves with the humbler elevation of practical ethics, and acknowledge that Truth is a relative term. To quote from a remarkable letter lately addressed to his Grace the Archbishop of Canterbury,<sup>1</sup> “A religion is true in proportion as it supplies the spiritual, moral, and intellectual needs of the time, and helps the development of mankind in these respects. It is false in proportion as it hinders that development, and offends the spiritual, moral, and intellectual portion of man’s nature. And the transcendently spiritual ideas of the ruling powers of the Universe entertained by an Oriental sage would be as false a religion for the African savage as the groveling fetishism of the latter would be for the sage, although both views must necessarily be true in degree, for both represent the highest ideas attainable by the respective individuals of the same cosmico-spiritual facts, which can never be known in their reality by man while he remains but man.”

With this prelude let us attempt to form some just estimate of a remarkable and interesting book which has recently been published, *Scientific Religion*, by Laurence Oliphant. It is certainly in marked contrast to the style of writing commented on in the opening paragraph,— indeed it is refreshing to listen to such earnest utterances on subjects of the deepest interest. While expressing his sincerest attachment to the true Christian faith, no writer attacking the anti-Christian creeds of the churches could demolish the orthodox conceptions with more powerful or crushing arguments. The 22nd chapter, which deals with the interpretation of part of the Book of Revelation, is one which the orthodox would do well to “read, mark, learn, and inwardly digest.” His remarks throughout the volume about the orthodox science of the day (for there is now an orthodoxy in this also!) are equally admirable. The following is a specimen. “But a blind belief in the superficial senses is as unsafe a guide to truth as a blind belief in a book. Science is as mole-eyed as theology, and yet to one or the other the whole civilized world trusts for enlightenment. No wonder that these two sets of blind guides, leading their blind followers, should stumble against each other in the dark and right furiously.”

The new vital impulses descending on man are then dealt with. They are supposed to emanate from those inhabiting the Unseen Universe. Whatever opinions

may be held on this subject — and opinion is to-day in a state of flux — the following may certainly be called an ingenious explanation. “Where there is scepticism in the human pneuma or inmost thought of the man, antipathetic atomic combinations are formed in his two external dielectrics, and interpose a hostile atomic element which encompasses the medium, and forms a barrier that the psychic force of the spiritual agent cannot penetrate. It is for this reason that physical manifestations are successful just in proportion as there is a strong faith-sentiment in the spectators, whose external dielectrics are then co-operating with the spiritual agent.”

The remarks on the discoveries claimed by Mr. Keely too are so interesting as to deserve reproduction. “Mr. Keely has discovered that such a change can be effected by vibration, in the atoms of which the atmosphere is composed, that what he terms ‘atmospheric disintegration’ can be produced, which has the effect of liberating a subtle essence, the nature of which has still to be determined, and which he believes to be ‘inter-atomic.’ The energy it possesses is so great that it exercises a pressure of 25,000 lbs. to the square inch, and, in the engine which he has just constructed for traction purposes, develops a force of 250 horse-power. All this is achieved without the introduction of any extraneous motive power, the whole apparatus being so constructed that the liberation of this tremendous agency from its atmospheric prison-house can be effected by the vibrations produced by a tuning-fork. Those who are sufficiently unprejudiced to connect the bearings of this discover, of what must be dynaspheric force, with phenomena which have hitherto been regarded as supernatural by the ignorant, will perceive how rapidly we are bridging over the chasm which has always divided the seen from the unseen, and obliterating the distinction between what has erroneously been called matter, and what has no less erroneously been called spirit.” Further on in the book it is significantly pointed out that this dynaspheric force with which Mr. Keely can operate on external substance is synonymous with the inter-atomic energy that produces the phenomena of hypnotism, telepathy, mediumship, and all such abnormal manifestations.

While differing in some points to a marked degree from the recognized theosophic teachings, the author nevertheless demonstrates that the source from which he has drawn his inspiration is conscious of many of the occult facts,— for instance, the androgynous or bisexual nature of primeval man; the highly attenuated character of matter which composed his frame, compared with the fleshly covering we now wear; the esoteric meaning hidden from the vulgar gaze in the Bible as well as in the Scriptures of all religions, and the consequent necessity of initiation in the mysteries; the mistaken notion of the popular mind as to the fundamental difference between spirit and matter: but it is needless to enumerate them further.

We now come to the great subject of which the whole book is a gospel,— the sympneumatic impulse, the descent of the Divine Feminine. Taken in the widest sense, the author’s inspiration appeals to our highest reason, and we cannot but give approval to the general proposition that the far-off regeneration of the race will lie (amongst other things) in the reversion to the bisexual type of our prehistoric spiritual ancestors,— in other words, in the absolute quenching of the principle of lust, the double-faced goddess to-day worshiped, though in varying degrees, by all Humanity — by the votaries alike of marriage and of free-love. This will be an unpalatable way of stating the truth to many, for it is a view from a light which naturally seems to dwarf the difference between the virtuous world and those whom the virtuous world avoids touching with the hem of its garment.

But while assenting to the general proposition, there are details in the working out of the idea which do not appeal to our sense of truth. Writing in chapter 20 of one who is pursuing the upward path, he says, “She will know — not because it is to be found in the Bible — not because her reason suggests its truth, but because her

physical organism forces the fact upon her, that she is the feminine half of a two-fold being, and that her completion consists in union with her masculine complement.” And again in chapter 21, interpreting extracts from the Kabbalah, he refers to the sympleumatic descent, “for it will result in the union on earth of the halves hitherto divided, whereby man will regain his lost condition.” This is no new idea either. Without going back to Plato (and we should probably err in ascribing to his deeply-veiled utterance the meaning that the words might naturally seem to imply), we find it unmistakably expressed in “Jocelyn,” that touching story of Lamartine’s, in the stanza which begins —

Mon cœur me l’avait dit: toute âme est sœur d’une âme;  
 Dieu les créa par couples et les fit homme ou femme;  
 Le monde peut en vain un temps les séparer,  
 Leur destin tot ou tard est de se rencontrer.<sup>2</sup>

The completion of the at-present incomplete nature of man or woman by an ideal union must to many be a very fascinating thought, but instead of its being as it here purports to be, the explanation of the mystery of the differentiation of sex, is it not rather a perversion of the truth, the truth being that both man and woman have within each one the potency of both sexes, and in this consists their true equality,— in other words, that the Soul is bisexual, and is therefore capable of assuming and wearing either the male or the female form, and that its true apotheosis consists in its assertion of and its reversion to its real nature and Divine source.

Much that is written in this section of the book on the subject of woman’s mission is admirable. Though the author is severe on the colleges for the higher education of women, which, he says, are “attractive to a certain class of the sex, but which are nurseries of hybrids which turn out an inferior species of man-woman,” yet, as he truly points out, the degree in which they (women) compete, with more or less success, with men in the intellectual and executive battles of life is the degree to which they stunt and destroy their own higher faculties.

Of the truth of his inspiration generally, what shall we say? Each man must judge according to his own light which opinion and belief are our guides, and before we have risen to the heights necessary for directly cognizing these facts of the Unseen Universe. While leaving those who are able to do so to deal critically with the detailed statements, and to discriminate between the interpretations of symbols and passages, many of which appear to be far-fetched, it seems to us generally that, while the learned and able author has received shreds and fragments of transcendental truth from the Astral World, the knowledge of the primary fact is wanting which would have been capable of discriminating between the teachings and of welding them all into one homogeneous whole,— we mean the doctrine of re-incarnation and the law of Karma, facts which are recognized as the basis of all the great Oriental religions, and which it is the shame and loss alike of Christendom and of Islam to have generally ignored, though traces of the truth are still to be found in the scriptures of the former, and though it is secretly acknowledged by the mystical followers of the latter.

The author also suggests that the attainment of a perfect human state by man while still he bears the body is a realizable possibility. A whole chapter is devoted to the subject of the formation of households which are gradually to realize this perfect state. But let the author speak for himself, though of course no short extract in this or in any other case can do full justice to the gradually elaborated idea of the author in his own work. “For as he labors thus side by side with his fellow-men, tilling, perhaps, the land, and ploughing deep furrows into his own soul, which are destined in good time to

bring forth an abundant crop, he perceives that he is indeed laying the foundations of a reconstructed society; and a vista opens out to his charmed gaze of co-operative industries, harmonious communities, and a political system in which liberty, equality, and fraternity shall develop under the aegis of absolute authority, and in association with a hierarchy composed of such different degrees of rank as correspond to their fitness to enjoy it.”

It must necessarily be with regret that criticism is allowed finally to replace approval of a book which contains so much that is excellent, and the lessons in which are so sadly needed by this self-satisfied and self-vaunting age of ignorance and error. But the unwarranted optimism implied in the above calls for comment; and, besides, there is an apparently willful misunderstanding throughout the volume of some of the deepest and most occult truths, which recalls a similar though much less flagrant example of misunderstanding, viz: the exaltation of woman as the crown of the universe by the late Mrs. A. Kingsford in her and Mr. Maitland’s work, *The Perfect Way, or the Finding of Christ*. If it is fair thus to cite a single blemish in a book of such exalted inspiration and remarkable value as the one just named, it may still stand as an example of the error which all psychics are specially liable to, who trust to “spirit-guides” apart from the true intuition of the well balanced nature, as well as from the ancient traditions of revealed authority.

PILGRIM.

(*Concluded in March.*)

## NOTES

1. {“H.P.B. to the Archbishop of Canterbury — An Open Letter,” *Lucifer*, December 1887, pp. 241-251.}
2. {The poem “Jocelyn, September 16, 1793,” Alphonse de Lamartine (1790-1869). As found (the first four lines are the ones quoted):

My heart had told me: every soul is sister to a soul;  
 God created them in pairs and made them male or female;  
 The world can in vain for a time separate them,  
 Their destiny sooner or later is to meet;  
 And when these heavenly sisters down here meet,  
 Invincible instincts to each other show them;  
 Each soul of its strength attracts its half,  
 This meeting is love or friendship,  
 One and the same union that a different word names,  
 According to the being and the sex in which God consumes it,  
 But who is only the flash that reveals to everyone  
 The being which completes it, and of two makes only one.  
 When he has him, the fire from heaven is less rapid,  
 The eye no longer seeks anything, the soul no longer has emptiness,  
 By infallible instinct the heart suddenly struck,  
 Don’t be afraid of returning, nor of being mistaken,  
 We are full of an attraction that we did not feel born,  
 Before talking to each other, we think we recognize each other,  
 For all the past days we no longer have a look,  
 We regret, we groan at having seen each other too late,

We agree on everything before answering each other,  
The soul more and more aspires to merge;  
It is the ray of Heaven, by the water echoed,  
Which goes back to the radius to double its clarity;  
It is the sound that returns from the repeating echo,  
Second and same voice, to the voice that casts it;  
It is the shadow that the sun sees walking with us,  
Sister of the body, which we cannot tear away from our steps.

*From the Grotto, September 16, 1793.*}

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*The Path* – March 1889, Vol. 3, pp. 371-376.

## MEDITATION AND ACTION.

PILGRIM {PROBABLY JULIA VER PLANCK}

{2 of 2}

*(Concluded from February.)*

It is the Utopia of every dreaming Socialist to found a Kingdom of Heaven upon earth, though his means of attaining it may be somewhat different from the peaceful formation of groups of individuals bent on realizing a higher life; but surely more appreciation of existing facts and possibilities is shown even by the religionists who declare that their kingdom is not of this world!

That our race may and will evolve the perfect state is an occult fact, but that evolution will take countless aeons of time, during which the race will inhabit other and more ethereal planets than the present material world, to correspond with the more ethereal bodies which the race will gradually assume, and it will only be after countless weedings-out, during which the great majority will be left behind to carry on such lives as they are fitted for, that the remnant of elect souls will realize the perfect state of terrestrial being (between which and the perfect state of transcorporeal being there will then be but the thinnest veil), the general conditions of which state render it perfectly impossible for us to make any comparison with the present, for, amongst other changes, the sexual passion will then be non-existent, for the Humanity of the sixth and great seventh round will have reverted to the androgynous type of their far-off ancestors of the first round, which to-day is buried in the depths of prehistoric time, while we of the fourth round, who are wallowing in the very nadir of materiality, are naturally removed by the whole diameter of the circle alike from the first and the seventh.

But we now approach the kernel of the whole question. What is bred in the bone comes out in the flesh. Like the sportsman who by the most curious perversion of logic (perhaps not altogether to be wondered at in a bucolic intellect), and glorying in his very shame, defends the brutality of slaughter, or the cruelty of hunting an animal to death, on the ground, forsooth, that the courage of the human animal is thereby fed and increased (as if true courage could not be kept up without brutality!), so the man who has been brought up to Western ways of thinking not only fails to realize the very first axiom of true thought, but, with the perverted idea of his race, glories in *his* very shame, for he exalts action above meditation. This is the idea strongly dwelt on in

many passages of the book before us. This is the rift in the lute that spoils all the music.

The Western nations having reached what heights they have through action chiefly, it is no great wonder that their representative sons should bow down before the goddess who has ennobled them, but that one who, like the author of *Scientific Religion*, has received so much true inspiration, should not in this also have been rightly guided, is a problem for psychologists to explain.

The right understanding of meditation and action is the great subject with which the *Bhagavad Gîtâ* — that holy book — begins and ends. Two quotations on the subject of action will demonstrate its scope and object. The first is from chapter VI.

By works the votary doth rise to Saint.  
And Saintship is the ceasing from all works.

The second is from chapter XVIII.

Better thine own work is, though done with fault,  
Than doing others' work, ev'n excellently.  
He shall not fall in sin who fronts the task  
Set him by Nature's hand! Let no man leave  
His natural duty, Prince! though it bear blame!  
For every work hath blame, as every flame  
Is wrapped in smoke! Only that man attains  
Perfect surcease of work whose work was wrought  
With mind unfettered, soul wholly subdued,  
Desires forever dead, results renounced.

No ordinary man can escape from action, for, while desire of action remains, action is being done,— if not on the material, still on the mental plane. And again it is written in chapter III, verse 4, “A man does not attain to freedom from action by not engaging in action merely, nor is the perfect state gained by simple abandonment of action.”

But it is one thing to perform all actions that duty enjoins, looking forward to the time when all earthly actions will have been performed, and when duty will no longer call; it is another and very different thing to glory in the action, to blindly imagine that any action we can possibly perform is the “worthy and laudable service” which is required of us.

The sympathetic relief of physical suffering is well; the teaching by which man's mental horizon is widened and man's moral nature is elevated is better. They both form worthy preludes to the higher goal. But best of all is to *become* part of the spiritual pabulum by which Humanity lives, and the very first step on the path that leads to this stupendous result is meditation; in other words, the detachment from all the ephemeral interests of life,— which detachment displays itself by perfect equanimity in good and evil fortune, the centering of all thought on the Supreme, until thought itself drops off and the soul is face to face with Deity.

It will be apparent in the above that the “service of man” is the key note throughout, but the “service of man” and what is more or less accurately described as the “Worship of God” must go hand in hand, until they finally become one and identical. It is this final unity which we desire to bring into prominence. Service on the physical plane is good; service on the mental or psychic plane is better; the altruistic

effort involved in both requires the impulse of the higher worship as a goal. But with the culmination of worship comes the culmination of service, for they are merged in one. When the self as we understand it is annihilated, when the soul has been able to endure the transcendent vision of Itself as Deity, when difference no longer exists and the one is merged in the All, the store-house of spiritual energy is thereby replenished, and all Humanity receives an impulse that raises them a step nearer the Divine Union also,— nay further, the Divine impulse after passing through man descends to vivify the lower creation. The whole Universe is thrilled by it!

All are capable of the lower service; many are capable of the higher; few are yet fit for the highest. Each one is bound to serve according to his powers, and, following this law, the service which seems worthiest for the writer, who can certainly lay claim to nothing beyond the singlemindedness of an ardent and aspiring but deeply passion-stained man, is to convince if possible an unbelieving world of the existence of that at once highest service and highest worship, which the religious have materialized and degraded, and which the agnostics ignore.

When it is realized that, for the attainment of true meditation, the whole nature requires to be transformed, the Will begins to make the attempt. Though as Matthew Arnold pithily puts it,

Tasks in hours of insight will'd  
Can be through hours of gloom fulfilled,<sup>1</sup>

it yet seems too much of a miracle to permanently change the nature, to induce altruism in the selfish man, or purity in the lustful, let alone humility in the proud, for this last (pride) being an attribute of spirit is necessarily far deeper seated than the surface blemishes of the physical nature. The Poet truly wrote, "Pride is the last infirmity of noble minds;" and, indeed, it can be, and often is, used as a means of ennobling the nature, and purging it of the grosser taints of the body.

This permanent change of nature will not likely be effected in an ordinary man in one lifetime,— rather will it require the concentrated energy of many life times on the "Great Quest," but the first step toward it must be the recognition of the truth, the realization of the supreme desirability of the state to which true meditation leads, and the knowledge that action impelled by desire in one life can only eventuate in similar action in the next, and that the only wise action to perform is that which looks for no reward, that which is dissociated from all idea of self,— in fact, such action as is preached from beginning to end of the *Bhagavad Gîtâ*.

We often hear it stated that a man is better than his creed, and it is a blessed thing for Humanity that the moral nature is sometimes able to withstand the debasing effect of the dire creeds of the churches, but the aimlessness of even the best moral nature which acts without knowledge must be replaced by the distinct realization of the goal to be aimed at. "The first good level is Right Doctrine;"<sup>3</sup> and till the perverted notion of the worthiness in itself of any earthly act disappears from the mind, and some faint conception of the sublime state we aim at takes its place, no further advance seems possible.

He must indeed be a devotee of a very blind optimism who can contemplate the hideous results of action in this vaunted civilization, and can still expect that, without a cataclysm in which the whole vile thing shall be swept away, any gradual evolution can bring a reformed state. For he sees around him a fair country blackened and marred by belching furnace-fires and the never-ending grind of machinery, the still more awful tumult of the fevered rush of the competing multitudes, and, worse than all, the

continually increasing degradation of the lives of the toilers, with every sign that all these evils are steadily on the increase.

The story of Martha and Mary<sup>4</sup> is a standing protest against our deification of action. “Martha, Martha, thou art careful and troubled about many things: but one thing is needful!”<sup>5</sup> and many other similar sayings of the great Teacher might be quoted, but the churches called after his name, and whose representatives have become as a rule “mere echoes of the world’s self-seeking,” have been reduced to accept the world’s apologetic theory that the teachings of Christ are incapable of practical application,— indeed, as the author of *Scientific Religion* points out, the present state of things in Europe has absolutely made them so.

But though the literal application of Christ’s teaching has become an impossibility in the West, there are still spots on the earth’s surface where the fever of the modern life has not yet reached, where the lust of wealth and luxury — the Gods or Demons whom the West worships — has no power to quicken the pulses in many a quiet household, whose inmates have at least inherited from their nobler ancestors a juster appreciation than is met with in the West, of the ephemeral character of life, and a worshipping reverence for those who are capable of true meditation.

If the so-called Christian Churches, instead of steeping their hands in the blood of tortured victims and rivaling Princes in the lust of conquest, had taught the Brotherhood of man that Christ believed in, it would not to-day have become in practice an unthinkable proposition, and we should not now be looking forward to the possibility of a social catastrophe which is too awful to contemplate. But surely the outcome of our present civilization, the steadily increasing accentuation of both poverty and wealth — which indeed constitutes the source of danger —, makes it apparent that the cup of iniquity is rapidly filling to the brim!

Nay, rather let us avoid adding more than is absolutely enjoined by duty to this fevered rush of existence. Let us remember always that in our true self we are the spectator only and that all action is but the result of the “Qualities;” so let us gradually transcend the “Qualities.” And realizing that the Divine inner Self — the goal of our great endeavor — ever abides in the true heaven, “let us in heart and mind thither ascend, and with him continually dwell.”<sup>6</sup>

Only by Soul itself

“Is soul perceived — when the Soul wills it so!  
There shines no light save its own light to show  
Itself unto itself!

None compasseth

Its joy who is not wholly ceased from sin,  
Who dwells not self-controlled, self-centred — calm  
Lord of himself! It is not gotten else!  
Brahm hath it not to give!

. . . . .

Meditate!

There shines no light, save the Soul’s light, to show!  
Save the Soul’s light!<sup>2</sup>

PILGRIM.

## NOTES

1. {"Morality," Matthew Arnold.}
2. {*Katha Upanishad*, Edwin Arnold, translator, Second Valli, under the title of "The Secret of Death."}
3. {*The Light of Asia*, Edwin Arnold, Chapter 8.}
4. {Article by Julia, p. 1386.}
5. {Luke 10:41-42.}
6. {*Sermons Preached Before the University of Oxford*, 1865, Henry Parry Liddon.}

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*The Irish Theosophist* – October 1895, Vol. 4, pp. 18-20.

## METHODS OF WORK.

J. C. KEIGHTLEY

The moot question of methods of Branch work is having full discussion at present, and especially in view of Mr. Judge's plan of "a Napoleonic propaganda, filling the air with Theosophy." The present moment is one highly favorable to all work and propaganda, for when the Theosophical Society is most in the mouths and minds of men (whether with favor or disfavor matters little, except that disfavor promises swifter reaction), then is the golden hour of opportunity and of success, according to universal Law. It matters nothing how or in what mood hearers come to Theosophy; what does matter is that they shall come. To this end the "air must be filled with Theosophy," so that the echoes from the past may reverberate, arousing the hidden thinker within. Many a man and woman, brought to a meeting by that hidden Ego and its attraction, has "come to scoff and remained to pray." One of the most devoted F.'sT.S. of my acquaintance studied Theosophy in order to "save a friend from its errors." The intention was sincere, and so the light broke through? Our opportunity being what it at present is, and the ether being filled with the sound of our existence, it is to be hoped that suggestions for work will pour in from all directions — and I am sure THE IRISH THEOSOPHIST will offer its hospitality — for methods of work must differ in different countries and surroundings.

It would appear true that Branch work, in order to be helpful, must begin with individuals in a Branch, before it extends to the outside public. I mean, that the work should at first consist in an effort to fit the individual — each one of us — for his or her larger work in the world. To this end, I know of nothing so useful as a brief preliminary study of *The Bhagavad Gîtâ*, which should occupy the Branch for a short space — not more than half an hour — at the beginning of each meeting. For the whole practice of Life is there; the whole energetic scheme, both of conservation and of multiplication of energy. Rightly understood, it is an immense help in daily, practical life. I have heard men in active business of the widest kind declare that those teachings, taken from that standpoint alone, enabled a man to go through the friction of daily life, strengthened his mind and nerve as nothing else did, and left him with a surplus of energy for theosophic work or study at night. Do not lightly think we have read and know it all. There are those who have studied and tried to live it for years who daily find new meaning in it. In the early volumes of *The Path* are some excellent and suggestive articles upon the *Gîtâ*, and Branch discussions, not upon the *Gîtâ* as literature or intellectual ambrosia, but upon its use in all the events of everyday existence, will develop fresh meanings rapidly. Members imbued with its spirit will do their work more wisely.

Another very good field of work has been pointed out by the Southport Branch. This Branch has issued a circular for debating societies, clubs and so forth, saying that a body of students interested in the various problems of life would be pleased to meet with them for discussion of various topics; a list of topics — not doctrinal — follows. This is an admirable idea. In America it has also been found that lectures on Eastern philosophies or teachings have been welcomed by educational bodies, whose members desire information.

Another most important field of work is that with the children. It can be undertaken by a Branch whenever there are three children to teach. This work has been very successful in America, and the Lotus Circle songs have been published there. The object is to teach the children the truths of Karma and of the Golden Rule, and to help them to trace the effects of these in their little lives. Many children appreciate these truths, which even meet their brief experience of life in a way which cut and dried dogma has not at its command.

Hardly less important than the little ones are our fellow beings who suffer and those who “suffer from themselves” in an immediate and visible sense. The hospitals welcome visits; the prisons need our aid. No hard and fast rules can be laid down, for methods must differ — and it is a vital and a healthy difference — with the individual who takes upon himself a task for which he feels himself to be fitted.

Constant watchfulness upon the local Press, and the writing of letters or articles wherever acceptable; printed invitations to Branch meetings, issued in local newspapers or by circulars; the distribution of leaflets in various directions; series of lectures well prepared and advertised; addresses at labor churches, clubs, and at other societies; various kinds of work among the poor; all these have a place in our world-wide field.

It is of the utmost importance that we shall avail ourselves of the present opportunity to work, and publicly, so far as may be, “filling the air with Theosophy.” Each one of us, whose Karma has brought him to the theosophic life, has some gift, some trait, some aptitude, some point of contact with the surrounding world, which can be used to promulgate all these ideas. If each one will go over the matter in the mind, asking, not “What shall I do to be saved?” but “What can I do to save others from materialistic thought?” then we shall be assured of success. Each one of us is a workman; each has his appointed instrument; let us find and use that instrument, which may be broadly named — OUR OPPORTUNITY OF SERVICE.

J. C. KEIGHTLEY.

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*The Path* – December 1889, Vol. 4, pp. 265-270.

## MORVEN’S CHRISTMAS GIFT.

J. CAMPBELL VER PLANCK

We were sitting in the twilight of Christmas Eve. A long, restful silence had fallen. It was broken at last by the shouts of the children, coming down stairs and full of Christmas turbulence. Just as Morven’s wife had slipped to his side under cover of the shadows, so she now dropped his hand and slipped away before the advancing noise and light. The tie between them always reminded me of some powerful undercurrent, swift, deep, still. It had little or no surface manifestation, but if you chanced to drop into its shadowed seclusion, you felt it actually in the air about you, wave on wave, a mighty pulsation.

The jolly little scamps who called Morven Uncle burst in, following the butler, the lamp, and tea. In their midst they bore Morven's only child, a wonderful boy of some three years, with a serene, grave, angelic face, and a mysterious look deep in his starry eyes. I never saw such eyes before. They had rings of light around the pupil; their clearness and stillness were wonderful; they were eyes that gazed upon unseen things. The baby had a gravity and a gentleness beyond his years: he looked like a baby St. John, and I used to call him — predicting, perhaps — “the young disciple.”

On this occasion he was promptly transferred to his mother's neck, where he accomplished his customary feat of throwing out one dimpled arm like a tendril and linking his father to the group. To see the Morvens standing thus, united by that gravely radiant child, was to feel instinctively that theirs was no ordinary history, that the child was born to some unusual and high, if intangible, destiny. Even the noisy children stood, touched and adoring, at the sight, and kissed his pretty hands as he smiled down on them. This mood soon passed, and presently I heard one ask Morven who gave him the best Christmas gift he ever had.

“My best Christmas present,” he answered, “was from myself to myself.”

The children laughed, then asked what it was.

“This,” he said, raising Mrs. Morven's hand to his lips.

“Pshaw! I should think Aunty gave you that,” they remonstrated.

“No, she didn't,” insisted Morven. “It came from myself to myself.” The children scented a story and fell upon him as legitimate prey. Mrs. Morven, however, gave him a warning look and diverted their attention in her skillful way until bedtime. But my curiosity had been aroused, and, when bed had swallowed up the merry cohort, I told Morven I wanted to hear that story. He hesitated.

“Do you believe,” he said, “in the latent powers in man?”

“H—m. That depends.”

“Exactly. And on your reply my telling the story, or not, depends.”

“Well, old man; your price is high. Christmas gifts generally do come high, however; so I'll brave your probable ridicule and admit that I do believe in them, to some extent, in some men.”

“That is, that they inhere in the inner man, (grant me the inner man, for a Christmas story anyhow), and may manifest under un-usual circumstances?”

“In some men, while latent in all. Precisely; you put my idea in a nut shell.”

“Well, then, you shall have the story. In the year 1870 I was a young business man of good prospects, going into the world a good deal, rather sought by it as well, and full of material life and worldly ambition. I had engaged myself to a Miss Y., a handsome girl, well born, well educated, a promising society leader, with a fortune about equal to my own, and a Father who could decidedly advance my business prospects. I had carried her away from a score of admirers, and I have heard of her saying somewhat the same thing of myself. We were satisfied with our arrangement; I preferred her to all the women of our circle; she always satisfied my pride and sometimes aroused my passion. I expected no more of any woman. So I never knew exactly why a chilly shadow seemed to fall across my mind now and then. This shade was an indefinite, lurking, irregular thing. I set it down to a touch of dyspepsia. Then I noticed that it vaguely connected itself with my engagement. The moment this fact became apparent to me, I interrogated myself, like an honest man. Had I seen any other woman who attracted me? I knew I had not. There was an ideal head, a St Cecilia, by Raphael, the engraving of which I had loved from childhood, when I manifested a peculiar fondness for it. My mother had left me the engraving in consequence; it always hung over my desk. It was the one hidden soft spot in my heart, but I knew I had never seen a woman like it. Not one gave me that soft glow, as of

reminiscent tenderness, which awoke in me as I looked on that grand face. This I attributed to the genius of the painter, who has set the seal of Harmony upon its noble brows. Finding no rival but this for Miss Y., I laughed at my chimera and dismissed it to the land of shades from which it came. Or — to be exact — I tried to dismiss it. Such ghosts “will not down” at our bidding, and especially did I feel its forbidding gloom when Miss Y. granted me any of the privileges of an accepted lover. Then the shadow seemed to rise between us, chilling the touch of my lips and hand, however I might argue it away. Our engagement was only six weeks old when I called on her two days before Christmas. As I entered the parlor, a snatch of music rang from the *boudoir* beyond, the closing notes of some majestic theme. At the same moment the face of St Cecilia rose vividly before me, objectively floating in the air and accompanied by a peculiar crackling sound.”

I interrupted him. “I have heard that some such tense sound often accompanies a so-called psychic event.”

“Very true. But I did not stop to analyze that I attributed the thing to the music and the train of thought thus established, while Miss Y’s entrance put a stop to all meditation. Presently I asked her who the unseen musician was.

“The children’s governess, —— a distant connection. Have you never seen her?”

I hesitated, searching my memory. Miss Y seemed surprised, even a little suspicious.

“If you have not, it is odd,” she said. “And if you have, and have forgotten it, that is odder still.” She drew a large portfolio before her. “The face is a peculiar one; see!” She held up a large photograph before me.

“You are out there,” I smiled, “for this is Raphael’s St. Cecilia,” and I turned the photograph toward her. She laughed triumphantly.

“Just so. I’m glad you see the resemblance. It was my discovery, but no one could see it till I dressed her hair and gown’d her like the original and had this photograph taken. But you’re tired. Sit down.”

She pushed a chair towards me and I dropped into it mechanically. Something extraordinary was taking place within me. I couldn’t have spoken for my life, really. My experience had no name for the feeling that took possession of me. Something coursed up and down in my veins like fiery mist. Pictures swam in and out of my brain, all of them connected with that face. I seemed to hear the roaring of cataracts. A great Past was on the point of opening before me; my mind was swallowed up in it already. As soon as I could, I took my leave, but not before Miss Y. had noticed my altered manner and responded to it by a touch of coldness in her own. As I rose, she detained me.

“You know I am not of a suspicious nature,” she said. “But several times lately I have noticed a change in you; an abstraction, a distance. I do not know whether it relates to our engagement.”

I began to protest. She stopped me proudly.

“Let me finish, please. I have no reasons, and I think you have none, to be dissatisfied with our plans. But I do not understand a woman’s giving her heart fully until after marriage, and, if before that time yours or mine should waver, it would be far better to tell the truth then.”

“I assented; praised her right feeling; assured her of my — heaven knows what! — and got away, leaving her evidently dissatisfied. I wanted to get out of the house and think. The deuce of it was, I couldn’t think. Everything seemed at boiling point. I heard those chords, I saw that face, and hurrying phantoms, shapes of air and fire, opened the flood gates of an unknown Past that plucked at my brain, urging me to I knew not what. Seriously alarmed, I hurried home, intending to send for a physician. Exhausted,

I dropped into the nearest arm chair, when all at once the fierce tension relaxed, something seemed to snap inside me,— I fell back and fell asleep.

When I awoke, it was ten o'clock of the next day, and I felt like a man who has recovered from a long illness. I believed that opportune sleep had saved me from one. As I rose, a bit of paper fluttered from my knee to the floor. I did not stop to pick it up. For years I had not felt so light of heart. Tons seemed lifted off me. I whistled and sang while I dressed,— and became aware that it was those remembered chords I repeated,— and airily kissed my fingers to my St. Cecilia with an “Au Revoir” as I clattered down stairs. I was not due at the Y. mansion until afternoon. All through the day's occupations my unwonted cheerfulness did not desert me, and my partner congratulated me on having “downed that dyspepsia.” I felt a marked impatience to go to the Y's, and finally forestalled the hour by some twenty minutes. The butler portentously stopped me as I was entering the parlor.

“Mr. Y. wishes to see you in his study, sir.”

Surprised, I accompanied the man and found Mr. Y. waiting for me. He waved my offered hand aside.

“Excuse me a moment, Mr. Morven,” he said. “Let us first understand one another.”

I stared at this singular preliminary, but replied that I was at his service. We both sat down, and he resumed.

“I am a believer in perfect frankness. My daughter received last night an anonymous communication concerning you.”

I suppose I looked the surprise I felt. His tone softened somewhat.

“Such communications are better put in the fire and forgotten. Unfortunately — or fortunately, as the event may decide — my daughter remembered certain things which seemed to confirm the statements of this note. With the good sense which always characterizes her,” (here I bowed my assenting admiration, while he frowned at me), “she decided to bring the note to me. In my opinion, we are justified in bringing it to your attention. You have only to deny or confirm the statements it makes. My daughter and I are agreed, Mr. Morven, that we may safely accept your word.”

I tried to thank him. “Not at all,” said he. “So much is due to ourselves. Our present relation would not exist at all, if you were not a man of honor. Permit me to read you the note.”

Taking a sheet of paper from his desk, he read as follows.

“Your lover does not love you. Ask him if this is not true. He struggles against an affection which is beyond his control. He tries to subordinate that to the worldly advantages of his previous engagement with you. But it is your cousin whom he loves, just as she loves him, although no words have passed between them. They love with a force which you will never know, in this life at least, or be able to understand. Morven tries to keep his pledge to you, but shall you hold him against his hidden desire, his secret will? If you do, your whole life will feel the blight of your action.”

As Y. read this extraordinary production, I sat like one deaf and dumb. Against the air about me surged and sang, bringing vague memories on its burning tide. As Y. concluded, he looked up abruptly.

“Have you any idea who could have written the thing? It is a peculiar hand” — and he placed the note in my hands.

I looked at it, fascinated. Then I rose to my feet. *The hand writing was my own.* Not my ordinary hand, but one I had practiced from boyhood to write in my private diary. Every accustomed quirl of the letters was there. As I mutely glared at it I heard in the distance the harmony I knew so well. The face of St. Cecilia rose again before me; the floor met the ceiling with a clap, and thoughts of surprising lucidity and swiftness

swept through my brain. Only a couple of seconds passed, but I saw it all. I loved her, I had *always* loved her, and in my sleep my inner self, that part of me where memory of past lives was stored, had awakened and set me free. I turned to the expectant Y.

"As far as I am concerned, Sir," I said, "I must admit the truth of this accusation. I can only say in extenuation that I did not know myself thoroughly, and that I have not addressed Miss Marie on the subject."

"That is just what she said when my daughter questioned her. It seems a remarkable coincidence of feeling to have arisen without words," he said with pardonable bitterness. But what did his bitterness matter to me? "Coincidence?" Then she loved me! I hastened to say that in all the circumstances I should wish to see the lady first in his presence. He must have anticipated this on my part, for he opened a door, and my Darling stood before me. To feel what I then felt was to know that I had been her's from all time, that I was hers forever. That she returned this feeling, her timid step and downcast eyes told me eloquently. We found Mr. Y. coldly just. He promised to convey my profound apologies to his daughter, he suggested that I had better be a stranger to his house for some time to come, intimated that when we met again it would be with mutual respect. Then he rose to end the interview. Perhaps the look I gave him reminded him of his own youth, for he left the room. All this while my Darling sat, quivering and shamed, in her chair. I hope I made it up to her. I learned how she had seen me by stray glimpses and loved me. She supposed that I had seen her in the same way, and to this day, the one secret I have from her is in that point. I have never told her that she was known to my inner self alone. When I returned to my room that evening my eye fell upon a bit of paper on the floor. I picked it up. It was a District Telegraph receipt for a note, signed by Miss Y. Here was proof, had I needed any. But I did not. I knew that my Darling was a Christmas gift from myself to myself."

Our conversation was interrupted by the entrance of Mrs. Morven. I now understood the meaning of a gold bracelet she always wore locked upon her wrist, and which bore in letters of sapphire these words: *As Ever. Forever.*

J. CAMPBELL VER PLANCK.

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*The Path* – October 1887, Vol. 2, pp. 201-206.

## NATURE'S SCHOLAR.

J. CAMPBELL VER PLANCK, F.T.S.

There was once an old Scholar who counted his friends by scores in his youth, and had now mislaid or lost them. Early in life he had wandered away from men and things to seek the Truth, and journeyed very far in his search, coming at last to an inheritance of little land and much learning, left him by an antiquarian ancestor. Deep down in quiet country dales he lived upon dreams and moldy books, well loved by all about him, for he never knew the current rates of wage or purchase, nor yet when maids hung gossiping over hedges, and dinner burned in the oven. The simple folk of the country side had their own way with him whom they called "the poor dear soul" and cherished as their own backbone, never letting any man out of their own township serve or despoil him, so much they felt they owed him. Some went so far in gratitude as to say he was not near so old as he looked, for if his hair *was* grey, there were firm, bright eyes and sturdy calves to give age the lie and maintain it. Moreover, the time a band passed through the village, he had been espied by Molly through the door chink, striding up and down, whistling as loud as any boy and cutting the air with his cane in a style far

beyond the drum-major. It was the kitchen verdict that he must have been “shocking bad” in his youth; his dinner was done to a turn that night and the maids had new ribbands in their caps and arch provocation on their faces.

Be his age what it might, day after day the Scholar read and wrote, or slowly paced his rustic walks, now amid rose blooms, now upon the sere rustle of leaves or crunch of snow, but always with a faithful old hound to heel on his right, whose head hung low like the master’s. Nothing breathed on that homestead that did not seem to have greater right there than the Scholar: the very toads and lizards sat and swelled for pride of ownership in mossy nooks on his walk, and busy winter birds stood still at his approach, and pecked briskly at the brown boughs won by sun from ice, knowing well that not even creeping things had ever seen cause to turn aside for him. One hoary spider had indeed been seen to think the Scholar would learn more if he took some notice of creatures, but everyone knows that since Bruce introduced a spider to history, the tribe has been hypercritical of the insufficient methods of man. It is certain that the Scholar considered himself a mere sojourner there where he was master, and meant to return to anxious friends when he could carry the Truth to them. But the great tomes of his legacy were many and wise; still he lingered, still he sought, while Time went tiptoe past him.

One morning, as he wrote, a caprice of the Spring wind burst open the study casement. A gush of wild-wood fragrance and the shrill lilt of a girl’s voice in song flooded into the room together. Some subtle quality of the voice made him throw down his pen and glance at a picture on his table. From beneath its coating of dust a merry brown eye laughed out at him and a round shoulder gleamed whitely. Taking up this picture, he polished it remorsefully with his worn coat cuff, muttering like one asleep: “Poor Kate! I have kept her waiting long. I cannot give myself to happiness or woman, until I find the Truth.”

Straightway upon this came a miracle! His door swung open. There upon his threshold, young and rosy, lap and hair full of blossoms, face full of dimples, stood Kate herself. As the man’s eye went from the picture to the woman, the man’s heart leaped up hot and strong. He dropped the painted thing and caught the living beauty in his arms. “My Kate! you have waited for me!” Small chance has Truth with her own at times, when velvety cheek is so near and the springtide is yet young!

What said the beauty? She laughed again, and kissed him with the careless, cruel, kindness of youth to age. “Yes, we waited and rang till we were tired, so I came on to explore. Awfully nice of you to know me!”

“But Kate” — he stammered.

“Harriet. I’m not named for Mamma,” she rattled on. “Mamma’s out there with Papa and the children.”

“Children?” gasped the Scholar.

“Yes. Ten, besides me. Don’t you hear them?”

Surely he heard them. Ten! they sounded like legions. The mere pursuit of truth is at once a recompense and a protection! Yet even a votary is vulnerable when a young girl goes on to say: “Let me call them, you’ll sprain yourself, rushing about so. I shook your nerves; see how your hand trembles.”

No wonder, poor Scholar. In that moment he looked double his age, for he — long unacquainted with mirrors — saw for the first time his stooping shoulders, his crows-feet and wrinkles, reflected in her blithe indifference, her attention wandering from him to his surroundings. His dead youth rose up with power, and stared him in the face; then fell away from his heart in ashes.

That heart was staunch though, as are the hearts of those who seek the Truth, so by the time his guests stepped beneath his roof, he stood ready to welcome them with

gentle courtesy — his Kate, grown portly, but fresh and good-humored still, and secretly flattered to see, (as she did with the tail of her eye) her portrait so cleanly kept when all else was so dusty, and hoping her husband would not remark it. Her husband, (who would not have cared if he had, she having tapped his single vein of sentiment and run it dry,) a grave, cautious Scientist: a friend of his, a Speculator, attracted by unlikeness, whose sharp glance bestowed a hypothetical value wherever it fell: these and other friends had hunted the Scholar up to renew old ties in his country home, seeing which, the very cockles of his heart warmed to them. Soon milk was foaming into pails; sounds of beating and churning and frothing arose. Maids scurried in all directions. Slugs disturbed on young green things, and cackling hens in angry session on the barn floor, alike averred that never had such an evil day befallen poultry yard and kitchen garden. “Humph” snarled old Peter: “me airly salad he should not have, an’ me meanin’ to sell it in market the Saturday, but for his bein’ the boss, dang him!” To which Cook replied with much feeling that “Lord knows, I ain’t never before seen the poor, dear gentleman ask for his own.” Peter glared at her. “Woman! That’s just what I am objectin’ to. It’s the first time makes the *preyident*. He’s got the *preyident* on us now,” with which mysterious omen hanging over her, Cook retired to her pans and sauces.

The day passed all too quickly, and when the hour for departure came round, the Scholar was so reluctant to part with his friends that he bethought him of making a gift to everyone, that some portion of himself might go with them. Gathering them about him, he begged that each would tell him what they had liked best in his home, adding — the wily old Scholar! — that then these things might serve to remind him of friends, and perhaps smile at him in their absence. They were very worldly wise people, however, coming from the city beyond the hills, that city whose knowing lights outwinked the stars, whose mists denied a right of way to the sun himself. So perhaps they saw through his cunning, for all hung back until he said to the Artist: “Come Sir; you have praised my homestead much. What will you crown with your final approbation e’re you leave me?”

The Artist could but smile back into the genial face bending towards him. “Why, Sir, the fairest thing you own is one that in itself contains the true rules of all Art. It is as blue as the heavens, and like them, a living lesson in gradation of color, and its form displays the perfect ‘line of beauty.’ ”

The Scholar’s gaze sought the dark cabinets on his walls, each rich with its own freight, but the Scientist spoke up with decision. “On the contrary, the finest thing our friend possesses is colorless, formless; its beauty is its utility: its protean energy is a fountain of Power.”

“Learning and Art are all very good,” chirruped the speculator, flecking off his eyeglass. “But if ever you chance to be hard up, let me choose what possession of yours shall be put upon the market, and you shall pocket its attractions — less commission — in more cash than anything else I see is likely to bring you.”

A swift cloud of deprecation passed over the company, as when a breeze ruffles a grain field and there is a stir, a rustle and a withdrawal from the rude intruder. The Scholar’s cheek even reddened slightly, seeing which, the Poet hastened to staunch the wound, as is the royal prerogative of poets. “Sir,” said he, “you have here an instrument of wonderful sweetness. It tunes ear and brain alike to the sweetest harmonies, and though I must leave it, I take its music with me, captured in my latest song, and all the world shall sing it.”

He was a famous Poet, so the rest hastened to agree with him. “As for me,” said a youth, gazing ardently at Harriet; “what I admired most was an image of the loveliest

woman God ever made; what I envy most seemed to hold her in its arms, and these were one thing.”

“And I,” said a reproachful youth whom she had jilted, “I liked the one thing that cannot be trampled upon, nor does it change and grow out of knowledge, like the fickle world around us.”

“Fancy! Now for my part the jolliest thing here is always changing, never the same. It’s a racer! No women for me!” So spoke the Dandy whom Harriet secretly loved. Stung, she turned away to hide her palpitating bosom, but flung a dart behind her, as girls will. “Diamonds,” cried she, “give me our host’s ancestral diamonds. Larger ones I never saw. Brilliants! Glorious! such quantities. My heart is set on having just such stones.”

Her lovers stroked their callow chins and thought of their salaries, but before the puzzled Scholar could ask for an explanation, her mother took his hand, saying plaintively, “My good friend, next to yourself, what I value most is none of these things they name, but just something in your dairy which makes yours the sweetest cream and butter I ever tasted. How my poor children ever grow up on city fare, a merciful heaven only knows.”

Everyone laughed at this touching idea, for just then the “poor children” rushed up with a loud rumble, as of thunder, and precipitated themselves upon the Scholar. The one at the rear, who still had some breath remaining, shouted out; “We never saw such a splendid stream. Don’t we wish we had it at home.” Their host was about to confess that he had never noticed it, when his voice was drowned in a general exclamation from all the grown people in one breath: “That was what I meant too; it is the stream yonder!”

The astonished Scholar turned to look at his choicest possession, now rosy under the setting sun. Its cascade swept down in a serpentine curve, while part of the water writhed backward from the lip of the fall, making a spiral within a spiral in strange double movement; an ebb and a flow. Below the outpour of life-giving water, six eddies swirled away, each in its own circle, but interlinked by a current that emptied itself in a larger whirlpool further down. The little wind that rises out of the east at nightfall in the spring, struck coldly across this boiling vortex, condensing its foam into a silvery mist that gathered, rose, took on a graceful wraithlike shape, and floated away, a freed thing to the free ether. The Scholar drew himself up in sudden excitement and wonder, then these words burst from him in a torrent strangely unlike the calm evenness of his accustomed speech. “At last! At last I have found the secret. See” — and he pointed to the cascade — “there is the movement that creates life; it circles through the eddies and out of the whirlpool evolves the new-born life itself, the immortal that seeks the skies. Rejoice with me!”

The tears ran down his cheek, but his voice rang like a bugle and his form had a majesty they could not understand. They fell back a few paces. Their mirth was extinguished, their manners constrained. Like guilty hearts they made hasty farewells, avoiding his eye: their thanks fell crisp and cool on the air, like frost. While still their footsteps pressed his land, drowsy birds in the hedges saw them put heads close together in the shadows and whisper furtively, “Mad! He is mad. What will people say? We will never come again.” The branches, closing behind them with a shudder, shed a soft rain of blossoms to obliterate their presence; then twining closer, shut the Scholar forever away from the world and its friends.

Lost in an ecstasy, he stood by the hurrying waters. A Voice called to him from somewhere; a Voice of airy mystery; a soundless but almighty Voice, so that he trembled as he answered, “Lord, here am I.”

“Seest thou not, oh, Seeker,” said the Voice, “that though Truth wears different garb to different men, it is but the livery of their own minds; beneath it is the One Truth that mirrors forth all the rest, changeless and resplendent under as many names as there are men? It is to be found in all things in Nature, even as the water is in all things: men pursue its splendor blindfold through the worlds, to find it shining beside their own door.”

“And thou, who art thou?” asked the Scholar.

*“I am that Spirit which moves above the face of the waters. With Truth I dwell in her supreme abode. Seek me there.”*

An awful thrill, half fear, half joy ran through the hearer’s breast, for these last words resounded from the deeps of his heart. Then he knew the supreme abode of Truth and worshipping in it, he became Nature’s Scholar, and she made him young again with that youth which men call Immortality.

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## NATURE’S VEILS.

JASPER NIEMAND

It is inevitable that in Nature, which is the veil cast by Spirit over itself, there should be many illusions. Just as in outer Nature the sun is the mist dispeller, so when the spiritual Sun pours its radiance upon the Soul of man, out of that soul-substance, primeval and multiform, germ after germ of ancient thought, deeply hidden under the action of the centuries, is evoked, is evolved, is dispelled. Mist-like they arise one by one, unfolding themselves under the eye of the Soul, a processional of dreams. Now a hope, now a dread; now a memory serene and now a doubt infernal; now a resplendent promise has fulfillment, and now a tireless torment fastens its fangs in the heart. The Soul of man, observant of that nature which has been created only for its purposes, stands like a witness receiving testimony, or like the spectator of a drama framed for its edification. This Nature, which is its material vehicle, its instrument for use in material life, it must know to the very depth and breadth thereof; it must probe, comprehend and take control of it all, before it can know itself.

This gradual conquest of matter, or Nature, by the Soul, might be a process as calm as science, as continuous as fate. The sun, its shining unimpeded, would dispel these miasmatic forms and the still deeps of space would lie reflecting that Sun. Nature conquered, the Soul in that purified garment, robed whitely in the “blood” sacrifice of Life, rounds her cyclic period and hides her back to Spirit. This purifying “blood,” of which the Scriptures tell us, is that red desire which fills full the heart of man, engorging its free and spiritual action, clogging its ethereal arteries with germs of desire; desire, whose heat inflames, whose astringent self-hood contracts, whose accumulations fester and destroy. As the human blood has its marvelous play, its swift alterations of form under the microscopic lens, so to the eye of the seer this force of desire blossoms out upon the surface of the mind in form after form, ever changeable, ever varying and elusive, though their stable root is desire. Yet were the witness uninfluenced, the spectator not identified with the spectacle, the lesson were soon learned, the kingdom swift of conquest, the goal secure.

At this point, however, we meet that chief of illusions, that veil of *Mâyâ* nearest *Mâyâ*’s self. For there exists in Nature that element of egotism, *Abankara*, or self-

identification, and Nature, casting up this element, identifies herself with the drama and gives a bias for or against the spectacle. The image thus put forward confuses the too attentive Soul. It is as if the moon, reflected upon the waters, were to see that reflection claim to be herself, and were to lend herself to the cheat. The Soul is bewildered by this action of the element of *Abankara* in Nature, and accepts this reflected image as the true and only Self.

It may be asked, Why is the Soul thus bewildered? Why does not the Soul remain unconcerned? Perhaps the nearest approach to an answer that can be given is this: That by virtue of the attractive power of Nature, the Soul is drawn down along the lines of force to that form of her own projection and transfers her energies to that seductive image instead of lifting Nature to herself. It is the old tale of Narcissus the beautiful, who fell in love with his own face mirrored in the waters of the world, and lay pining with desire by all the streams, neglecting the missions of the gods. So the Soul plunges more and more of herself into Nature under its attraction and impulsion and suffers her own detention there. She sees the action and reaction of her energies on the material plane and amid their convolutions enjoys the fantastic illusion and dreams. The rightful part of the Soul is to raise matter to its own substance and likeness, and this is done when, feeling the spiritual influx, the Soul guided by that power only, descends into matter as uplifter and redeemer, and not as accomplice. The root of the Soul is Freedom. That Freedom confers a power of choice.

Now the Soul, by virtue of this Freedom, has an instrument which nothing but itself can bend or break. That instrument is the will. Each Soul can defy the attractive power of Nature and all her illusions; the mirage can be dispelled by the will's strong radiance and can defeat the self-identifying element by a constant and unremitting presentation to the mind of the mental image of the one, true Self. The mind resists this; it does not "feel" the truth of this ideal and it rebels. Then those who put their trust in feelings, fail to rise; their self-imposed shackles weigh them down. But those who hold fast to the higher conception regardless of the sense of dullness, the want of feeling, the blank and the silence, or the turmoil of the senses, those come in time to find that the mind has at last turned to a new basis of action whence is liberated a fountain of fresh energy.

A true mental image, endowed with spiritual energy, is a living thing and operates of itself upon submissive and reflective matter. No longer upon the troubled mental waves does the Soul behold a wavering image with a transient life of its own, but in the depths of Nature calmed and stilled she sees her own clear light with the life of the Spirit moving through it, and knowing herself below as above, knowing Nature now as her vehicle and not as her enticer, she evolves that Nature to her own high purposes and to its own highest destiny. And though that Nature falls from her as she re-enters the portals of the Eternal, yet she finds it awaiting her as she re-emerges, her servitor through the evolving ages.

These images before spoken of are veils of *Mâyâ*. And there is one, more deadly than any other. I would fain speak of it in accents of the heart which might penetrate to the core of every comrade heart that feels the beat of mine. That veil is Doubt. It is the darkest thing that ever crawled forth from matter to spread its slime upon the image of the Soul. It paralyses the will. It destroys the spontaneity of the heart. It raises a wall between us and Masters.

What is this Doubt? At its root it is Vanity, *Mâyâ's* self. The very presence of a doubt shows plainly that I am thinking of myself in a purely personal light. It is a perversion of normal Vanity, by which, after thinking of myself as something fine or great, I fall into self-lamentation and tremble before myself when I find that I am small.

Small, weak, a poor failure in his personal nature every man is when he relies on that alone, and he oscillates between vanity and self-doubt like a pendulum wound up by Time. Self-doubt is the subtlest form of vanity because it is the most deceptive. We say that we are free from vanity at least, because we are so humble, so modest, and we fail to see that self-doubt is but another mode of being occupied with one's self, and a mode in which the vainest man does not outdo us. Dwelling in thought upon the true Self is the only corrective and helper.

Doubt of another is the same thing. It also is doubt of the true Self being all. To think of another as being mere lower human nature and no more; to think that here in my fellow being is no saving soul power which might in an instant descend and snatch him away to a spiritual glory before our dazzled eyes; to refuse to recognize in any man or woman that soundless AUM which abides in every atom and is above and around all, this is to cast a poisoned net upon our fellow combatants struggling in the arena of Life, and drag them to the Earth.

Oh, Arjuna! Thou art immortal. Arise! Take the sword of the will in hand, call up thy fellows on the field of battle and fight on, through Nature to over-Nature; through matter, the hydra headed, to Spirit the one. Why doubtest thou the soul of thy fellow-man? Yet to doubt thine own is no less sin. Both mental acts deny the Self. *Thou art That.*

Every hour that strikes upon the face of Time is the outcome of thy Soul's own law. Why, then, doubt any of these hours? Why not accept them all? Call them good or call them evil, they are the Soul's messengers. They bring new gifts; they take back gifts outworn, gifts no longer pertinent to the purposes of thy Soul. Let them come! Let them go! Release, too, that strong desire-grip of thine on sentient life — and, having relaxed that grip, let thyself go also; move freely up and down the whole of Life, accepting it all as thine own will and law. Then seeing but thyself everywhere, thyself and mind shall merge into that higher Self and doubt shall be no more. "He who sees Ishwara everywhere equally dwelling, he seeth."

In every event of Life there is a moment, brief perhaps as an eye-wink, in which the voice of the Soul is heard. It should be listened for. We hear it speak oftener than we think. When heard we do not always hold fast to it. We suffer mind to arise like a specious pleader presenting its own bias and calling that "the facts of the case." These facts are argued before us, and when we do not accept the bias, as often as not we reach no conclusion and drift upon the current of circumstance, or else the evidence of our senses decides, and we act upon what we call the sound basis of fact and reason, and go sadly hand-in-hand with Nature on the rounds and tasks of slaves. Cast material facts away and bow thyself when the true Judge speaks.

Who art thou, oh Mind, that thou shouldst decide, when thine office is only to report what thou hast seen in matter under the guidance of thy Soul? Unguided thou hast seen, and given in a false, an incomplete report! the faithless servant, the perjured one, is handed to the executioner, cast into the prison of doubt, harried in a mental hell. Why not ask counsel from the deep inner heart in each event? Why not follow that counsel through every surge of doubt and beat of pain? Only by holding fast to this light can we increase its action. Only by going slow when we do not sense it can we assist the re-emergence of that calm monitor. Is it not heard? Then turn to Duty. Plain, simple Duty is an unerring guide. Is thy word pledged? Redeem it at every cost. Has Life placed thee where thou art? Pay the full debt; thou canst never stand upright until it is discharged.

Just so surely as we accustom ourselves to listen to the debate of the mind, that debate will increase. It is based upon false premises, for the vital question is, not what a man shall do, but how shall he do it: his mental attitude is all. Secure an attitude of

trust in the Self, and every act alike is offered upon the altar. One of the finest mental acts I ever witnessed was that of a man of business training, a shrewd, keen observer, whose powerful place in life depended upon his ability to grasp and weigh facts. In a moment when spiritual trust was required, that man was found to cast aside his whole mental equipment and to act from a basis of purest faith.

Such strong Souls are to be saluted of all; they are the vitalizing centers of all great movements; they rally their fellows to them from the ends of the world, for when Soul thus calls to Soul the earth is shaken and gives up her living dead; the skies are riven and the gods come down to dwell with men and teach them.

JASPER NIEMAND.

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## THE NEEDS OF THE PEOPLE.

JASPER NIEMAND

An ancient tradition speaks to us of an Archangel who took on a human body in order to dwell among men, hoping thus to aid them. With this body he took on humanity; its weight lay heavily upon him. For that human nature so strangely compounded — admixed with error and colored with the night — was yet leavened with the essence of the Spirit. This divine essence, submerged in dense matter, it was his task to discover. He had, as his labor, to find himself again in humanity before he could aid men in the least. And his heavenly companions watched breathlessly his test.

Blinded, gagged, weighted by his purely human nature — that nature taken on with the body he wore as a man may wear a garment — the angel had still to clear his eyes, to free his speech, to unburden his feet clogged by the mud of materiality and to “bind upon them the wheels of the Law” before he could fulfill his mission. That mission was to know and to meet the needs of the people.

At first, as the imprisoned angel looked forth upon human life, he was beyond measure attracted by the brilliant complexity of its aspect. He had known simplicity only. Unity was his sole sensation. To learn the unity within diversity; to disentangle the simple from the maze of the complex was his immediate lesson, though as yet he did not distinguish it. As he gazed upon the whirl of action, the many colored lights flaring up from the Great Wheel in motion drew his attention and fixed his gaze: he, too, unknown as yet to himself, had within him a spark of that extraordinary flame which men name “Mind,” and naming, do not comprehend. The man-angel followed this light for a time, only to be endlessly perplexed and bewildered by it. But as he followed, sincere in his endeavors to rediscover the Unity which was his guiding star, he began to perceive that this organ of the inner sense which men call “the Mind” is in reality a mystery. There came to him, as he made earnest search, an hour of revelation when he saw that all the wonderful systems of Thought spun by the Mind did not bring him one step nearer to the needs of the people. There were religions, creeds; there were sciences; there were institutions; there were negations and affirmations, until the world groaned beneath their weight. Comparable to an undying spider the Mind still spun its interminable web. Some there were among men who understood these systems, using them as a tool, or a crutch, or a weapon; but few lived them and none sought the Soul within them: the masses of mankind looked downwards and the people in their need hungered for “the bread that feeds the shadow”<sup>1</sup> and the bread of spiritual life. And the angel, seeing of a sudden the black depth of their need, had once

again a glimpse of that revelation which had drawn him from the skies: he understood, as by the flare of some interior illumination that the light of the Mind is but an earthly reflect, rendering darkness deeper still. For the need of the people was not a mental requirement. It was imbedded in another strata of Nature, and had its fulfillment in a remote and starry region where the light of the Mind never cast its shadow. Through all the centuries at its proud and self-sufficing disposal, the human Mind had never remedied, had never even touched the real requirements of the people.

Then the man-angel made a mighty effort, disentangling his consciousness from the web of the Thought-Spinner, and as he slowly and with infinite pain drew it forth, he closed the eyes of his Mind and abode awhile in the darkness of an unaccustomed silence which he now found within himself. As the fiery vibrations and colored lights of the Mind died down, he found himself in a darkness which was a terror, a seeming death. But he would not yield. He had tried the lights in vain; now let him pierce to the heart of the darkness, finding that which must lie within it — or give him the shame of failure and death. He could watch, and waiting, endure. Rather suffer endlessly than accept his human impotence and hear the anguish of the people's need ringing across the ocean of Time. That mortal wailing wrung the very fibers of his heart; it had a power to express the essence of his being, distilling from it an unendurable pain. To look back was impossible; his heart could not contemplate return. In this mood of the conqueror he abode yet awhile in the darkness.

So abiding, there came upon him very slowly, by imperceptible degrees and all softly, a sensation as of light indeed, a feeling as of essential sound. By gentle approaches a radiance shone over his consciousness, and as he gazed, as he came to worship and to contemplate, he knew that the source of this soft splendor was his own heart. He understood that the Compassion of that heart towards the Peoples of Pain was in truth his divine guide. There, streaming forth as a glory from the deeps of his nature, was that divine Principle of which the prophet of old said that it fell upon the just and the unjust alike. He had found that Compassion which is the Christ-Nature.

Thus seeing, the man-angel came forth from the silence into the common light of day, bringing to it the enhancement of his own courageous heart. And once again considering the round of human life, he saw that the salvation of each man lies in following his own ideal. Let this ideal be never so humble, never so lowly — call it commonplace if you like — so long as it is other than himself, so long as it has the least atom of aspiration at its core, though it were but “as a grain of mustard seed,” so long it raises him, and by its means he can be gradually led up and beyond himself as by a fine, small thread of Spirit, journeying unconsciously towards his greater Being.

To this result there is but one radical condition imposed. It is an absolute necessity that the man shall live and shall be, that which he professes to believe. This is a spiritual Law, unchanging, unyielding. To the mechanic, to the artist, to the religionist at his prayers, as to the merchant at his mart or the mother by the cradle, this condition is indispensable. There is no going behind it. To the fact that this Law is not understood, is thought to be evaded in our civilization, that civilization owes all of its trials. If we say we believe a thing, let us live up to it. It is less harmful to remain in dense ignorance of the Law than to see its truth and to expect to live as if it were not. Not to believe is to remain a creature of the dust. But to discern, to accept and then to deny our conviction in our lives — this is the path to death eternal.

The love of work and the wish to do it thoroughly well:

The love of Art for its own sake and inspiration:

The happiness found in the communion of worship and prayer, not for what these may bring, but because in them the suppliant loses himself:

The commercial expansion of a community, then a nation, then all the peoples of the earth grandly interacting and interchanging:

The Mother-love that gives insight into love for all that lives:

All these are ideals, human, if you like, yet containing at their core the POSSIBILITY of a wider expansion, a richer and a purer fulfillment. Not in vain have we read the parable of the small leaven which leavened and increased the whole mass. Any ideal, rightly comprehended in the entire ground of its possibilities, opens door after door until at last the follower faces the small hidden door of the Kingdom of Heaven. Ideals are the avenues of the Soul. It is by the might and energy of their ideals — the light flickering out from the heart across the human mind — that men are led on, step by step, they know not whither; but all of a sudden they see a Great Shining: it is the illumination of an interior Consciousness.

Each human creature, however lowly, confined or starved his condition, has somewhere in his heart a spark of the Ideal. It may never find expression. Or it may be some very small thing that expresses it, something not marked by worthiness or nobility in itself, some blighted blossom breathed upon by the frosts of life. It is well-nigh impossible that our ideal should not be bespattered by the mud of our passage through material life, cramped and withered with the uses to which it has been put. Nevertheless it is of a vital strain. Nevertheless it is as a breath of Spirit playing around and above our human nature. Nevertheless there is life and light streaming down along its small but ancient path. And as the man follows it; as he augments its breadth and draws down more of its life by his constant application and use, it comes to pulsate with forces divine in their origin, with possibilities rooted in an eternal source. It needs but that man shall first follow his ideal faithfully — no matter how insignificant this may appear — and then that he shall embrace all its opportunities, for this heavenly light contained within it, as water is contained within a cup, to broaden and increase. There is no need for his fellows to teach him: his ideal is his teacher. But his fellow men can always stimulate and encourage him — especially by example — to put his faith in his ideal, to rest his hope there, and to live what he sincerely believes. The rest lies beyond human power: in the vital essence of the heart the Radiance and the evolving energy lie. When it was written that where our treasure is, there is our heart also, the pronouncement involved the other half of the fact, and where our heart is set, there will the heavenly treasure be discovered.

Consider with me the place of man in the midst of Nature. By what is he led? Is it not by means of that which he loves? At first these loves are gross, are of the animal order. But soon the sky shines through them. Even among the animals we descry the dawn of an impulse higher still. The animal comes to love man. It comes to provide for more than its own young. It is often moved by the needs of some among its own kind, in suffering and in pain; it has been known to provide for some instant want of its fellow-creature; it has been often known to assist men in danger. It comes to remember; it comes to love and to hate. It comes to desire human companionship, even to show devotion to a master often brutal and rarely comprehending its heart; to look to man as something far higher than itself, something dimly sensed but dearly valued; longed after with all the power and the mystery of a dream, an ideal. There is mind and heart in the animal; some among our scientists have admitted it: the creature world progresses; it too has laid hold of something of the uplifting force of the Ideal.

So among men at all higher than the brute, we find desire for something beyond their present selves. Often it is no more a clear or definite impulse than is the higher impulse of the creature. But it is an imprint stamped upon the human mind by the prescient heart. There is, in the heart, a Presence as yet undiscovered by the mass of men: a Something often felt but as yet misunderstood. And as we misinterpret its

meaning and follow after a false image; as we grasp, and seize, and possess, and weary of, and cast away, so at long last we come to understand that the real wish of the heart is something quite other than we took it to be. We tried to snatch something for ourselves from that heart expanding towards the Whole. Within our present ideal we feel another meaning, an energy that seeks expression of a wider and a deeper kind. From this discovery it is but a step to search for the real meaning of this expansion of the heart towards the universe; and now the man, all unknowing, has set his feet upon the heavenly path.

It is thus that the ideals of mankind are but outreaching impulses of the heart and have a power to conduct the human being to a life and a consciousness beyond those of his separated self. The only situation utterly bereft of this hope is that of the man who — lower than the brute in his fierce self-seeking — desires to enjoy solely for the sake of solitary pleasure; desires to inflict suffering solely for the sake of inflicting it. But this solitary sensualist is rarely to be found. It is far more common to find those who fear to face themselves, and to whom the dread of being alone is so terrible that even satiety in its deadly, sickening weariness is better than a moment of silence. The thing most dreaded by the man who lives in desires, is the sight of himself in the mirror Nature holds up to his thought. He dares not face this, for he has a prescience that will not loose its grip on him, that this way madness lies. That noble essence within his heart will not suffer him to realize the distortion and impotence of his being with impunity, and has passed a law, that, seeing himself thus, he shall alter, or he shall go mad.

Thus it comes about that we see so many human beings who appear compelled to herd together in droves, in the dreary pursuit of pleasure wherein no joy is, but only fever, nightmare and exhaustion. How many of these hunted creatures would not rest if they dared; if it were not for the dread they have of falling out of line, when they know that the human herd, pitiless as the brutes, will trample them under. Have they not participated in this? So fear, and flight where no man pursueth, is the portion of their lives. Nor is it much better with the weary toiler who knows no pleasure nor ease. True, he does not fear himself; his brow is bent earthwards and he thinks no thoughts at all, for the mechanisms of his tired brain should not be counted as thoughts; and the man is ground under by the devitalizing effort of competition for his daily bread, that bread so cruelly hard to earn because the hardship is inflicted by his fellow men in their want of sympathy. Yet both these types, as all types of men, could find release had they but the glimmer of an ideal. Sometimes we witness this transformation, finding one or another among these throngs gaining this glimpse and rising, advancing, evolving by its means.

To encourage men in the pursuit of their own ideals is then the happiest inspiration of him who would serve the Divine Order. For it is within these ideals that the Real lies concealed. To each man his own revelation; it rises upon him, pure as the first dawn. But no human ideal can be very greatly in advance of the man who holds it. It is only when the man has risen somewhat above his mere humanity and is in quest of a diviner model — a Reality — for his ideal, that it outstrips his slow pace and shines upon him as a star set apart on the mountain top. Until this step is reached, the ideal of a man is apt to be but his next step in advance, and he is prone to let the subtle essence escape him in his attention to its material aspect. Take, for example, the artist pressed for bread: he may come to lose his feeling for his artistic ideal in consideration of his needs. The patriot, dealing with large aspects of the national life, may find his ideal swallowed up by the mounting tide of ambition personal to himself — an ambition hitherto unsuspected by him, a tempter wrapped in the folds of his sub-conscious mind. The lover, purely loving at the outset, so far as man may be pure, becomes intoxicated with the fumes of passion and possession, and when he misses

the keenness of his first sensation, identifies his love with that sensation and thinks love has come to an end. All these have wandered from the road in the excitement and stress of action. They have forgotten — perhaps they have never known — that the worst foe of a man's ideal is the man himself. We are but battlefields whereon the divine and the material contend for the victory, and we alone can put an end to the war by our choice. Hence the true friend of men is he who assists them to remain true to such ideals as they have. The struggling artist must win his bread; but let him still grasp firmly the ideal that the pure love of his art is a thing most precious to his mental and moral health: if his circumstances forbid him to do his best work for it, they do not — they cannot — prevent his placing his heart and his thought still more firmly upon the ideal he loves. He may not be able to give form and shape to his highest aspiration. He may not be able to make his ideal manifest to the sight of men; but no power on earth can inhibit his thought or withhold from other artists more happily placed, his encouragement to maintain a devotion to their ideals. At the close of this life's endeavor, some compassionate angel may hold before his fast dimming eyes the truth that he has enriched the human race, inspiring others whom he never saw with his mortal sight, increasing the hold of the Ideal upon the human mind. The patriot, warned of the dangers of insidious ambition, may gradually extend his national ideal to one of international bearing. The lover, encouraged to see the ideal of self-forgetfulness within his love, even though desire and passion may carry him away, may come to find in some one of the tests of life that he can forget himself for the one he loves. And then, to all these, as to all who serve their ideal honestly, there comes a further opening, some expansion of their original ideal. Then, step by step, each catches some gleam from the eternal vision at the heart of his ideal: he feels the presence of that vast motive power, Divine Love.

It may at all times be seen that there is an ideal present in the minds of most men, and of those bodies of men which we term "nations." Each nation stands for something; it embodies some principle or some trait. Take, for example, a nation standing for fair play, for Law and obedience to Law. Individuals in this nation may be wholly wanting in either ideal, yet an appeal to the national ideal touches some fiber, strikes some invisible chord, has some weight with them. If some brute be indulging his fury towards a weaker person, the cry from bystanders, "That's not fair play," or "Play the game!" will often give him pause. He knows that the mass is against him; he feels the restraining force of the national ideal. Again, the sense in a nation of the ideal of obedience to Law has given rise to some impressive incidents connected with her sons in foreign lands, and savages have felt the might of this ideal, seeking security beneath its aegis when they could not define it. Such instances might readily be multiplied. The ideal of a nation is the Soul of a nation. The ideal of a man is a ray from his Soul, or from the Oversoul. Like the nations, each one of us stands for some main principle or idea, unconsciously, but surely. This main tendency of our being should find expression in each life. What we live, we know, and in this way we come to know more of the Great Ideal graven upon the life altar of the heart.

He who would help his fellow-men and would himself expand towards the Light, needs but to sympathize with the ideals of those whom he contacts. If the ideal be a false one, he can always sympathize *with the wish* to follow some ideal. Often he can aid men to find their ideals, waking in them the wish to find; and rather by his example than by his words. This function of interpreter is all the more valuable to his fellow men because of the fact that the human creature also exhibits the working of that Law of Nature which in other kingdoms has been called the Law of Reversion to Type: what the gardeners call "sporting back." The plants show this in their forms and in reversion to the qualities of the original type as well. In the human kingdom this tendency is shown in reversion to animal *qualities* only (except in the case of some

monstrosities of form); especially in adolescence is the tendency awakened, and reversion to animality threatened. The inculcation of interest in some ideal, together with aid towards its attainment is a service which may often be rendered to the young, and to persons in some crisis, some turning point of their lives. At each new turn of the road of life, the human being would seem to have set before him the choice between reverting to the traits of the animal, or reaching to the higher, spiritual model. Since the natural tendency is to revert to the original type, we must try to rouse the other pole of the nature; the stimulus of an ideal is the best corrective to the natural impulse. Sometimes we may trace the presence of an ideal in some wish to excel, in some desire to aid: these should be encouraged, should be guided along right lines, and then comes the training to look for the underlying spirit of our ideal, to discriminate between the husk and the vital seed — between the *apparent* bearing and the *true* tendency of our chosen ideal. To foster and encourage that attitude of mind in which a man looks upon his ideal as his most precious possession should be the constant service we render to our kind. To declare and to uphold the basic ideal of our nation in its true sense, is another mode of serving the Soul: we can develop this ideal. Also we may share in the activities of those about us with these thoughts ever in mind and heart. Our sympathy, our readiness to share the experiences of others, our courteous and speedy hospitality towards ideals, and our recognition of the Soul in each, have their insensible effect upon our fellowmen. Coming into touch with these radiations from our inner nature, they have in fact contacted our fraternal ideal in all its living power, and we, in our turn, have their manifolded aid. We come thus to share the joys of our fellows as we have shared their sorrows and their toil — the common human lot — but also we irradiate that lot, imparting to it something of the divine principle of Love. To welcome each ray of unselfish heart-light wherever we find it — this in itself is a service to the Soul. To each human creature in its place the Light of the Soul offers itself, seeking out all human beings without distinction. It is an eternal Consciousness which faileth never. It seeks expression in every life, even to “the life of the rain in the grasses, the lives of the dewes on the leaves.”<sup>2</sup> Each color of the bow and the loud sounds of thunder bear its trace. Adapting itself to the need of every atom, it is yet divinely set apart and leads the whole creation upward to the everlasting source.

This, then, is the first need of the people — to find and to follow some ideal. Great is the fortune of the man who, through the wide reach of his Compassion, the penetrating quality of his sympathy, enters into the hearts of men, upholding before them the image of the Ideal. The enactment of just laws; the higher conception of national life and international duty; a more generous relationship between man and man, between the various strata of human society; the endeavor to broaden the concept of religion and to show the Unity between all forms of faith, and in each form the Spirit of Truth abiding at the core; all these and many another are ideals of men that need but a magic touch to show them all as the habitations of the one Ideal, the Oversoul. Thus we work on, hand in hand with that divine Power within Nature which is the hidden Evolver. The second need of the people is other. It is a belief in ethical causation; that as we sow, we reap; that the universe is rooted in moral law. That the thoughts of men’s hearts and the actions springing therefrom breed each of their own kind. That disease and pain and misery arise from past and present sins against that righteousness which is the true ground of our being. That where hatred and self are, hatred and self will arise, hydra headed; that the best fruits of our nature will ensue the tender compulsion of Love. Each one can easily find this truth in his own daily life, for no results are so visible as are the reactions of our moods, our virtues and our vices upon the body, the mind, the heart, the life. Acceptance and daily devotion to the Christian revelation that Love is the mainspring and the fulfilling of the Law is much needed to humanize Western civilization. The truth is to be found in every religion —

ideals, all — but the wise lover of his kind can never be indifferent to the religious ideal of the people among whom he lives: *for them*, this *is* the Way: and to help men to find the Way is his own ideal. But from none is lip service — the loud word unaccompanied by the daily deed — acceptable.

Lastly, the need of the people is Courage. The firm will to face the truths we find embedded in our nature and by their verdict to abide. The courage to face ourselves as we are and to turn our earnest endeavor towards living as we say we believe. When we have this courage perfected in us; when trustingly and cheerfully we confide ourselves and our fate to the ruling of the Law of Causation as to the Love which is at the heart of things, then the Soul itself stands ready to show us the next step. That august guide will impart the secret of its operations. It will quicken the consciousness of the man, showing him how to put the ideal of his heart into practice; how to give “a local habitation and a name” to that scintilla of the Light of the World now incarnated in him. Methods and organizations will not enchain his powers. His insight — that eye of the heart — will penetrate further still, wearing the colors of his cherished hope. He will reach within and beyond his present consciousness, content to follow the right and to trust in his own star: that starry Soul will do the rest. Helping and helped by all, the man will inherit “that united spirit of life which is his only true self.”<sup>3</sup> He will become “a voice in the hearts of men,” for such as he are needed by the people; he has embodied his ideal, and all the world awaits the Man.

Love, Faith, Courage. These are the needs of the people. And they form the triune crown of the angel.

JASPER NIEMAND

## NOTES

1. {“Nourishing the Gods, Self Sacrifice and the Law of Mutual Help,” John Garrigues. Published in *Theosophy* magazine, August 1921 — but must have been seen earlier by Julia? As found: “By their example and teaching they nourish those who sit starving for the bread of wisdom, the bread that feeds the shadow, and the eternal man as well.”}
2. {“The Death of Meleager,” Charles Swinburne Algernon.}
3. {*Light on the Path*, Mabel Collins, p. 4.}

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## THE NEW GOD OF CHOWPATTIE.<sup>1</sup>

L. WHARTON

In a small thatched hut among the mountains, Soondia's child lay dying. Through the rains it had wasted slowly, and now all seemed in vain. The heats were over. Torrents gushed down the mountain sides. The hills and plains were green and “Nature worked so swiftly that you could see her action.” But for Soondia and for her child Nature did nothing. In vain were the Bhoots appeased with rice, with milk, with flowers. In vain were sacrificial fires lit. Lamas came, prayed, held weird rites, received the scant coin and departed — all in vain. From the bamboo poles around the dwelling; from every bush in the bare compound fluttered prayers on paper of every color — all in vain. And then there came one awful moonlight night when the rattle sounded in the child's throat, when the old woman keened — and when Soondia, desperate, a mad thing, rushed out and tore down the bamboo poles, scattered the prayers and offerings, tore

away the fires, and screaming, staying not to see her child expire, rushed down the hill into the jungle. That was the night that the new God came to Chowpattie.

“Climbing the grade, panting and sullen but undismayed,” the stout pioneer engine 24B climbed the Himalayan slopes, its ten tons clinging to the rails as it dragged behind it the construction trucks and workmen. For 24B was the guide and the servant to the pioneer construction train, and each night saw it at the end of the track which by day it had helped to build; now at the edge of a precipice, and always up a grade of a thousand feet to the mile. Dragging its train thus, and stopping thus at a giddy altitude on the mountain side, facing the eternal snows of mountains higher still, its feet amid the cacti, its fires shining, its black nostrils pouring forth smoke, standing there at the jungle edge, where never engine stood before, it was thus it appeared to Soondia as she came upon it in her mad flight. A monster never dreamed of! A fire breather; a roarer; a demon vomiting men black and white from its serpentine entrails; aye, and food and tools; all of which it had carried within its bowels up those dizzy slopes. A panther glowered, turned and fled from it. The jungle creatures stared and ran. The king cobra stung and stung and again stung its heels, and died exhausted and enraged whilst his mate and its brood fled far. The monster only hummed and stood still, resting, while all the jungle life vanished. Sacrificial trees caught fire from it and burned, scented and resinous, till the monster’s slaves, black and white, thrashed them out. And the monster shrieked its awful orders! Alone of all the jungle, Soondia, the mad, the desperate mother, fled not. Fear had no place in that heart whose only fear was to lose the first-born. Into that heart there flickered a hope, a hope dancing as danced the monster’s fiery breath. For here was Power! Here was Life! Was not this a new God? Did she not see this new incarnation of Force doing its deeds of wonder? Force, Life, Motion. These she craved; these she must have, will have, for her son! The new hope flares higher. Resolve is born! A fitting shape steals food here and there unobserved by the men encamped. A shadow amid jungle shadows plucks flowers and seeds, caring nought for life profaned. The new God has an offering made before him, where his iron frontlet faces the snows and the mountains. That motionless shade amid the darker shadow of his feet — that is Soondia — squatting among her offerings, praying the night through to the new God to save her child. When the day breaks she rises, does puja, then runs swift as a panther to Chowpattie. At the threshold of her hut her husband meets her.

“Where wentest thou? Whence camest thou? *The child asks for thee!* With a shriek of joy the mother clasps her son. The new God has heard her prayer. The new incarnation of Power has breathed life! Her child mends steadily. On the day on which he first goes to play in the compound, the men on the construction train of No. 24B, pausing for tiffin, see a singular sight. Some natives, carrying wreaths of paper flowers, fruit, food, water and grains, timidly approach 24B where it stands stalled in the ferns. They prostrate themselves, and then decorate the stout iron front of the engine. It is, they say, thank offering to the new God of Chowpattie for a life.

The wonderful new God cleaves his way to the mountain top, 8,000 feet away. He brings thousands of travelers. Other sons are born of him (presumably) and like him, in some strange and godlike mating of his own. He has altered the mountain; he has brought money and work to Chowpattie, and even to distant Darjeeling. There are many like him (apparently) now, and Chowpattie worships the Bhoots again. But Soondia never forgets. There is but one new God, displacing all other gods, to the faithful Soondia, the Force-worshiper, holding on her knees the laughing son of her son.

L. WHARTON.

## NOTE

1. An anecdote told to the writer by the President of a railway in India.

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## NEW FORCES.

JULIA W. L. KEIGHTLEY

This question of new forces has a bearing at once wide and deep upon the welfare of humanity. In the understanding of them, to some extent at least, our present and our future hope is bound up, and a slight presentation of some of their aspects is here attempted, not with a view to instruction, but in order to lead up to thought on the subject, inasmuch as it is solely by thinking about them, frequently and consecutively, that the student will be enabled to experience their action. So far as the individual is concerned, this action is induced by one thing only — Thought. Meditation is the gateway through which they pass.

The first point is this: the new forces are cyclic. The close of two cycles has permitted their advent. Following in their train should be found the restoration of conditions, spiritual, psychic and even material, which, in relation to man and his world, have not been possible in the last 5000 years.<sup>1</sup> The word “should” is used advisedly, the forces are here, liberated from the spiritual spheres; but man must do his part; his sphere has in turn received their impulse and has felt their impact; he must, in his turn liberate them, and, under conditions which will admit of the multiplication of their spiritual energies. Such multiplication is the secret of the Wise who “guard the home of nature’s order and do excellent things in secret.” This cyclic truth it is which forms the stable base of the hopes now being held out to man.

The next point has a vital bearing upon the human mind. That mind, the hell-maker, constantly endeavors to shut the new hope from view, and with reason; for the lower mind, like a composite entity, has a life of its own, a life largely partaking of the material and the animal. This life the new forces threaten to destroy as such and, by a spiritual act of transmutation, to cause this lower mind entity to become servant where it has so long been tyrant and master. Consequently the mind resists their full, free operation, closing the tentacles around its old hard formulas of thought.

In their cyclic return — and at the close of each century but in minor degree — the new forces first break up all dead forms, all molds, all ruts; they scatter and disperse in order to reassemble and to build up new combinations. This may be seen in Life about us, in national crises and in convulsions of nature. Each student will find the same thing in himself, and that he is being impelled upon new paths of action, forced into new modes of thought. All the old methods and ideas appear shattered, and despair surges to the surface of the mind. Fear pictures man as being carried out upon a dark and storm-lashed sea towards regions unknown.

In all this is no Wisdom. The Ideals are the main point, and the Ideals are unchanged. Only the mode of approach has altered, and has altered precisely because the cyclic hour, the cyclic return and the loyalty of souls have opened up a wider path, have laid low many obstacles. We can now be better vehicles of higher forces than those hitherto in operation, and the free fluidic spirit strives to break up and to flux all forms and minds, to put all in fusion, recasting all into the living model of a stronger and a broader day.

Our part is to abandon the old conceptions which were but the personal garments with which we, each one of us, invested the Ideal, in order to dress up the Universal as a something all our own. It is no doubt hard for human beings standing upon the threshold of a new order of things, to realize this mighty moment, to cast aside their mental impediments and to pass on through the strange dawn into the new Light. As dawning mists arise, the shrouded world looks sinister and strange, but those who would not return to sleep and lethargy step boldly onward through the unfamiliar region and the first glimpse of the fresh, the glorified day is their reward.

Hitherto we have seen that the forces of over nature have been acting more or less from without, inward. They reached their fullest expansion in the 5000 year cycle and were being indrawn. We shall now find them to be acting from within outward, a point to be covered by meditation and earnest search. Each must discover the new action of the soul within himself. Just as America was newly discovered by a man impelled by a Master Soul, and was yet a land of ancient mystery, so we may newly find the Ancient within ourselves under that same guidance; the goal is the same but the physical conditions are new or renewed. No mental or physical disturbance should be permitted to hide this truth from the eye of Trust.

Lastly, the new forces are unifiers, harmonizers. A surface glance may dispute this when only the phenomena of external upheavals are seen. But look on awhile longer; everything is being re-arranged, newly distributed and brought into line filled with a new vitality. What less would common sense expect on the advent of a new order? It is plainly to be seen that the workers everywhere have an identity of purpose and an interaction never before attained. Why is this? Clearly because the new forces are cyclic; that is to say, they act with the universal Law of Periodicity, they are the manifestations of Karma in action.

Those who go freely with them act in accord with the whole body of Nature, animated by the new breaths of the Over Soul. Hence their course is harmonious, united,— a course of power. Their minds are generators of force; their souls are regenerators of men. They are companioned by Mighty Ones; they have absolutely nothing to fear. They are blessed because they have believed without asking for sense manifestations; they have grasped the truth that a force has a real and a conscious being, and is not a mere name for something mysterious and unknown.

Intuition and not Intellect has kindled the light by which they have seen this truth, and while they act with these divine forces for the uplifting of the race, every moment brings them swiftly nearer to a realization too glorious to be profaned by the pen.

JULIA W. L. KEIGHTLEY.

## NOTE

1. {The cycle noted is the end of the first 5000 years of Kali Yuga — which began at the death of Krishna in 3102 B.C.E., and which ended on 17 February 1898.}

## THE OBJECTS OF THE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY.

JASPER NIEMAND

A CONTRIBUTION TO ITS STUDIES.

The objects of the Theosophical Society are three in number. They would seem to correspond with the triple evolutionary scheme of the Secret Doctrine. That scheme, we are told, provides for the formation of “the three periodical Upadhis” — the three schemes of evolution “which in our system are inextricably interwoven and interblended at every point. These are the Monadic (or spiritual), the intellectual, and the physical evolutions.” (*S.D., Vol. I, page 181, Sec. Edn.*) In this connection we should remember that occultism takes no account of the present accretions of matter around the physical nuclei, and that for it the “physical” is represented by the psychic and the psycho-physiological. In what has been called the Three Outbreathings, we may thus see the model of the T.S. Like all models, it did not at once reach the form desired by its chief founder. The adept evolves: he does not create. He inspires; he does not force: he encourages, stimulates, guides men and affairs until the desired model is attained. Thus it was in the case of the T.S. When it had reached its present expression of the three objects, in the form now re-affirmed by the T.S.A., the founder declared her satisfaction therewith: Mr. Judge, later on, did the same. The reason is not far to seek. The Society now corresponded with the triple scheme of evolution, its model and correspondence, on universal planes.

In the three objects of the T.S., the first and primary object is the spiritual one. This object is the Universal Brotherhood of Humanity, which has its base in the “fundamental identity of all souls with the Oversoul.”

The second object corresponds with the mental evolution. It is the study of the unity of religions. (Mark! Not religions; not creeds; but their unity, their agreement.)

The third object is the psychic, the psycho-physiological one; it is the study of the unexplained laws of Nature and of Man; of the psychic powers latent in Man. In this, we must, of course, include the higher psychic powers and planes.

A close observer of the evolution of the T.S. would probably be found to declare that, while the first object was always intended to occupy that place to which the use of the adverb of place, “First,” assigns it inevitably, and although sympathy with that first object sufficed, in the intention of H.P.B., and of W. Q. Judge, to entitle applicants to admission into the Society, yet at the same time, once this was stated, the new member was, as a rule, at first more attracted by the third object: later on, as his synthetic powers were developed, his interest in the second object increased; and, finally, the same line of development continuing, he came to glimpse the fact that the primary object is in truth the essential one, and that it had its rise in the spiritual stream of evolution. When his perception of this truth had increased by reason of the exercise of that spiritual recognition in his daily life, he was ripe for a more special form of study, and in another center of thought and work.

The three streams of evolution interblending inextricably, as we are told that they do, it is not surprising to find that many members of the T.S. regard themselves in duty bound to work for all three objects to the best of their ability. But, so far as the Society itself is concerned, they must consider, in this, the absolutely free platform of the T.S.,

and in working for all three objects, to do so primarily by and through their sympathy with the interests and the methods of their fellow students, allowing the same freedom of choice to others which they claim for themselves. There can be no orthodoxy, no ostracism, no exclusion, whether of thinkers or of subjects of thought. All men are welcome, all subjects and methods of study are pursued.

Many members of the Theosophical Society regard the first object as being to the other objects what the atmosphere is to a plant, or the air to the lungs of a man. It provides at once the *conditions* under which alone true study — whether of Religions, of Nature or of Man — becomes possible: it also provides the *method* by which those studies must be guided if they are to be liberal and synthetic. That method is one of co-operation, through complete and loyal sympathy with the aspirations and the search of others; it should provide the necessary courtesy, self-control and tolerance: it maintains a fraternal respect for the views and the feelings of others and it holds as sacred the freedom of the Soul of man and his right to follow its guidance as he can, unimpeded by the opposition or the prejudice of his fellow men. For all men do not require to study or to make search in the same manner, or in identical fields. Life itself provides the next necessary lesson for each human being. “Study” may be interior only, yet none the less real. One mode of learning, and a very real though difficult mode, is the acquirement of a truly fraternal spirit; of an eager sympathy for the Truth latent in *all* departments of life. When we have acquired this conception of the first object and are really able to carry it out — to some extent at least — we have gone some distance on the path towards unity, and away from separation. Under the fostering spirit of Charity, all seekers are freely able to pursue those studies towards which they are attracted by reason of the interior impulse of each. In this way the student may hope to discern, in the study of the laws of nature and of man, identity of soul: in the study of religions, the underlying unity: in the daily practice of the spirit of brotherhood that trace of the bright flame of universal Love which shall at last — widening and broadening with his search — guide him to the haven where his soul would be.

The founder of the T.S. also made a special contribution to its studies in the system of philosophy known to us as the Secret Doctrine. It was an effort to revive, in the West, some recollections of world-old truths which the East has to a greater extent brought down to the present day. But, in so doing, it was never her intention to provide the basis for any dogma — and all who knew H.P.B., know that the very word was to her, anathema. Cultured as the western scholar might be, he knew but little, before her time, of the eastern teachings; those who knew them, misinterpreted them. So she provided, as it were, a missing pearl to the string. She rendered wider research and comparative study more possible. In so doing, she repeatedly warned all students of the danger of dogma as the reef on which the T.S. might go to pieces.

That only the spirit of tolerance and brotherhood could preserve the Society intact was her oft repeated statement. To conceive that she would warn against creed and dogma in the T.S. with lips and pen, while her hands provided it with both, were indeed a curious mental attitude. Had she meant the teachings brought forth through her agency to be the only subjects of legitimate study and research in the T.S., she had indeed provided us with articles of belief, as rigidly outlined as those of any Church. Her well-known saying: “Follow the Path I show, the Masters who are behind, *Do not follow me, or my Path,*”<sup>1</sup> indicates sufficiently — were other evidence lacking instead of being ample — that she never desired the promulgation of Theosophy as she herself taught it, *so far as the T.S. is concerned*. Founding the Society upon the rock of the Universal Brotherhood of Humanity, and approving that as the sole requisite attitude, not of the intellect, but of the heart, H.P.B. thereafter contributed in a special manner to our philosophical knowledge, thinking thus to indicate more clearly the existence of the underlying unity latent in all manifestation; and to stimulate students to that search

which begins centrifugally, but which must react towards the center within ourselves before the gleam of the soul can be descried. That point once reached, another place was provided where the method of learning and of teaching was clearly defined. But within the area of the T.S. *all* studies were urged forward; *all* students inspired to search for the Truth latent in *all* things, *all* philosophies, *all* religions, *all* science, *all* lives, latent still, yet, most of all immanent, in the heart of the seeker. Only in this way, through having spread before them *all* the accumulated data of the Path, can men select, under the promptings of their souls, the especial food necessary for each. So in the *Key*, we find H.P.B. saying: "We have, strictly speaking, no right to refuse admission to any one..."<sup>2</sup> In the *Letters*, Mr. Judge repeats the statement of his Chief. "As to the Theosophical Society, all should be admitted. If this is a Universal Brotherhood, we can refuse *no one*!"<sup>3</sup> Then follow the wise words, that we must not neglect to see that they are not deceived as to what we have to offer; they are not to go without the warning that here is no especial pabulum, no prescription for salvation, but only an accumulation of experience, tradition and lore relating to the spiritual world, from which each must himself choose freely that which he feels himself to need most. It is evident that no invidious comparisons were ever intended to be drawn between religions, between philosophies, between students or their modes of thought, but that the portals of the Society were to be thrown wide open — not to temples of the human mind, nor to aught that this untiring builder can construct, but — to the vast fields of the Ideal, the fields elysian.

The teachers to whom reference has just been made were far from desiring that their views should be put forward as authority. Their chief teaching was through example. Under accusations of fraud we have H.P.B. saying that she could not defend herself without breaking the invariable occult rules. Mr. Judge, in like case, declined in like manner, on the ground that he could not answer the charges laid before a committee, because in order to do so he must bring forward statements in regard to the Masters, and that this would establish, in the T.S., a precedent leading to a dogma, "the dogma of a belief in the existence of Masters." They were wisely aware of that insidious tendency of the human intellect, the tendency to formulate and to define, whereby in time men come to embrace a body of teaching and to make it the touchstone of all Truth. History emphasizes this warning. The good intentions of truth seekers do not suffice. The tendency naturally is towards form, towards limitation, whether in the concrete manifestations of physical plane "matter," or in the subtle substance of the mind. If methods be dogmatic, dogma must result: if definition be sought after too eagerly, thought must inevitably harden into a creed, driving out the fluidic and free spirit of Truth. But where the utmost tolerance prevails; where the mind is open to the ebb and flow of universal thought and does not shut, like the oyster, upon its own particular pearl, there the spirit may freely play, may widely enlighten. It is not what men may say upon these points, nor what they may conjecture or dispute upon in relation to this danger that should have weight with us, but the actual facts of history. With the best and purest intentions, Ignatius Loyola founded the Jesuit Order and enthusiasm for the form of belief thus fostered by the Order, led in time to methods which have been condemned by most European Governments and which are deplored by sincere and earnestly spiritual minds in the Catholic Church. Turning to a far higher and wider instance: Jesus taught no creed, *he only lived a life*. His disciples put forward no creed; yet on the simple record of those four Gospels and a few Epistles, the hundreds of Christian creeds are based, each claiming the letter of the law. The mind of man has read these creeds into the simple teaching, acting under a law peculiar to itself when unenlightened from within — or above. The same thing has happened to almost every great spiritual Teacher. It was to avoid this historic and perpetually recurrent danger that H.P.B. desired to see the T.S. firmly based upon the

rock of Brotherhood, of Tolerance and of Charity. In order that the thinker may not be confined in the impulse of his nature towards the course of study best fitted to his individual need, the first object is offered as the guarantee of his rights; but it is more: rightly viewed it is, in our belief, the *evolver of his spiritual nature*. Every spiritual Teacher the world has ever seen has formulated this spiritual principle as the first law, the primal need, whether he called it Love, Charity, the Dana Gate, or that Compassion which is “no attribute,” but is “the law of laws, Alaya’s self,” the very self of the Oversoul. This is that gleam of divine light of which it has been said that it is not to be found by men of high intellect, but only by him who is great of soul. The principle of Universal Brotherhood is elsewhere defined as the fundamental law (one of three) of the “identity of all souls with the Oversoul.”<sup>4</sup> As might be expected, its active existence within men is made visible by their sense of identity with all that lives, by a lessening of their sense of separation, and by a glowing love for all that breathes. This principle sprang from the very heart of the first Logos: it came into manifestation before religions existed; before man knew he had a psychic nature to explore or that Nature stood there with all her laws: it is that which shall lift the race to its true humanity. A Master had it in mind when he said that the business of occultism is to humanize our nature with compassion. A modern writer (Drummond) has named it as the Law of Laws, the law of spiritual continuity. And it was, precisely, to preserve this spiritual continuity, that this law was embodied in our first object.

Such, as the writer and many others understand them, were some among the meanings of H.P.B. and W.Q.J. in thinking that sympathy with the first object is the sole essential requirement for membership in the T.S., and as well, that without the active presence of such sympathy, the mission of the T.S. is bound to fail, falling to pieces under the operation of that cyclic law which in due season breaks up all the molds of human minds, but which shall never prevail against the *spirit* of the law. It was never their desire that these ideas should be put forward as a dogma in their turn. But we may well regard their view as being entitled to respectful consideration by the members of the T.S., in view of the work and the lives which they devoted to the highest interests of our Society. That they *did* hold them is not a matter for argument. It is a statement of fact made by those who knew them most intimately, through long and active years of the closest association, years full of opportunities to ascertain their precise views upon many points; years in which almost every possible phase of thought in connection with their work and every question of their meaning and intention in that work came up and was explained. This fact — for it is a fact — is one that no argument can invalidate, no discussion disprove. Take it, or leave it, as you like; the fact is there. Has it no meaning, this consensus of belief among their pupils? Members of the T.S. are absolutely free to differ with their views — which are also ours — of the teachings which they gave out. But they have no right to impugn the witnesses, no means of throwing honest doubt upon the fact. It is a truism that any belief or theory can be read into any of the Bibles of Humanity. This psychological law, as heretofore said, has its origin in the typical operation of the human mind. Chapter and verse can be made to wear the color of the mind that quotes them. The merest tyro in psychological study knows this. It is a rule which works both ways, of course. Compare it with that other interesting fact that the Bibles of the world are not written by the great spiritual Teachers, but by their disciples. The scriptures of Buddha, of Sankara, of Jesus and of many another Messenger-Adept are the records of eye-witnesses, of pupils who recorded the meaning of the Teacher. How should they not know that meaning who had it direct from the teacher himself? But when the disciples passed away, and the fierce inward driving of the law of crystallization began, then the teaching became dogma, creed, articles of belief; the letter prevailed; the “spirit that maketh alive” had fled. H. P. Blavatsky was no exception. She put together, in her books, material and

teaching given to her by various teachers, and says of this, quoting Montaigne; “I have here made only a nosegay of culled flowers, and have brought nothing of my own but the string that ties them.”<sup>5</sup>

The first object of the T.S. was stated to be: “To form a nucleus of the Universal Brotherhood of Humanity.”<sup>6</sup> We do not understand this to imply that the T.S. is necessarily *to be* that nucleus; but that the T.S. is to “form” that nucleus, here among then, as it is already formed by the spiritual Brotherhood of those who were once men like ourselves, but who, in attaining perfection, have transcended the human stage of evolution. That is to say: we understand that the conditions of fraternity and kindly, sympathetic tolerance prevailing in the ideal T.S. should so inform and free its study and research, that through the adoption of this method, and its firm maintenance, such conditions — mental, psychical, spiritual — shall be provided as will admit of the formation of the desired nucleus. The T.S. is, so to say, the structure or organic center *within which* the nucleus is formed.

Many members believe that a new “Messenger” appears among men in the final quarter of each century, and that each such Messenger teaches the same ancient, but ever new, truths. Past records show that each such Messenger teaches after his own method, and not in that of any other teacher: this, even while he synthesizes the teachings of his predecessors, as did H.P.B. Jesus is spoken of as one such Agent of The Lodge. At the first glance, there seems to be little resemblance between the teachings of the Gospels, and those of the *Secret Doctrine*. Are we then to suppose that study limited to Theosophy, as taught by H.P.B., will prepare the T.S. to recognize the next Messenger? Suppose he were to come teaching Masonry, for example, as we are told the last Messenger but one did; and that this was then done for the first time. How would an F.T.S., brought up in the tradition of a hard and fast acceptance of “the Theosophy of H.P.B.,” be fitted to recognize the truth of the new message and aspect of the ever-living Truth? Bending over his books, he would probably reply: “I do not find that in the *Key. Vade retros, Sathamas!*” But if perfect tolerance and fraternity had won the day, a body of broad-minded students imbued with sympathy, courtesy and synthetic methods of thought, would be on the ground, able to recognize the accents of Truth under any mode of exposition, rather than to cry: There is but one Teacher, and the T.S. is her prophet.

We do not understand the Universal Brotherhood of Humanity to be a material fact, but to be a spiritual truth, a manifestation of unity, of spiritual continuity beginning upon the human plane, and stretching away into the innermost regions of Being. One sometimes hears this Brotherhood loosely alluded to as “The Real Theosophical Society.” This formulation would appear to be an ideal personal to some of our members. It will be of interest then to record what H.P.B. said upon this subject, fraught as it is with the deepest interest to us all.

To begin with; it should not be supposed that the true Brotherhood has — as is sometimes said — neither laws, nor constitutions, nor Conventions.

As we understand the matter, from the statements of H.P.B., made to many pupils, and in no sense privately:

1. The Theosophical Society, founded by H.P.B., is, at the present time, the *only* “Theosophical Society.” It was founded by her, as the Messenger of the last century, with the help of some others, chief among them William Q. Judge, the “Resuscitator of Theosophy in America.” It is one department of the work of:

2. The Theosophical Movement. This term applies as a whole to the many departments of universal work undertaken under the direction of:

3. “THE LODGE.” This spiritual Organization is referred to by Mr. Judge in *Letters*<sup>7</sup> Vol. I., page 65. H.P.B. said that THE LODGE is composed of a number of

Lodges or Branches, each such Lodge, or Branch, having its laws and rules from time immemorial, the same being self-chosen and self-administered, and all being founded upon — and, in fact, a part of — the unexplained laws of Nature and of Man, and being in their essence spiritual. Each such Lodge was said to have also its Ritual, its organized meetings, its pledges peculiar to itself: and that THE LODGE itself and as a whole held an annual Convention at a time named by her, and at a given place, under the Ritual and Rules governing THE LODGE *as a whole*; at which time and place (these do not vary) absolute freedom of discussion prevails, and the work of the Theosophical Movement for the coming year is decided upon. In such discussions, she further said, there may be, and there is, difference of view, and all such are freely heard: but there, difference of view as to methods of work does not imply opposition, as among men; once the method is decided upon, the synthetic forces come into play, and all work with united souls along the appointed lines. It is evident that our T.S. was meant to be founded upon this model, and that the unity of Soul attained by those LODGE members (which unity governs their methods of action) is replaced, on our plane, by the first object of the T.S. It is our first lesson in unity. In this wise it provides for that spiritual continuity which should serve to connect the T.S. with the Great LODGE, and the binding force which manifests as Charity, or Tolerance in the initial stages of progress, to widen afterwards into the realization of the identity of all souls with the Oversoul. This realization is by no means intellectual. It has its rise upon deep, interior planes, and is an initiation. It's one true prophet is the intuitive and synthetic heart.

Those who hold this consensus of belief do not put it forward as a creed, nor do they insist that a single member shall accept it. They do assert that such was the belief taught to them by the Founder of the T.S. And that it is a belief common to many disciples, pupils, seekers after Truth of many grades. Such will always be found to work with earnestness and simplicity for the three objects of the T.S., but under that rule which provides for the freedom of opinion of each member and all Branches. They hold in deep respect the broad, free platform of the T.S., Universal Brotherhood, and they believe that in the endeavor to realize that spirit they, like the Sage Merlin, do follow the Gleam.

JASPER NIEMAND.

## NOTES

1. {"A Private Letter." R.S. (Julia Keightley) *Reminiscences of H. P. Blavatsky and "The Secret Doctrine"* — 1893, pp. 121-129.}
2. {*The Key to Theosophy*, H. P. Blavatsky, p. 49.}
3. {*Letters That Have Helped Me*, William Q. Judge, p. 4.}
4. {*The Secret Doctrine*, H. P. Blavatsky, Vol. 1, p. 17.}
5. {*The Secret Doctrine*, H. P. Blavatsky, Vol. 1, p. xlv.}
6. {*The Key to Theosophy*, H. P. Blavatsky, p. 39.}
7. {*Letters That Have Helped Me*, William Q. Judge.}

## ON THE OTHER SIDE OF SLEEP.

JASPER NIEMAND

I saw a man of very wise and noble mien, standing by a huge heap — a mound — of glittering gems. In the daytime I had seen the Taj, and thought, “It is as if all the precious stones of the Taj had been changed into rare gems.” I came up to the guardian of this treasure, and he said to me:

“The Lodge offers you this heap of jewels. They mean not only fortune but immense power to do good; to do everywhere all the good you have longed to do; to give everywhere all the heart’s desires of others which you have longed to grant. If you will, this shall be your reward!”

I looked at the jewels. I did homage to the Lodge Messenger. Then I said:

“Being ignorant, I should use this reward ignorantly. I refuse.”

The messenger’s face was lit as from within by a smile like the light of a star. He said:

“The Christs have always refused.”

He waved his hand, and an angel, before unseen, opened in the rock a hidden door and stood back for me to enter. The messenger saluted me, and I entered the small, dark door.

Inside was written:

“The door of the dead.”

“The flower is renunciation of the self’s purest desire. The fruit shall be that Self which is the whole.” Further on was a small iron box, and in it a parchment on which was written this tale:

### “THE BURNING GEM.”

Upon the wayside stood a man who offered to wayfaring crowds something concealed in a box made of *red iron*. This something, when the iron box was opened, proved to be a yellow diamond, shining with a glowing lustre. “This gem,” said the bearer, “is iron in fusion, afterwards hardened in silence and darkness, being buried, when fused, in an underground tomb among the dead. Let him who can bear its burden receive the gem.”

The mass of the crowd passed by unheeding, being immersed in their own concerns. A few curious ones gathered round the man, but did not take his offer; some feared a trap and ridicule; some said, “it is glass, or he would not offer it;” others again said: “he is a thief seeking to dispose of stolen goods;” others again feared the government was for something in this offer, and still others were too lazy to move, too slothful to think. The educated said, “only the ignorant would be attracted by such talk,” and the ignorant said, “the book-wise may be thus taken in by the learning from overseas, but not the people or the people’s priests.”

Presently there came a group of disciples, pilgrims voyaging to an unknown shrine which they sought. One among them reached out and took the box from the hand of the bearer. At once his arm fell, and he exclaimed, “it is far too heavy a burden,” and the iron casket would have fallen to the ground had not the bearer caught it as it fell.

"Not so," said a second disciple. "The essence of the thing lies in taking the gem and leaving the casket in the hands of the bearer." So saying, he took the gem, placed it in his bosom, saluted the bearer gratefully, and turned to go on his way. He made but one step, when he cried out that the jewel burned into his flesh, and with a great cry of agony he tore it forth and cast it away. Then he and his fellow, with mutual recriminations went their ways and became lost in the throng of wayfarers, and were soon indistinguishable among them.

But there was yet a third disciple who had stood by, carefully observing, saying nothing, and he continued still to observe. He now saluted the empty-handed bearer, for, said he, "this bearer who now appears empty-handed is one who has fulfilled a mission, and who will now return to the master who sent him, bearing with him this my salutation, which thus will reach the feet of the Master. For all men are ready to salute him whose hands are seen to be full, but those who see by the light of wisdom *know* that he who empties his hands is he who stands nearest to the Master."

The bearer, having returned the salutation, vanished among the crowd as one who would say that the matter was now at an end, and the gem lost. But before he departed he handed the iron box to the disciple.

Now this box shone with a red lustre and was beautifully worked, and despite its weight, the thought came into the mind of the disciple that this box was worthy of the gift of kings, and was only second to the gem itself. Then he said: "I distrust my mind." At once a vision passed before his inner eye, and he seemed to see the Master bestowing this rare box upon the bearer. He said: "I distrust the psychic vision." So saying, he cast the box away. On this a voice arose from his heart and seemed to whisper: "I seek a hidden shrine, a shrine unknown; perhaps that gem was this shrine." On hearing his voice, he turned to seek for the jewel in the jungle, barely marking that the iron box dissolved into a mass of coral snakes, poison-bearers, hissing and stinging as they crawled away.

After some search he found the gem and placed it within his robes. Its burning soon became intolerable. Yet he would not cast it out, for he said: "the jewel surely does not burn me, but its pure light, acting upon my human nature, burns up all the mortal refuse in that; acting upon my mind it becomes the conscience within that mind and shows the errors of the past; this fire is the energy of sin and the sense of sin." And then again he said: "Let not my mind dwell upon the burning, nor my conscience upon the sense of sin, but let both reflect upon that one pure light in which both shall be absorbed."

Having said this and acted upon it with the strength of his heart, the pain, mental and physical, of that disciple disappeared, and he began, little by little, to see along the clear ray shining from the concealed jewel he bore within his human raiment and which shone along the small path which he trod.

"The light shineth in darkness, and the darkness comprehendeth it not."

At the present stage of the disciple, that darkness is the human mind.

That mind is better dark than light, for the true purpose of the disciple. When the mind energizes, it is far more difficult to see the concealed light.

He who has learned that the light of the mind is ignorance and is darkness, and who thus refuses to use life's treasures by that light, he is ready to pass along yet another part of the way which lies beyond the concealed door. That door is called:

THE DOOR OF THE DEAD.  
Behind that door is hidden the Life.

JASPER NIEMAND.

## ON THE SCREEN OF TIME.

JULIUS

The whole phantasmagoria is only a picture thrown up against the  
Screen of Time by the mighty magic of Prakriti (Nature).<sup>1</sup>

The various portions of the world-screen portray the Theosophical movement as proceeding with unchecked, even increased, activity. As in the course of every river, yes, even to the smallest rivulet, impediments arise, deterrents temporarily fill the bed or swerve the course, so in this movement many a change occurs.

Yet there is always readjustment, and, with that, the increased momentum observable when a pent-up force frees itself and breaks away, carrying with it the *débris* which it scatters and dissolves. There is a change, and yet no change. The goal is ever the same, for in the great course of evolution

Even the weariest river  
Winds somewhere safe to sea.<sup>2</sup>

But what the laws of motion do for the streams, the laws of mind must do for thoughtful man, for man earnestly applying himself to the study of Law with Nature and her eloquent analogies for guide. Such men readjust their course with care. Not the triumph over obstacles, not the elate sense of power evolved, of a strong, free, onward progress, is suffered to deflect their course or to swerve the calm mind from its outlook over men and things. The impediments, whether they arose from circumstance or from fellow-men, are viewed as teachers, not as foes, once they are removed, once their restraint or their opposition is removed. Karmic agencies all of them, none can impede the course unless by our own concurrence or submission. All, if we ourselves pursue unaltered the path of inaction in action to the Unknown Sea, all have the rather assisted by aiding in the development of latent powers of persistence, of resistance to the invasion of foreign motive, of warring elements whose accumulation would turn our course. An opponent is foe or evolver, as you take him. By the might of that newly-developed power the river takes again to its strong arms the now disintegrated opposition, no more an obstacle but an element of affluence, parts necessary to the trinity of earth and air and water: it takes them into its resistless sweep and all are at one again, all flow on toward the ideal Unity. In that ideal our present union consists; it is this unity of motive which makes the strength of a movement such as ours. Thus may man learn again from Nature. She teaches that great rivers rarely raise their own impediments. Such are more difficult of removal. Let us suffer without complaint — but with instant resistance — the choking of our stream by *débris* thrown from opposing shores, but — let us not raise our own obstacles!

How often the Friend now invisible to most eyes lamented the tendency of “the Theosophists to soil — like the cuckoo — their own nest.” In the first letter addressed to me by our beloved Madame Blavatsky she wrote as above, and then expressed a fear which to her was hydra-headed, the only fear that ever had power to daunt that lion heart, the fear that, like Frankenstein, she had created a monster which might rend her and mankind. So the obstacles threaten at times to turn the river into a devastating

monster. Let it keep to its own bed; let it cease to war with the obstacles in the very first moment of their removal; let the common aim be resumed; and the hope of H. P. Blavatsky, her faith and not her fear, shall be justified.

LONDON HEADQUARTERS has had a visitor of interest in an English gentleman from Tibet. Originally a botanist, he had journeyed to the "Unknown Land" and studied Buddhism with the idea, at first, that it would help him in his travels. He was soon seriously interested, and finally became a Buddhist and later on a lama, passing through the usual severe ordeals. During his present visit to London he lectured at the T.S. Headquarters, as well as before other Societies, before returning to Tibet, where he has now gone. The most satisfactory point of all that he said was, to Theosophists, his statement that the Mahâtmas are known to exist and are fully believed in throughout Tibet and the Buddhist orders there, al-though They are not generally seen, but work through other persons (a few). He also told of some curious practices of exoteric Lamaïsm. When persons commit adultery they are killed and their skulls tied together; this is supposed to detain them in Kâma Loka, united in the presence of their sin. A species of drum is made of the skulls, every tap upon which is supposed to give the delinquents a thump to be felt even in the place of shades. At a yearly festival called the "Butter Festival" these skulls are sometimes (in a moment of priestly mercy) burnt, which is supposed to release the astral bodies of the sinners from kâma-lôkic torment. One such human drum has been presented to Brother George Mead. I understand that he means to burn it without waiting for the Butter Festival. In fact, I suspect that Brother Mead has moments of mercy weekly, even daily: he does not wait for a stated yearly softening of the heart. Another human curio is a rosary made of round bits from the tops of human skulls, taken from the part where the soul is said to pass out at death. This will also enkindle the flames of our brother's pity. It is not clear what constitutes the "adultery" thus punished, in the view of these Tibetan lamas, as it was also said that a woman might have as many as five husbands. Another custom. Tithes are paid to the lamas as a religious observance, and these they scrupulously exact. If anyone fails to pay tithes, the delinquent is hypnotized by the lamas, when he goes about quite cheerfully but starves himself to death by their suggestion! One would like to know whether this priesthood of exoteric Buddhism is a "red" or a "yellow cap" tribe. They would appear to belong to the class of lamas mentioned by Prince Henry of Orleans in his book on Tibet, whose frontiers he successfully passed. Curios of brass and silver were also brought by the visitor and generously donated to be sold for the benefit of the T.S. Crèche. A silver prayer-wheel and rosary covered with hammered ornamentation, Tibetan texts and designs, and also set with turquoises, and a fragile chatelaine of silver hung with small toilet accessories, were the prettiest objectivities from the far and fascinating land.

The reported discovery of a new gas said to be allied to nitrogen, as announced at the Oxford meeting of the British Association, recalls the facts given in the *Secret Doctrine* on gases as yet unknown, which are the missing links of chemistry and alchemy. One of these, spoken of as paranitrogenic or nitrozonie, would appear to correspond to the "new" gas of modern pioneers, or rediscoverers, as we prefer to call them.

Another fulfilment of statements by the author of the *Secret Doctrine* is found in a paper on original research, the "Physical Researches on Nervous Matter," said to be by Richardson and published in the *Asclepiad*, II, No. 41. The author says that "great mistake" has been made and concealed by "one false observation." Anatomists supposed that "the brain and its elongations in the shape of nerves were absolutely solid substances, and although at one time it was thought that in the nervous fiber

there was a fluid called specifically the nervous fluid ... and although the tubular character of the nerve has been exhibited by microscopists, with mistakes of observation owing to the circumstance that *post-mortem* changes have sometimes been taken as natural conditions, the grandest of errors has remained, that of looking upon the nervous matter as solid. The brain after death looks solid —." The author then proceeds to state, as his "first subject," the theory that the nervous matter is not solid during life, but is mobile. "It is not like a wire, as a conductor of vibration, but is rather like a column of mercury, movable by expansion and vibration of particle on particle, *particles collected in centers, and in a certain sense distinct*, yet all in communication by means of the connecting lines which rise from the expanses in the organs of sense and from the other surfaces." The paper concludes with various tests by oxidization, combustion in oxygen, and so forth, but I would call attention to the lines italicized by me above as finely descriptive of a condition of interior substance whose *ensemble* may stand as the astral or nervous body, molded, in part, into the shape of the body which contains it, yet having, in most men and women, no specific form of its own; a carrier of "*Life*." H.P.B. always said that solidification of the brain after death rendered observation of the astral (or nervous) passages and "airs" impossible. Some of the most pregnant facts of practical occultism are based upon this truth. Have the microscopists tried the effect of the Tesla electric current upon the brain as soon after death as possible? Here is a hint to our scientific friends, for could the mobility of "coagulated" nervous matter be even partially restored under electric action, yet another portal to the unknown might be unlocked in part. To the pure clairvoyant power only is complete observation of the normal and fohatic action of nervous matter possible, yet even partial observation is a crutch to halting minds which, like Thomas, must touch objective fact. Nor is this an unnatural need. It is one wholly natural, for it has its root in the stubborn illusion of the physical senses. Its yoke is felt by all in one or another form, and that is one reason why, in these days when it seems to be the paltry fashion to touch upon the faults of the illustrious dead, and when even some trusted friends have been lured to *post-mortem* dissection of H.P.B. and to claims that those of her utterances or testimonies which disagree from their personal views were false or were the subjects of her unrecorded and unobserved repentance, I would revert to that larger method common to seekers after unity in all ages, I would by synthetic deduction from her wonderful insight, her prophetic vigor, her unfailing humanitarian service, prove the upward *tendency* of her being, and would suggest that *post-mortem* observers of her character, as objectively crystalized in their own minds, may have been blinded by the new and rigorous conditions. The spiritual eye sees all things by its own light shed upon them. So with the eye of the mind; so, indeed, said H.P.B., with the physical eye, which in fact emits an energy by which it sees, though modern science knows naught of this. Emerson said: "Greatness is always in a *tendency*, not in an action. It is for us to believe in the rule, not in the exception. The noble are thus known from the ignoble." H.P.B. *tended* ever towards a brighter light. She, whose spiritual beneficiaries and dependents with coldly self-righteous sighs deplore here and there a fault, a spot, (a solar spot, it may be, to eyes of faith), saw the blackest sins, crimes even, as she now sees paltry infidelities or the ingratitude of microscopic analysts — with a heart of largest pardon. Pardon, do I say? Ye gods; what Homeric laughter must now be hers, who was wont to laugh as with that other Sphinx, great Nature! Ah, friends; it were easy to touch apparent lapses of character and action, yet let us rather endeavor to rival her in charity, in the largeness of her silence. Somewhat she has, perhaps, to pardon in us all. We are too prone to forget that "Self-knowledge is of loving deeds the child."<sup>3</sup> And that other watchword left by her: "Inaction in a deed of mercy becomes an action in a deadly sin."<sup>4</sup> In the name of her infinite pardon give the lie to those who bid us look unmoved on another's pain; "tell them their tongue is false."<sup>5</sup> The Law brings pain; be it ours to

heal that pain, and, like little children, to love one another. Now that Love is not emotion. It is unmoved Compassion, itself the mover of worlds. Its herald here below is to leave the *awards* of action or inaction *to the Lam*, as does the living Lodge, while we work for, with, in, and through one another.

JULIUS.

## NOTES

1. *Letters That Have Helped Me*, {William Q. Judge,} p. 29.
2. {"The Garden of Prosperine," Algernon Charles Swinburne.}
3. {*The Voice of the Silence*, H. P. Blavatsky, p. 31.}
4. {*The Voice of the Silence*, H. P. Blavatsky, p. 31.}
5. {*The Voice of the Silence*, H. P. Blavatsky, p. 28.}

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*The Path* – December 1894, Vol. 9, pp. 286-290.

## ON THE SCREEN OF TIME.

JULIUS

As the student of Nature watches even his small corner of the world-wide Screen of Time, he sees with delight the things of history appear, disperse, and reappear. It was in this mood that I received, on the 12th of August last, a gift which was at once a reminiscence and a prediction.

We have eternal friends, souls of one Ray, our kindred from dawn to dawn. One such sent me two curious family relics, bought from an impoverished woman in one of the oldest towns in France: these relics were the Masonic cross and apron of her grandfather, who had received the cross prior to the French Revolution, the apron just at the close of that stormy time. They bear evidence of his having been a member of that branch of the Rosicrucian Society which was founded by Cagliostro, who suffered imprisonment in consequence of his having founded a secret society.

The detail of these objects evidences the oriental inspiration of the real, the *secret* — now, as then, secret — Rosicrucian fraternity. The cross, surmounted with a crown, is of green garnets and crystals, set in silver. In its center is a picture, done in black and gold enamel upon a mother-of-pearl ground, of a small cross with a rose heart; in front of the cross a pelican upon a funeral pyre plucks at her breast. Below this, eleven degrees are marked off. The woman said she had been told when a child that these marks signified the Masonic degrees taken by her grandfather, but there is a mystic significance attaching to the number eleven. On the back of the jewel is another picture, done in the same way, of a larger "rosie crosse," surmounted with the letters INRI.<sup>1</sup> The apron is an oblong of white lamb's skin, sewn with small round gilt spangles, either in groups of five or singly (like sun symbols), and is trimmed with gold lace now tarnished. At the top, over skulls and crossed-bones, are the letters S.H.O. (Société Hermetique Orientale). In the center a rough double triangle is formed by square and compass; in the middle of this a flamboyant six-pointed star has the letter C or G as its seventh point. The one letter would stand for Cagliostro, the other for St. Germain. Upon a bridge in the lower foreground are the letters L.D.P.,<sup>2</sup> historically attributed to Cagliostro; each letter is stopped by a triangle made in dots. The bridge crosses from the west to the east, and Cagliostro, agent of the Universal Lodge, was the bridge or path — sometimes called "the Door" in mysticism — between the eastern

and western branches of that Lodge which is ever one. The bridge has four buttresses and three arches ("four bases and three aspects"); it spans a ravine in which are strewn the mutilated remains of human beings among X crosses of black magic made by cross-bones. Above the bridge, a tree of life has seven branches, one double (an eighth sphere attached?). The path leads from a locked and barred castle, black in color and surmounted or overshadowed by nine hierarchies of flames, on the left or west, to the right, where a flamboyant sun of orange and red proclaims the East. This sun rises at the side of a grotto bearing a rude resemblance to the human back brain. At a central and upper point projects a curious green growth, like a stem or a gland; below it on one side stands the mystic soma cup, on the other side is a moon-shaped crucible. A small sword has been thrown down in front of the grotto, and the same symbol reappears, much larger, over the grotto, grasped in a hand whose huge arm is red; the handle of this sword is red and orange, the blade is green. One symbol shows that the wearer or traveler, having gone from the negative (black) to the positive world, is now an active participant grasping and using both the subjective and objective will. My learned friend, Mr. James M. Pryse, tells me that the apron has Masonic, magnetic, and Rosicrucian keys.

In the November number of the *Pall Mall Magazine* is an article upon the Rosicrucians. It is headed by a picture which will have a peculiar interest for some students. By what action of that force which we call "chance" has this apparently irrelevant article been injected into these up-to-date pages? At a period in last century corresponding to our present date (almost) the writer of this article states the Rosicrucians to have disappeared. Is not this one of those floating straws which show the motion of the stream beneath — apparently so glassy and inert? The *real* Rosicrucian Society began before the date given and continues to this day, but the stream subsides into its underground channels when the century's effort is over, and the members of the hidden force — who have not been known as such, or at all, save to a very few workers on the objective plane — work after another fashion until the last half of another century brings the moment when their chiefly-unseen but always-vigilant aid must again be given to the leaders and members of the new open movement. Some know that H.P.B. had there her most powerful helpers and supporters. Her Rosicrucian jewel (shaped like the pelican in the small center of mine, but of silver) will occur to the mind.

A friend of H.P.B. tells me that she said that at the close of the present cycle the Lodge would temporarily cease to work among men in the present direct fashion, except through the channel of the T.S., should that body then be in forceful existence. As a glacier pushes its way and leaves each year a landmark planted further in the fields of its choice, so the Lodge forces will not withdraw from any real, fixed station won for its manifestation by our effort. Hours of struggle are upon us, and it may cheer us to go over certain known things. It is always helpful to pass the countersign. And H.P.B. said further that we should be in bad case next century if we failed now.

As in universal action force flows from hierarchy to hierarchy, from world to world, from cell-unit to cell-unit by established channels only, so the guardians of the Secret Wisdom, followers of Nature's laws, have everywhere their posts. Not alone in the East. It is not only Eastern Occultism, but Eastern and Western, two objective poles of one spiritual hierarchy, with a great teacher, twin-brothers in work and duty, in each division, with spiritual chiefs "above," and followers and helpers of all degrees in succession. "The Lodge is everywhere." Such Teachers take bodies of Eastern or Western heredity for their temporary habitations; the force generated through these bodies or physical bases for projection upon the physical plane must be magnetically and psychically homogeneous to the ray or sphere of the work. After the dawn of the Christian era, the Western mind, slowly involving the World-Manas, was more readily

to be reached by the symbols adopted from antiquity by the early Christians, for these symbols were crystallized in their etheric environment and were those which had most life there at that time. Hence the rosic cross which had a sweet and secret heart, and was the same abode of the same spirit as the lotus-petalled heart of the East.

The visible agents of the last century worked under both directors, as I gather, but each one had someone superior to whom he immediately looked, and one brother inferior in knowledge who was his immediate assistant. Any member of the Lodge in any degree may have a number of "twin-souls" in all degrees, but one link of a chain must be objectively and relatively nearer to two others than to all. St. Germain, Cagliostro, Mesmer: one Adept and two Chelas. H.P.B. and her original trimurti completed by H. S. Olcott and William Q. Judge. Then, as now, there were other ardent workers, but as we look down the lines of the centuries here and there the mystic triad of pioneers reappears.

The human mind has a tendency to exalt what is distant. Prophets are naught in their own country, and cities are least known to their inhabitants. The young in occultism are sometimes drawn eastward by this trait, which has its root in the attraction of contraries. The tendency is toward forgetfulness of this linked succession, and that our soul *chose* for its next step the environment where we now are. Prophets may have a mission to other lands, but the dweller in cities may find rich rewards close to his hand. The Eastern race had earlier fruitage, and the coronal flowers of her achievement are those perfect souls who are as the pole-star to heaven-aspiring minds. Such men are not confined to bodies of that nation in which they first attained, but take such houses in such lands as the great work of human service may demand. To-day the West is the hope of the future race as of the present. To-day the elder brothers of men look to that West for objective aid as for racial evolutionary development. Individual men may still pass on to perfection everywhere, but the evolutionary forces tend westward now and must thence react back upon the East.

H.P.B., true to her mission of breaking up old moulds of mind, fixed modes of thought, attacked all forms from which the spirit had fled. The nascent Manas of the new race must not be smothered in the musty cradle of old forms. The husks of all creeds were in turn by her assailed. Readers of the early numbers of the *Theosophist* will find her dealing with the materialized dogmatic forms of the East just as she dealt with those of the West. She encountered the hostility of eminent Brahmins and prominent Christians then as now. This must inevitably occur when the spiritual pride of a race or the "modern spirit" of a nation is touched by a mordant such as hers. Intellectuality oftentimes outruns spiritual (universal) intuition. The saddest shadows which hurry across our Screen are those of some Western occultists who went eastward, of some Eastern Chelas who came westward — to fail.

It ought to be more generally understood that H.P.B. not only disclaimed infallibility, but also deliberately put herself on record as having both made mistakes and "done wrong" as we would say. Her large nature was reckless of self. And yet some clues were left which we may follow. She wrote to Mr. Judge: "When I am dead and gone you will know that I never, never deceived any one, but that I was often forced to let others deceive themselves." It is told that she said to another and a less experienced friend: "Would you believe that I had done wrong if you were to see it in my own writing?" We can imagine the friend's loving answer. Ah! may it go well with both the living and the "dead" friend's memory in the hour of test.

But those two cries of hers show her heart craving for a faith and trust that should outlast her bodily life, outlive her generous self-judgment; something of heart-knowledge; had she not won it fairly? Soul-recognition, had she not revived our

memory of soul? She longed for that intuitive understanding which scorns material proof or disproof of subjective realities. The touchstone of soul is soul.

It is not yet too late, if, as I believe, she lives, consciously lives and works on. Whelps of the old Lion of the Punjaub, which of you will cry to her: Had'st thou writ thy fault up large upon the halls of the universe, thou had'st not so deceived me — never.

“It is possible to have a splendid loyalty and yet be wise.”

JULIUS.

## NOTES

1. {INRI = Abbreviation for the Latin phrase: “Iesus Nazarenus Rex Iudearum.”

“Jesus of Nazereth, King of the Jews.”

2. {L.D.P. = Initials for the phrase: “Liberté de passage.” “Freedom of Passage.”

Referring to the legend of the Chevalier d'Orient degree. From *Ars Quator Coronatorum*, Colonel F. M. Richard, Editor, p. 56.}

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## ON THE SCREEN OF TIME.

JULIUS

One who looks carefully at the shadow-pictures thrown upon our universal screen must observe strange figures and new combinations pointing to changes in the future. Sometimes even a Christian minister is slightly inspired, as in the case of the Rev. Parker at the Temple in London last month. Prophesying of next century, he said there will be no creeds and no need for preachers — as there is none even now. H.P.B. once made a somewhat similar forecast, though not so fixed in date. Such a change would be good.

But the American Section of the Screen is the one to look at for advance indications. Here came about — insensibly, yet most powerfully — the great Religious Parliament,<sup>1</sup> which started as a mere annex to a Fair but soon grew to an enormous affair in itself. It has left traces far deeper than the commercial Fair, its shadows still move over the surface. It aroused people in distant lands, and many Orientals came here through it. They attracted more attention than any other priests, they still in part remain. One of them on the way over stopped at London to lecture, beginning by abuse of the Theosophical Society, went to Chicago and discovered that Theo-sophy had been drawing people's minds eastward for twenty years. The Sanyasi, the Brahmo Samajist, the Buddhist, the Brahmin, spoke at the Parliament and created more stir than all others. The meeting closed.

But while some of the Orientals departed, others remained and still go about America lecturing in public halls and private dwellings and obtaining pupils. Some get their classes for Yoga. All succeed in invading the parlors of Boston, New York, Chicago, of any town. Dull England, the Conqueror, would not thus harbor them, but they find constant welcome in lively America. And they continually write home their impressions, their successes, their hopes. All this is significant.

Although not so heralded, it is part of the great Theosophical movement. It points to the subtle current running West, joining the East. The East lies almost dead, almost paralyzed by Western materialism. The West is waking to the greatness and

value of the ancient Aryan philosophy; it has the energy to appreciate and use it under new conditions; when made a part of Western thought, it will react back to the East, when an awakening will take place — it will not take place till then. This is the great secret of the Screen. There is no division of races in it. He who says that those who insist on Western destiny and point to the current flowing West are trying to make discord between the East and West, is blind when not malicious. 'Tis true that Mahâtmas are of no country, and just because of that they are wise, and run with the great cyclic currents so as to turn into the obstructed and befouled canals of the Orient the newly-purified water of the ancient wells. To obtain the purification they must have a free land and a free or partly-free people to work with; they can also wait while doubting or vain people dispute the question.

As the Theosophical Society represents outwardly the whole Theosophical Movement, so the Screen shows its most powerful influence in America. In India a comparatively small section of the people know of it. The masses know nothing about it. They require almost centuries to change and raise them from their superstitious state. One of the Masters — K.H. — himself a Hindû, wrote years ago that he could not stand the magnetism of his own country and had to flee after a short visit. The Rajahs care nothing for it, and mostly live in luxury, bound to the English Bank. In Europe Theosophy has some headway, but not a great deal. Almost every proposition has to be laboriously proved; psychic events are wholly doubted; those who have psychic experiences are obliged to excuse themselves; the land is still conventional. But in America the whole land rings with Theosophy. Its terms are known everywhere. Psychic facts are accepted, apologies are not needed. Ridicule arises here and there from editors, but the people think. The Masters have been freely spoken of and the perfectibility of man expounded. The whole land is asking for news of Theosophy. If for the present it be but an Athenian desire, that is an advantage, for it gains Theosophy a hearing. Verily the Screen shows the farther West to be the hope of Theosophy for both hemispheres, and those who shall sow the seeds of dissension by failing to see the real reasons and by calling any exposition of the cyclic Western wave an attempt to divide the Masters from the rest of the world, are heaping up for themselves a very heavy Karma.

JULIUS.

DEAR JULIUS:— Che-Yew-Tsâng?<sup>22</sup> There is little of interest to relate. You will remember that Lord Brougham sent news of his death to London in order to read his obituary notices before his actual decease. He wished for frank criticism. My first motive in writing under a *nom-de-plume* was similar to that which prompted his action: I had an article burning in mind and heart, but I wished that the subject should be worthily treated. I might write and use my own name, but I feared that my friend Mr. Mead, the editor of *Lucifer*, might insert it, even if indifferently written, for friendship's sake. That I did not want. So I thought I would have it taken or rejected on its own merits, and would hide the person behind the idea. Was it chance that made me take a Chinese name and write as a Chinaman? Probably not.

Once that I began to write I found an additional motive for doing so from behind a veil, as it were. Regardless of criticism or praise, I wrote what I felt and what I wanted to say. The entire anonymity (for I told no one living of my purpose) made it possible to write from an impersonal standpoint. Much is gained in that.

The first article was a success, and so many favorable things were said about it in my presence that I almost wished it had never been written! At its first most flattering reception, modesty forbade my claiming it as my own (Lost since then? Perhaps.); and besides, already I had ideas for further work, and good-bye to all impersonality if now

the Chinaman's identity were revealed. From the Universal these ideas had come; why color them with a soon-to-be-forgotten name? But to one person I did reveal his identity, and because I knew that this person had seen the real author of those articles. This person, with my permission, told Mrs. Besant under a promise of secrecy who the Chinaman was: that was on October 6th, 1893. Mrs. Besant's pleasure and approval helped to satisfy me that it would be best to preserve the anonymity.

Some time later I informed Mr. Judge, who had previously written that he was sure Che-Yew-Tsāng was no Oriental. He had been asked by several who the author was, and had replied that he did not know, nor did he care,— for if this writer spoke the truth, it should be accepted for what it was worth, and if what he said were judged false, what had names or persons to do with it?

And the writer's words were largely taken as true: people wrote to the Unknown, but only one correspondent was ever answered, for I feared they might tell me that which they would not have revealed to me personally. So I was silent, and only wrote to one to say that I spoke with no authority whatever. Do I deserve credit for those articles? I do not; for when I have said that "from the Universal" those thoughts had come to me, it is but a partial statement of the case. I have heard it said that there is useful teaching in those articles; others have said that they were written with unusual force. Did they not recognize that force and that teaching; did they not see the source of both? They might have felt so plain a thing. Let me put on labels, then: the force was that of William Q. Judge; the teaching I had got from his writings and from one who had been taught by him — Jasper Niemand. To him and to his "creation" is the credit due: but they do not want that credit. If those articles were helpful I am glad. But I would have it known that where the author stood when they were written, in loyalty, in trust, and in love, there this day as in all days stands —

CHE-YEW-TSĀNG.

LONDON, *January 6th, 1895.*

#### NOTE

1. {"The World's Parliament of Religions," Chicago, Illinois, 1893.}
2. {Che-Yew-Tsāng is the *nom-de-plume* of Ernest Temple Hargrove.}

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*The Path* — April 1895, Vol. 10, pp. 19-23.

## ON THE SCREEN OF TIME.

### JULIUS

Has the screen got any sense of humor? Some elemental, protoplasmic sort of smile must surely pass across its face as time brings men and things and dreams to play their pranks before it. A student of some experience once said in jest that "to have a sense of humor is the first qualification for Chelaship." There is truth in that, though care is needed lest the humor should grow bitter. But come with me for a little while and smile! Leave the noise and dust behind, and rest in the cool and the shade of smiling contemplation. There is no need to take life as a tragedy: has it not been said that "if we only knew our business all this would be but a contest of smiles?"<sup>1</sup> He who cannot see the humorous side of events is well-nigh lost, and this the present shows. So look forth with me upon the scene of strife and laugh as the gods must laugh to see the mortals playing and being immortals. See how they grow into the parts they play and think they hold the destiny of worlds in their little hands! This one cries to the four

points of space that, unless another resign from office, the future not only of the Society but of races yet unborn will be imperiled. And the cry is taken up and quickly echoed, for faithful echo ever answers "Yes" when that is needed. Do you not remember that combat fierce and terrible between Don Quixote and the wine-skins, and Sancho's part in the story? So that "Sancho, awake, was as wise as Don Quixote asleep: his head being quite turned by his master's promises." History is never original, as I will presently remind you on another count. But returning to our comedy, gaze out on the warfare of papers, protests, and promises; dust, documents, and dummies — all in wild confusion, each final and conclusive. Thunders of indignation, volcanoes of approval; tragedy and desperation. And laugh! The mortals are lacking in dignity, but they mean well. They really do believe that if success does not crown their individual efforts, the sun will give up its work in despair. Let us look on and wait: there is never such haste that action must be frantic. The wheel of months and years grinds on and unceasingly. The face of things changes in that grinding. Exaggerated tragedy becomes burlesque, and the wise man waits for the reaction which follows all strained emotionalism. Many would have been saved from grievous blunders if they had stopped to gaze at themselves on the Screen of Time. They might have caught its protoplasmic smile!

But some are being wounded in the fray, and to one of such this letter was lately written by a friend: I give it, as it takes up a different standpoint to the one I have been considering: "Hearing that you are not well in health and have as well another grief to bear, I make bold to write to you and say that I am sorry. It is not consolation that I have to offer, for I think that is too often a mere mockery of sorrow. Yet I would tell you that you are not quite alone. A friend who is dealing blows to right and left, and would fain make of herself an enemy, has not spared you in that respect. But I think we have only to remember what we have already learned for ourselves — that it is all from delusion — and then we shall not mind and shall be prepared to wait until great Time brings its magic changes. We can wait: 'those also serve who only stand and wait.' And that too has to be learned no doubt like other things — through pain. But let us not forget that it is we who make our own pain. I have found that grief and sorrow only spring from wrong thinking. Not wrong in the sense of wicked, but in the sense of something out of harmony with the scheme of Nature; something *unscientific* and therefore contrary to the highest ethics. If we confined our thoughts as well as acts to our own clear duty, leaving results and the morrow to the Law, what room would there be for sorrow? So let us lean back and smile at the show and seeming of things, knowing that even if we are tied by hands and feet for a spell of days or years the heart of the world will throb on quite well without us. Therefore do not let us get mentally involved in this or any other matter, but stand aside — spectators, though doing with power all that comes to us to do and ready to do nothing if that be needed. Then, Brother, let us be glad at whatever comes and at all that is said and whispered, for though to-day may seem dark these things work out in the end for good. The more violent the storm the sooner shall we see the face of the sun which shines behind the clouds that only hide it for a very little while. You are quite happy and serene, ready for all and indifferent to each, at rest in the silent place of your own abode. But, like all of us, you are not known to every man, for the soul alone knows the soul. That is why there is little need to hide in Kali Yuga! You may tell them all, and they are not one jot the wiser. These people who imagine that they know the heart, the mind, and the soul of either you or me are not wise at all. They do not understand. They do not believe in their teaching, but merely hold it in their heads. So let it turn there, and perchance in the course of ages a flower will bloom in the heart of each, and then we will rejoice. If man could be strong in himself as a part of the whole, the noise of the world would not so much as reach his ears. My love to you."

It has been said that history cannot be original. We have instances of this to-day on every side. What battles were fought by H.P.B. with the Brahmins of modern India, and how she faced the opposition of their inherited conservatism! She had to deal with priests, for, as everyone should know by now, the Brahmins were the priestly caste of India. They were horrified with her unfamiliar methods, for they had grown hard-cased in a form and they overlooked the spirit in the letter. In all her writings, especially in the *Secret Doctrine* and the *Voice of the Silence*, she had much to say about the "Tirthikas, the unbelievers" — the Brahmin ascetics, as she carefully explained. But, needless to say, she was not so foolish as to think that all Brahmins were of this kind. Was not Damodar a Brahmin? Though he had to lay down his caste before achieving the aim and hope of his life. There are of course many good and noble-minded men amongst the members of that caste, as amongst those of other castes. One may study the characteristics of a nation with profit and without the slightest harshness, and if you conclude that the dominant peculiarity of some European nation is frivolity, you do not mean that each and every native is frivolous. It would be ridiculous. It would be still more ridiculous for every native of that country to take the criticism as a personal insult to himself. He would be self-condemned at once. Most educated Englishmen would tell you that the English as a nation are conservative to a fault, but are there not flaming Radicals in England? Yet one may say that, however subtly hidden, the characteristic of a race will be found in the units of which that race consists. I have known a socialist in Scotland whose deepest feelings were outraged when a small boy whistled on the Sabbath! So one may study a race impersonally, and expect to see it repeating its previous records. One may study an association in the same way, or a caste. Following that method it would be easy to foretell the action of a number of men in a given crisis, when action was necessarily hurried, if one knew the character of the race to which they belonged. In an early of *The Theosophist* (vol. I, pp. 51, 52) a description is given of a famous Yogi known as Brahmachari Bawa, or Vishnu Pant Gokhle, a Brahmin. Before reaching "illumination" he tells his interviewer that he had often consulted Brahmins and sought teaching from them, but he was always answered thus: "If you will worship *us* and learn *our* mantras and incantations from *us*, we will disclose to you the truth about the 'self-existent.' And so," he continued, "in order to try them, I learned their mantras and did all they bade me do, and then demanded that the true knowledge should be divulged to me. Their answers proved their selfish wickedness, foolishness, and often entire ignorance of the subject ..... Having thus discovered that most of them were only hunting after fame and selfish ends, and yet dared to brand those who questioned them as to their learning 'faithless infidels,' a great aversion arose in my heart for them." No doubt many Hindûs could thoroughly endorse from their own experience the words of the Brahmachari Bawa. They could hardly have found amongst their fellow Brahmins the light which they sought, or they would not have so run after H.P.B. All this is interesting as a study in Karma. National heredity is a powerful factor in human action, and actions ever tend to repeat themselves. True it is of most men, and especially of those with priestly blood in their veins, that "What men prize most is a privilege, even if it be that of chief mourner at a funeral." And the essence of a privilege lies in its excluding others from sharing in it; the holding of something as apart from the rest. A form of preservation which surely turns to self-destruction soon or late. By this you may know men: the soul which is of light opens its door to all who care to enter; sets no time limit on its acceptance; is indifferent to either praise or blame; and waits in patience on the Law, and waiting — works. But not for self *or against any man*: for Humanity and Brotherhood.

JULIUS.

## NOTE

1. {*Letters That Have Helped Me*, William Q. Judge, p. 82.}

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*The Path* – August 1895, Vol. 10, pp. 157-160.

## ON THE SCREEN OF TIME.

JULIUS

In a recent contribution to an English magazine, a writer on Theo-sophy makes Pain the very center of manifested nature. The universe, it is there said, was produced through the self-sacrifice of the Logos, and self-sacrifice is made synonymous with pain. From that first agony all things have since subsisted on physical and mental torture; all growth has been the result of pain. Pain is to be welcomed as an honored guest. Remains the truth at first repellent, it is said, then austere but attractive, finally peace-giving and inspiring, that each step upward is only won by pain. Pleasure, happiness are not named. A picture is drawn of blood and tears and broken hearts that must make the ordinary reader marvel at this strange philosophy. Such a view stands out in vivid contrast to the old legend which made the universe the result of a great shout of laughter from the gods. They could contain their joy no longer, and in one long peal of merriment the worlds were born. Opposites indeed! Neither view is correct when taken apart, and it is unfortunate that this writer on Theosophy should have insisted upon one of nature's poles to the entire exclusion of the other. The duality which exists throughout this period of manifestation, or Manvantara, is fully explained in the *Bhagavad Gîtâ*. Heat and cold, light and darkness, pleasure and pain, are opposites. One opposite cannot exist apart from the other. Growth does not take place by means of pain alone, any more than through pleasure alone, but is the result of oscillations between the two extremes. Above these two extremes there is a third state which may be called Contentment. In that state both pleasure and pain are accepted equally. Preference is not given to one mode of force any more than to the other. All these phenomena of consciousness can be interpreted in terms of vibration, and just as a bad smell can be transformed into a sweet odor by changing the vibration of the "odoriferous ether," so intense agony can reach a point when it becomes indistinguishable from delight. So with enjoyment: it can become so intense that it loses its character and is called painful. A good instance of this was given the other day by the great Italian tenor Tamagno,<sup>1</sup> who confided the fact to an interviewer that some music gave him such delight that he suffered agonies from it!

So it is impossible to consider pain as central or as something superior to pleasure. The philosopher, according to the *Gîtâ*, regards both with an "equal mind." The worship of one at the expense of the other is unhealthy, besides being unphilosophical.

Once a vision was seen. The seer is known to the writer by letter only, though well known. He was in Paris. Passing up from the Luxembourg Gardens, along narrow streets that seem to be a center of equal attraction for priests, restaurants and funerals — though hiding perhaps beneath this safe disguise an inner life of different and loftier order — he came out upon the *Quai* directly opposite the site of the Tuileries.<sup>2</sup> Leaning over the parapet, gazing at the muddy waters of the Seine, his thoughts were in no way enticed by the miles of second-hand bookstalls that extend along the south side of the river. Their volumes in every language and on every subject (a battered *Key*<sup>3</sup> among the rest!), rare and curious, cheap and very nasty, no more occupied his mind than the

tragedy of the fallen Empire which had played its last stake within two hundred yards of where he stood. Paris, once the temple of Pleasure and still the *rendezvous* of pleasure-seekers, was all in holiday attire. Laughter was in the air — but what are surroundings to a man whose mind is occupied with thoughts that are worth the thinking? Nothing. Truly it is the mind which makes the surroundings, and Archimedes was neither the first nor the last thinker who has remained faithful to a thought during the sacking of his city.

My friend soon found realistically the truth of this oft-repeated adage. He had been pondering over the history of a life, a friend's life; studying it, not unkindly, but in relation to universal principles and with fraternal sympathy. He came down along the record of events until he reached the present. Looking out across the river, gazing without sight at what had once been the palace of a tinsel Caesar, there suddenly appeared to him a gray figure, stooping, meditative. Then it waxed clearer and he saw that the head of the figure was bent over some object held in the hand. It seemed that the whole being — the mind, heart and soul of this silent specter were rivetted on this one object. My friend looked more closely to discover what this was: only a worm, a poor, struggling worm transfixed on a pin, writhing in agony. A feeling of disgust at the cruelty of it came over him and he turned to reproach the torturer, who had not seen him, who had eyes for nothing but the sufferings of the captive worm, regarding it with interested pity and yet with satisfaction. "Why not take it off —?" my friend began, but as he turned to speak he started back in momentary horror. The figure was that of the person whose life-history he had been pondering, and the worm, as he now saw, bore a similar likeness — the picture of a mind gloating over its own self-inflicted sufferings.

Then all vanished. A company of French infantry passed by him with strident bugling that could be heard for miles. It sounded miles away. The picture still fascinated him. The pity of it! For it was true: this had been the symbol of that life. The Worship of Pain; a sublimated form of selfishness that longed for a martyr's crown, but which would welcome the martyrdom for its own sake, even without the crown. A selfishness that in its grosser form would be but hypocrisy and conceit. A passion for pain which made it seem that to inflict it on others was to confer a benefit rather than a wrong. How could they grow without pain? See how *I* have grown through pain! A disease, my brothers, a disease of the mind. "Think not that breaking bone, that rending flesh and muscle, unites thee to thy 'silent Self.'"<sup>4</sup> And remember that "these vices of the ordinary man pass through a subtle transformation, and reappear with changed aspect in the heart of the disciple."<sup>5</sup> The St. Dominic of yesterday may well continue to try to purify the souls of others and his own, by the pain he thinks it right to inflict, though now perhaps he uses some mental torture. The St. Simeon Stylites of one life may pass from racking his body for "the greater glory of God," to racking his mind, and with the same motive. He may now cry as then, though in different form:

O my sons, my sons . . . . mortify  
 Your flesh, like me, with scourges and with thorns;  
 Smite, shrink not, spare not . . . .  
 . . . . .  
 O Jesus, if thou wilt not save my soul,  
 Who may be saved? Who is it may be saved?  
 Who may be made a saint, if I fail here?  
 Show me the man hath suffer'd more than I.<sup>6</sup>

But that is not Theosophy: nor is it Occultism. It is far removed from either. Once more we see that growth does not depend upon the amount of pain or pleasure

that is endured, but upon our attitude of mind towards all that may meet us on life's journey. "It is not *what* is done, but the spirit in which the least thing is done that is counted." Extremes are always dangerous. To follow "the Middle Path" requires a broad mind that can recognize the duality running throughout the whole of nature and that can adapt itself to either mode of force with lightning-like acceptance, meeting the pleasure and the pain, the failure and the success, with unmoved center. It is not an easy path to travel, but those who try to follow it and who continue trying *shall succeed*.

JULIUS.

## NOTES

1. {Francesco Tamagno (1850-1905).}
2. {The Tuileries Palace (and gardens) in Paris, France, on the right bank of the river Seine.}
3. {*Key to Theosophy*, H. P. Blavatsky.}
4. {*The Voice of the Silence*, H. P. Blavatsky, p. 30.}
5. {*Light on the Path*, Mabel Collins, p. 17.}
6. {"St. Simeon Stylites," Alfred, Lord Tennyson, 1883. As found, the two verses are in reverse order.}

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*The Path* – May 1891, Vol. 6, pp. 40-44.

## ONE WOMAN'S VISION.

JASPER NIEMAND

One who had read a legend somewhere repeated it to me thus from memory:

"There was a Greek woman who, being visited by spirits in the guise of two Chaldeans, was dowered by them with transcendent powers and superhuman knowledge, and she was able to behold at once all the deeds that were done in all lands beneath the sun, and was raised high above all human woes and human frailties, save only Love and Death. The woman dwelt alone with the stars and the palms and the falling waters, and was tranquil and at peace, and she was equal to the gods in knowledge and in vision, and was content. Then one day a tired wanderer came and asked her for a draught of water to slake his thirst and lave his wounds, and she gave it, and, giving, touched his hand, and one by one the magic gifts fell from her, and the Chaldeans came no more! In all the vastness of the universe she only hearkened for one voice; her eyes were blind to earth and heaven, for they only sought one face. She had power no more over the minds of men or the creatures of land and air, for she had cast her crown down in the dust and had become a slave, and her slavery was sweeter than had ever been her strength — sweeter far — *for a space*. Then the wanderer, his wounds being healed and his thirst slaked, wearied. He arose and passed away; she was left alone in the silence of the desert — but never more came the Chaldeans."

Thus ran the tale; it seems unfinished and I am moved to finish it.

When the woman had made fair progress and attained into power, it was her right to be tested by the gods. Now we are most tested by Love and by Death.

So, as the tale runs, she was left mourning in the desert. She called upon the Chaldeans and their power, which she had shared; but power comes not at call; we must seize it and make it our own. She cried then to death; but death comes not quickly to those to whom he comes as a friend. It is only as dread warrior and foeman

that his approach is swift and terrible. She could not die. In all the world there was left to her only her love; this she could not slay, though now she strove to cast the burden off, and then she clasped it to her burning heart. She could not lie forever thus in the desert. Her great love impelled her, and she arose, thirsting for one more sight of that distant face, determined to follow through the world that she might once more look upon it. She passed from the palms and limpid waters over the burning sands, and, all unseen, her guardian spirit and the spirit of her Ray went with her.

Thus she came into the world, and seeking saw on every hand sin, misery, disease, death, shame, and bitterness, and all the wrong man heaps on man, and all the joys of sense and soul that are the wombs of future pain. Failing to find him whom she sought, she asked herself, "What if he be wretched as these?" And, as her heart swelled with pity at the thought, she strove more and more to help the suffering, to clasp the imploring hands that clutched at her gown,— all for his sake. Learning to love them so, she hoped to forget that master love for one, and hoped in vain, for human love is strong and tests us as a sword. At last she cried to all the gods. "Let me see him once, and die." So strong the cry, the inner heavens rang with her demand; on it she staked her all, and drew from Karmic powers, in that one gift, all that they held as treasure for her in many a life to come. Her guardian spirit hid its face and trembled, but the spirit of the Ray, the Watcher, saw unmoved.

So she beheld her lover. The man had changed. The fret of life had worn him. His sphere was dimmed by a dark, inpouring tide that colored all his deeds, impeded his higher aspirations, and mysteriously sapped his life, by him unseen, unknown.

"Call back that evil tide!" she said. And then again, "What is it?"

Her guardian spirit could not answer for tears.

"It is thy love, whose strong barrier resists and impedes the law. Hark to the discord of his sphere," said the Watcher, the spirit of the Ray.

The woman uttered a moan of pity and of shame.

"He is changed. Dost thou love him still?" asked her guardian spirit.

"Better than ever I love and long to comfort him," she answered.

"Behold," said her guardian to the Watcher, "how strong is this love, now purified by pain. Shalt thou not deliver the woman?"

The unmoved Watcher spoke. "When the man came to her in the desert, did she speak to him of the starry Truths of the darkness? Aye, I know that she spoke, but her words were forms devoid of life while her voice — their carrier — cooed the notes of love. Aye, I know that she taught and tended him in tenderness and pity, but did she not ask reward, the reward of his love? What free gift asks a great gift in return? She only asked to serve, sayest thou? Know, Spirit, that in heaven's high hosts are thousands who wait through the passing of cycles for permission to serve, and sometimes ask in vain. Accepted service is the gift of gifts in the power of the Divine. Saw she his soul-spark yearning for freedom from personality and separation? Under that crust which is the outer man, saw she his inner self, the radiant, imprisoned, enmeshed in the web of matter, awaiting a deliverer? No. She saw but her own reflection, the mirrored flame of her own desire. Her image she projected towards him. Her glamour she cast about him; her own fond yearning, it was that she loved. The imprint she stamped upon him faded, for his guardian spirit stood near. Then the radiant one within impelled him from her. Life bore him away. He passed on to other scenes, dragging after him, unknown but not unfelt, the dark and ever-lengthening chain of her recalling thought. The woman loved herself, so loving love; she to whom power was entrusted by the gods cast it, for self, aside."

"Ah! say not so!" the guardian spirit cried. "Was no pure flame behind the smoke; no living germ within the husks of love?"

"Look!" answered the Watcher.

As the woman gazed, spellbound, she saw, above her lover, a shape of superhuman beauty, glorious and full, one of a band of mighty ones, filling the world, strong to aid and to save, interlinked, interdependent, all in one and one in all, the immortal hosts, the higher selves, the higher self of man. Seeing the loved one thus transfigured, thus translated, a cry of joy broke from her lips. "He is free!" she cried.

Then the Watcher bent above her, while the guardian spirit held his breath.

"Shall he become as one of these and pass beyond thee?"

"Oh! take him to that blessed place," the woman said.

"That place is one which men themselves attain. By fortitude; by duty; by self sacrifice; by entire acceptance of the law; he may attain. Or wilt thou — O cavalier at the law, constructive of thine own desire, destructive of the universal trend of things — wilt thou detain him on the way?"

"Why may he not go there with my love?" she asked.

"With thy *love*, yes; for *love* makes free what it loves. But not with thy *desire*. The law has parted you in the flesh; who shall withstand that law and not be broken? But love coheres, inheres, and knows not space nor time."

The woman bent her head. From her heart a wild complaint arose. But she had seen the glorious vision; she longed to see her beloved on that way, the path of law. "Set him free," she said.

"But if thy desire recall him —?"

"Hast thou forgotten, Stainless One, or hast thou never known, that true love loves the better self, the shining ideal? I was blind, but now mine eyes are opened. I give him to his higher life, that life which is the law. And I — I bless that law, though it deny me, because it sets him free."

As she spoke, something seemed to break in her heart. Before her swept the great, blinding, glorious vision of a freed humanity, lifted upon the sorrows of such as she, lifted by very force of woe endured, into that shining host. The world that suffered and the world that conquered were one, and all, above, below, were types of souls freeing and set free by higher Love.

"I love the world," she cried, "for all is one."

Upon the face of the guardian spirit there shone a great joy. "Thou hast conquered by love," he said. "There remains only death for thee to meet and to subdue."

The Watcher spoke, "Nay; death is overcome. The only true death is the death of self. She lives for all, her powers reclaimed, restored, for the power of powers is universal love."

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Thus runs the tale of truth. If woman knew her power to uplift, before the eyes of man, the splendid ideal, knew her power to nourish and sustain it, she, loving thus, would teach man how to love, and, freeing him, retain him forever in the higher bonds that knit all souls to Soul.

JASPER NIEMAND.

## A PLEA FOR THE CHILDREN.

AUGUST WALDERSEE

A few years ago, the interest of the “average man” in occultism was *nil*. Now, to quote Molière the witty, “we have changed all that.” Many an honest man is an unconscious theosophist, and we have innumerable new versions of “*Le Philosophe sans le savoir*.” Little by little the stealthy tide has stolen in, until the public in general takes its daily rations of occultism in novels, essays, and experiences, and has even adopted its expressive phraseology. In a word, the average man is coming abreast of the theosophical student. This sign is favorable. It marks the moment when a fresh impulse from higher spheres may be expected, and which will impel the advance-members of our era further still. These advance-members, in the present respect of which we write, are the theosophists.

One step, of greater present importance than any other, now remains to be taken and promptly taken. Opportunity is a fruit which will not keep.

It is a vital truth that real knowledge, if unused, injures the mind that keeps it locked-up and barren. Knowledge is not a dead thing like the fruit of the loom and the easel. Knowledge is a seed, a living germ; it should be sown, it should be active, should fructify. He who stores up spiritual truths as mere intellectual acquisitions soon has a mental and moral plethora, and ends by turning from his normal food. The mind has its indigestions as well as the stomach, and of a more deadly order, for all things have more power as we proceed inwards. In the natural procedure of life, we learn one thing at a time, and it is learned by living it. A truth may first be intellectually perceived (so far as our consciousness of its entrance goes), but if it is not then lived out, it remains as a point of stagnation in the mind and more or less impedes the circulation of Thought. It is thus that our mental limitations accrue by degrees. To live a truth, we naturally begin by conforming our daily actions to it. Its overflow is first felt by those nearest to us; they are blessed or banned by our use or misuse of it. Equally, if we withhold it, they are deprived of a benefit to which they have a moral right. Although they may be unconscious of the loss, we have injured them in direct proportion to the value of the truth withheld. The theosophist is, as a rule, ready and willing to impart this gracious knowledge which has radiated into his life from hidden spheres and touched it with a glory which escapes the mold of words. But how many theosophists realize that the persons nearest to us, our rightful heirs, are the children? Do they say that these mutinous heads clustering and tossing about us are too full of toys and the glee of a perpetual springtime to find room for larger learning? No observer of children, no nursery eavesdropper, will maintain it. In their butterfly flight they pause, poised just out of reach, let fall some reflection or question full of mysticism, and are gone, swifter than the winged answer. They are sturdy witnesses to the reality of the unseen. They sense it, they ruminate upon it; they turn some theory of their own over and over as the young calf chews its first cud. They find it and use it in their games. They project their knowledge tentatively upon their older friends, in whose conversations they do not find it figured. They are full of naive wonder at this omission, but, once lightly dealt with, once mocked, they shut fast those rosy lips and dream on in silence. They are nearer than we to the Unseen from which we have all come: to us a speculation, to them *it is a memory*, and they resent its profanation instinctively.

Instances of astral and spiritual experiences on the part of children may easily be multiplied, but in the Tea Table of this magazine they have been sufficiently outlined.

The pressing question then for theosophists is this: Shall we leave the children to these vague foreshadowings of truth, until the pressure of material life has dimmed the prophecy of pure youth and eradicated the finer impulse? Or, where the psychic nature is strong, shall we leave them balanced between dread of these sights unseen by others about them, and the keener dread of their own sanity and health? Shall we leave them tossing there, or shall we put a rudder in their hands? The budding form, the starry gaze, the blossom-tinted cheek are so dear; are the hearts, the minds less precious to us? Do we say that these truths are too grand for them? They are not truths if they are not of a pristine simplicity. The limpid purity of the child reflects the True better than our troubled soul can do, and "heaven is near us in our infancy." Springtime is seed time the world over. While the parents are reaching out for Truth, shall the children go on imbibing error? Let us give them the bread of life, not the stone of materiality: let us give them the teachings of universal Justice, of Love. Let us show them how all things move by Law; the rebound of good and evil; the magnificent reaches of Life from world to world, from form to form. When we trace out Karma and Reincarnation to them, first in natural and afterward in ethical symbol, we shall endear the universe to them as they find it welded in links of harmony and love. This joy we owe them, and it is owed higher still; it is a debt to the Supreme.

There should be Sunday Schools for the children of theosophists who believe and practice what they profess. Each Branch could start one. In progressive Boston the *idea* has already taken root. We seem to be irresolute for want of a practical method. Catechisms could be compounded from those of Colonel Olcott. Interesting dialogues and tales might be written by those versed in the labyrinths of these young minds: we all hold a clue to them; this clue is Love. Let us pay our debt to the children.

AUGUST WALDERSEE, F.T.S.

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*The Path* – November 1886, Vol. 1, pp. 245-251.

## POETICAL OCCULTISM.

JULIUS

II. {2 of 4}

{The other 3 are not by Julia so they are not included here.}

### SOME ROUGH STUDIES OF THE OCCULT LEANINGS OF THE POETS.

Perhaps no passage in *Light on the Path* is more forcible than that which warns the disciple against allowing the idea of separateness from any evil thing or person to grow up within him. He is bidden to "be wary, lest too soon you fancy yourself a thing apart from the mass." The *Bhagavad Gîtâ* utters the same truth in other words by picturing man as led astray by the pride of self-sufficiency and the great danger underlying the desires and passions of the individual soul. Throughout life the student of occultism daily renews the struggle of soul against flesh, of faith against desire. This combat is finely pictured in Tennyson's *The Palace of Art*. It is truly an occult palace. Four courts are made, east, west, south and north, with a squared lawn in each, and four great

fountains “stream in misty folds.” Here we are reminded of the Garden of Eden with its four rivers, of which Eliphas Levi says: “this description of the terrestrial paradise is resumed in the figure of a perfect pentacle. It is circular or square, since it is equally watered by four rivers disposed in a cross.” The square, answering to the number four was indeed the great kabbalistic figure, representing the Trinity in Unity. Nor is the mystic circle wanting in our occult palace, for there are “cool rows of circling cloisters” about the squares, and a gilded gallery that “lent broad verge to distant lands,” and “incense streaming from a golden cup,” another mystic symbol, representing the passive or negative side of nature. Full of sumptuousness was this palace, built for the soul that she might dwell in sensuous luxury, remote from the struggling world. Then the poet shows us further into the recesses of his sweet thought, and we see in the pictures with which the palace was hung, a portrayal of the various life experiences of the soul as it passes from phase to phase, from room to room of this great palace which is human life.

Full of great rooms and small the palace stood,  
All various, *each a perfect whole*  
*From living Nature*, fit for every mood  
And change of my still soul.

From high estate to low the soul thus passes, from a “glimmering land” to “iron coast and angry wave;” from uplands of toil and harvest, to the “high bleak crags of sorrow, from Greece and Sicily to India or the North, until “every landscape, as fit for every mood was there, not less than truth designed,” a rich panorama of re-incarnations. Amongst all these the soul moves joyful and feasting, “Lord of the senses five,” communing with herself that all these are her own in the “God-like isolation which is hers.”

Then of the moral instinct would she prate,  
And of the rising from the dead,  
As hers by right of full-accomplish'd Fate;  
And at the last she said:

“I take possession of man’s mind and deed.  
I care not what the sects may brawl.  
I sit as God holding no form of creed  
But contemplating all.”

So three years she throve and prospered, but in the fourth year, (mark again the occult number of perfection,) a great dread came upon her, she was plagued in “the abysmal deeps of personality” with a sore despair. The moment of choice, the turning point had come, that period of which Esoteric Buddhism speaks as occurring for the race in the fifth round but to which some exceptional personalities have forced themselves in this our fourth round. Many occultists will see their own experience mirrored in that of this tormented and lonely soul, contemplating her “palace of strength whereof the foundation stones were laid since her first memory,” only to see in its dark corners, “uncertain shapes, horrible nightmares, white-eyed phantasms and hollow shades enclosing hearts of flame.” Do we not seem to see all the elemental world, led on by the dread Dweller of the Threshold here confronting us? The struggle is even more powerfully depicted but the lesson is learned; the soul may retrieve herself

by a lowly life; she throws aside her royal robes, and recognizing the need of mixing with her kind, begs for a "cottage in the vale."

The poet reserves for his last verse the final lesson that only when we lead others to the heights and share these with our kind, can we ourselves stand steadfast there:

"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."

A footnote in the September PATH states:—"After all, the whole process of development is the process of *getting back the memory of the past*. And that too is the teaching found in pure Buddhism, etc." Sometimes we are conscious of vague callings to do a certain thing, and critically regarding ourselves, we cannot see in this life any cause. It seems the bugle note of a past life blown almost in our face: it startles us; sometimes we are overthrown. These memories affect us like the shadows of passing clouds across our path, now tangible; then fading, only a cloud. Now they start before us like phantoms, or like a person behind you as you look at a mirror, it looks over the shoulder. If they are indeed reminiscences of other lives, although dead and past, they yet have a power. Hear what Lowell whispers in "*In The Twilight*" of these mysterious moments:

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

And yet, could I live it over,  
This Life which stirs in my brain,  
Could I be both maiden and lover,  
Moon and tide, bee and clover,  
As I seem to have been, once again,  
Could I but speak and show it,  
This pleasure more sharp than pain,  
Which baffles and lures me so!  
The world would not lack a poet,  
Such as it had

In the ages glad,  
Long Ago.

Emerson, who saw further into the world of nature than any poet of our race, gives us this:

And as through dreams in watches of the night,  
So through all creatures in their form and ways  
Some mystic hint accosts the vigilant,  
Not clearly voiced, but waking a new sense  
Inviting to new knowledge, *one with old*.<sup>1</sup>

The hermetic maxim, "As above so below," sends us indeed to nature for initiation, and the *Gîtâ* follows up this nail with a hammer by saying: "The man, O Arjoona, who, from what passeth in his own breast, whether it be pain or pleasure, beholdeth the same in others, is esteemed a supreme Yogi."<sup>2</sup> Analogy, Harmony, Unity, these are the words traced over and over for us, the shining rays of the one Law. These are the thoughts in which the poets delight. Emerson speaks again with still clearer voice:

Brother, sweeter is the Law  
Than all the grace Love ever saw.  
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.  
If the Law should thee forget,  
More enamored serve it yet.  
.  
.  
.  
I found this;  
That of goods I could not miss  
If I fell within the line;  
Once a member, all was mine:  
Houses, banquets, gardens, fountains,  
Fortune's delectable mountains.  
But if I would walk alone  
Was neither cloak nor crumb my own.<sup>3</sup>

The Biblical verse:—"It is more blessed to give than to receive,"<sup>4</sup> is a great occult teaching. As we strengthen the muscles by exercise, so we enlarge the intelligence and the heart by constantly dispensing our means, whether these be golden thoughts, or time, or affections, all along the line of Brotherhood. Not because of a sentiment, but because Life is made up of vibrations which our scientists, cautious as they are, admit may affect the farthest stars.

Like warp and woof, all destinies  
Are woven fast,  
Linked in sympathy, like the keys  
Of an organ vast.

Pluck but one thread, and the web ye mar;  
Break but one

Of a thousand keys, and the paining jar  
Through all will run.<sup>5</sup>

This from Whittier reminds us of the lines on Karma in *Light on the Path*. “Remember that the threads are living,— are like electric wires, more, are like quivering nerves. How far, then, must the stain, the drag awry, be communicated.” Yes, the communion of saints is a living fact. We all commune, not alone with one another; with those above us and with those below, but essentially with our time. Not one of us can escape its influence: we oppose its conclusions, deny its powers, and meanwhile it speaks through us, without our knowledge, the passwords we do not yet understand. This “dark age” is still the birth-place of spiritual development, of an awakening belief in the supernatural, or that which overshadows nature. We have had no more safe, practical sober poet than Whittier, who sweetly sings the life of every day, when he is not stirred by the fret of the times, to Freedom’s larger issues. Yet hear him describing the power of a “wizard:”

All the subtle spirits hiding  
Under earth or wave; abiding  
In the caverned rock, or riding  
Misty clouds, or morning breeze.  
Every dark intelligence,  
Secret soul, and influence  
Of all things, which outward sense  
Feels, or hears, or sees,—  
These the wizard’s skill confessed.<sup>6</sup>

Is not here an “outward sense” of Professor Denton’s discoveries of the “soul of things?” But hear further the poet’s confession of faith in the occult power of will:

Not untrue that tale of old!  
Now as then, the wise and bold  
All the powers of Nature hold,  
    Subject to their kingly will.  
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.  
.  
Still to such, life’s elements,  
With their sterner laws dispense,  
*And the chain of consequence*  
    *Broken in their pathway lies.*  
.  
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.  
.  
To his aid the strong reverses,  
Hidden powers and giant forces,  
And the high stars in their courses,  
    Mingle in his strife.<sup>6</sup>

The italicized lines are almost an echo of the words of an Adept when speaking of the possibility for the disciple, of an ultimate escape from the laws of Karma, which give him the right to demand the secrets of nature. “He obtains this right by having escaped from the limits of nature, and by having freed himself from the rules which govern human life.” So does Whittier’s initiate. For every one of us there looms a

danger in our being prone to mistake desire for will. The paradox of Levi is sound and true: "The will obtains all that it does not desire." Meditation in this direction will reveal some deep and useful truths to the practical occultist.

But to return to our poets. There are many butterfly hints to be found fluttering through their lines. Time has spared us this one from Marvel:

At some fruit-tree's mossy root,  
Casting the Body's Vest aside  
My Soul into the bough does glide;  
There, like a bird, its sits and sings.<sup>7</sup>

And Matthew Arnold, turned dreamer for the nonce, has netted us one, more meaty than diaphanous, in which we find hints of periodic Devachanic sleep, between every period of earth struggle, of man's threefold nature which serves to hide the memory of his other lives, and a touch of Karma as well:

The Guide of our dark steps a triple veil  
Betwixt our senses and our sorrow keeps;  
Hath sown with cloudless passages the tale  
Of grief, and eased us with a thousand sleeps.<sup>8</sup>

It would sometimes seem, as in the above quotation, that the poet himself was scarcely conscious of the full bearing of what he wrote, as if that dim something from another life of which Lowell spoke, had brushed him with its wing unawares. Often the higher Self speaks out from a man's work, to other men whose consciousness has a higher development than his own, while it has not as yet revealed itself to him. How many men tremble thus on the borders of the unseen. Let us beware whom we set down as remote from our communion, "for in an instant a veil may fall down from his spirit, and he will be far ahead of us all." There is an occult verse from Goethe which has been quoted by Tyndall in one of those sad and baffled paragraphs which darkle through the works of our scientists, shadowy witnesses that these distinguished materialists and physicists are often nearer our path than they or we suspect. Through such they seem to call for deliverance. We give the verse in its setting, leaving Tyndall's prose to point its poetic meaning.

"As regards knowledge, physical science is polar. In one sense it knows, or is destined to know everything. In another sense it knows nothing. Science understands much of this intermediate phase of things that we call nature, of which it is the product; but science knows nothing of the origin or destiny of nature. Who or what made the sun, and gave his rays their alleged power? Who or what made and bestowed upon the ultimate particles of matter their wondrous power of varied interaction? Science does not know: the mystery, though pushed back, remains unaltered. To many of us who feel that there are more things in heaven and earth than are dreamt of in the present philosophy of science, but who have been also taught by baffled efforts, how vain is the attempt to grapple with the Inscrutable, the ultimate frame of mind is that of Goethe:

Who dares to name His name,  
Or belief in him proclaim,  
Veiled in mystery as He is, the All-enfolder?  
Gleams across the mind His light,

Feels the lifted soul His might;  
Dare it then deny His reign, the All-upholder?"<sup>9</sup>

JULIUS.

## NOTES

1. {"The Adirondacs, A Journal," Ralph Waldo Emerson.}
2. {"*Bhagavad Gîtâ*."}
3. {"The Discontented Poet, a Masque," Ralph Waldo Emerson.}
4. {Acts 22:35.}
5. {"My Soul and I," John Greenleaf Whittier.}
6. {"The Bridal of Pennacook," John Greenleaf Whittier.}
7. {"The Garden," Andrew Marvell.}
8. {"To a Gipsy Child by the Seashore," Matthew Arnold.}
9. {"*Fragments of Science*, John Tyndall.}

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## PRINCIPLE OR SENTIMENT?

J.W.L. KEIGHTLEY

The sentiment of Brotherhood is one thing; the principle of Brotherhood is another. The one is a phase of emotion; the other is a fact throughout Nature. The principle is a constructive force in action; the sentiment, inadequate, partial and restricted, weakens, hence destroys. Unless we are able to discriminate between them in our daily lives, we shall risk to tear down where we would build; more, we shall risk many a benign possibility of the future, for is not this the supreme cyclic moment wherein, as in some titanic laboratory, the elements of future attainment are brought together? The principle will combine where the sentiment would scatter them.

By the principle of Brotherhood is meant the building power, the unifying force. It constructs by means of the harmony of contraries. Compassion is its name of names, its law of laws, and not its attribute. In that this principle flows forth to all from Nature's inmost heart, harmonizing all to one consenting whole, the infinite mercy of its action stands revealed. We come to understand why a teacher, speaking for his entire fraternity, said to a would-be pupil that it is their business to humanize their nature with compassion.

In the harmony which exists between apparent contraries lies a wise and simple teaching. Forms may differ, formulae may diverge, but let the chord of the mass be identical; let the same binding vibration exist; let the mental tendency or the spiritual gravitation be similar, and we shall find a central harmony and likeness in the most dissimilar appearances. The principle of Brotherhood will then have ample expression. Chemical relations at the one pole of Being and the relations of human minds at the other pole, alike serve to illustrate this broad fact. All at once we see that Brotherhood lies, not in the divergences, not in the differences, but in the identity of a central truth, a common factor in whose presence those differences are minor, are without essential meaning. In the presence, as it were, of a divine unity, these temporary divergences are without force and weight. Thus compassion, in the presence of the spiritual identity of all Being, overlooks the clouds obscuring our sun-natures, and has but a single, universal care; that care, to assist the sun of the Self to shine forth.

This “spiritual identity of all Being” is another way of phrasing Universal Brotherhood. By the use of the word “spiritual” we transfer the conception to the plane of force *per se*. If we are to establish a clear distinction between the principle and the mere sentiment, some practical, working definition of the principle must be found; and it must hold good in every department of life. From the world of the mineral to the world of mind we must be able to identify it at every step. It is then evident that this principle can only be expressed in terms of force, for only through the media of underlying forces can all the planes of life be said to intercommunicate. The principle we seek is then readily found, for:

That which in the mineral kingdom is the binding force holding the molecules together around a common center:

That which in the world of bodies is the equilibrating force, maintaining or preserving their interaction during “life,” and after “death” coördinating the separating atoms to larger processes of life-action, returning each constituent of matter, of force or of substance to the cosmic storehouse whence it was drawn:

That which in the world of human action finds expression in the social, the communal, the coöperative, the conservative and preservative instincts, however misused:

That which in the world of thought becomes visible as the intuition of an immortal essence and of the identity of all souls with the Over Soul:

These are all varying modes of one binding force, of one underlying unit of consciousness, seeking with never dying compassion to harmonize all these world-wide differences with itself — the Self. Everywhere to assist this ultimate expression is the work of the true Brotherhood.

The conception of unity in diversity lies at the root of the human mind. Warped and selfish instincts distort its features. Noble lives are those whose clear vision has seen that we must work for the good of the whole if we would advance the race, that we must continually bind, harmonize, equalize and equilibrate, often attaining some united result by means of the interaction of contraries, rounding each orbit to a central aim. They have seen that the tangent is unproductive. True, the master-builders have pulled down in order to build, but what have they demolished? Forms, creeds, habits of thought, erroneous ideas. Never persons; individuals never. Their use of force is necessarily impersonal, working as they do with Nature, and not against her. When men have hardened the living truth into a dogma, by the very laws of life that truth which is alive and vital must presently find another vehicle of expression, expanding with the expanding mind of man. Then the master-builders, arriving one by one along the centuries, attack these old devitalized forms, as the air attacks cast-off bodies exposed to its action; as the earth, the water, and the fire do. Imitating this natural action of the elements, the servants of Nature assist the disintegration of each rejected chrysalis of thought, aiding that thought — the escaping life itself — to soar where once it crept. Teaching and living the law of individual responsibility and freedom of choice, they have applied themselves only to the dispersion of false ideals; they have not attacked persons, but have left these to the law. For the Wise know well that man is not homogeneous, and, meeting the divine in each with the divine, they have endeavored to humanize the bestial with compassion, and failing, have veiled their eyes awhile. Their hearts they veil never.

When we thus attain to the idea of the impersonal nature of force, we begin to understand why it has been said; (a) That the true disciple must feel himself to be but a force in nature and “work on with her;” and (b) That the first exercise of the selfish (or “black”) magician is to hypnotize individuals. On the one hand, impersonality; on the other hand, personality carried to its highest degree. On the right, an endeavor to assist

the central perfection of Nature: on the left an effort to center Nature around one's self.

The law of cycles has its inevitable sweep and sway. With that the master builder works and must work, though nations fall. There are cataclysms he cannot avert, convulsions which he cannot impede but which he may shorten by hastening and intensifying their action. In truth he knows — and the knowledge averts sorrow — he knows that only outer forms can fail. The land may sink beneath the seas, bodies may disperse to the elements; but the national spirit lives and re-incarnates, the national mind finds its outlet and manifestation in lands remote, emerging from the waves, in bodies more adapted to the continuous *mental* development of the human soul.

It remains for us to establish some touchstone whereby we may know the absence of this impersonal spiritual force from our lives, or its presence in them. This touchstone is found in the *tendency* of a person, an act or a thought. Our judgment will not be infallible, but the constant effort to make it by this larger light, clarifies the mental vision. A teacher is quoted as having said: "Judge the act, but not the actor." Is not this but another way of expressing the idea that we should observe the separative tendency of others and of ourselves, while presuming to judge and condemn no fellow being?

We have all of us seen persons whose main trend is towards unity, harmony. Not all their acts have borne an impress so divine. Yet their tendency is constructive. Whether in secluded homes they create an atmosphere of tranquility and duty; whether they flash through the world clearing, as by the action of light, a way for truth and justice, they are ever units of the binding force, sharers of Nature's action. They have abandoned self. This is true of the simplest home maker as of the great patriots and reformers. The test of either is the question: Did they build or did they destroy? But no surface judgment must be brought to bear. Napoleon warred, but to raise the model of a wider freedom; to open out, amid prejudice and privilege, a broader path for human thought and human endeavor; his victories were eloquent for peace. Grant battled, but it was to bind his divided nation together in a more liberal and more lasting union. Before the profound mystery of human progress we are forced to admit that a just judgment of mankind is rarely possible to us: we know not what star has overshadowed the agents of destiny.

Once again, we have all of us met persons whose tendency is distinctly separative. Home, creeds, parties, movements, they struggle for supremacy of action in one or all of these and rend all alike. The sphere of destruction is theirs. They combine, only to explode. What they cannot break down, they condemn. The more inoperative their condemnation, the more insistent it becomes, until the moral sense is blunted and they condemn upon hearsay only; they have lost sight of that basic rule of the truth lover, never to make a statement of fact except upon their own personal knowledge. They lead, only by the power of their personality; when this wanes, they are but names and ghosts. It must ever be so. Whenever the human mind has sown the giant weed of self, cultivating that under the sounding titles of genius or talent, power or charm; whenever the individual force is used for personal ambition and not in the all-embracing ends of Nature's harmonious plan; whenever the individual arrays the Personal Idea against the Ideal Nature; then Nature herself provides the antidote, the force reacts, the individual loses power and minds enslaved are all at once set free.

How then shall we know when this separative force is set in action, whether by another or by ourself? Can we not see when a person is attacked and when a principle? Can we not discern that action which aggrandizes a personality from that which upholds an ideal? Do we not know when the divine in man is encouraged and when the personality is praised? When the lower nature is bidden to look upward in hope,

and when disdain and self-righteousness strike it lower still? Ah, yes! We are not so much at ease in our restricted mental atmosphere that we feel no exhilaration from a purer air.

Coming now to the question of the principle of Brotherhood and the mere sentiment thereof, I would point out that the sentiment may exist as a parasitic growth upon the true principle, threatening to stifle that in its false embrace. Sentimentality never discriminates. It advocates a "mush of concession." It rejoices in the exercise of emotion; loves to "feel good" to "feel kind;" to lisp the sugared phrase, the honeyed hope. It never knew that in Justice dwells a higher Brotherhood. Music, light, the enthusiasm of the crowd or of the personal mood are its stimulants. It delights in fictions, as a false peace, an impossible equality. It pays no heed to spiritual harmony; has no respect for the fitness of things: ignores the laws of force; violates the underlying spirit of persons and acts; has no care but for its own expansion, no aim but to bubble and spill. Better than the vast diapason of Nature it loves the tinkle of its own slender tune. It must see itself in evidence and in its own way does quite as much harm as the combative use of the separative force. Why? Because it is, in fact, one mode of that same force. It seeks — what does it seek? Self-gratification, self-exhibition, the generous pose before its own mental mirror. It hesitates not to tread where angels fear to trespass, but goes giddily about its self-assumed task of uniting spiritual dissimilars, heedless what delicate balance of force it disturbs. Its vanity would seek to bind peace and war together; to merge, as only the ONE can do, the two poles of life into the circle, and because its passing sensations can bestow an emotional fraternity upon the most divergent acts or personalities, it fancies it has equalized all. This maudlin streak manifests in most of us and its test is the same as the test of a more spartan virtue. The sentiment of Brotherhood attaches to persons. It views a man as a simple unit, not as a congeries of forces, praises him as if his light were single and white. A principle is too cold and abstract a thing to kindle this facile flame. And that is our fault. When we have made the principle warm and vital with our abounding love, our daily heart-living of it, then, and then only can we complain if it draws not the love of others as a star attracts a star.

Whenever an act or a thought threatens the unity of that sacred cause to which we are pledged, it becomes our duty to suppress these in ourselves as to refrain from supporting them in others. For, I repeat, we cannot act alone; each must be wise for the rest. Moments will come when we must fulfil that other duty of pointing out the disruptive tendency of some proposed action. Then go forward in God's name. Do not fear to offend sentiment; fear only to be unjust. Having done our duty, we may leave that to the law while with our fellows we work on at other tasks. Remember that many an impulse apparently amiable has its root in self-esteem. The wish to ease a personal friend at any cost can do as much harm to the spiritual unity of our movement as hatred and malice can do: partiality is a separative agent and hath its back-stroke. There are times when it were better to follow our comrades in a mistake, giving up our own view with the larger aim of preserving harmony, for in such case those who guide the movement can use this harmonious force for great ends and can at the same time re-adjust the mistaken action. It were a far more difficult task to readjust those who quarrel in the cause of peace. Forces are forces, they are not to be gainsaid, not all the "sweetness and light" that sentiment ever uttered can abate one atom of their power, once we have evolved them. It is from our motives that they have birth and color; guard vigilantly the fountain of force in the heart.

Nor shall we fear to be loyal to our leaders, past and present. Smile the critics down; tell them we praise, not the leaders, but their work. Are they not embodied principles? When loyal expression is a force of far-reaching power in the grasp of the masters of forces, shall we withhold that aid? I trow<sup>1</sup> we will not withhold it. Our

Society was never so large, so vigorous, so united and harmonious as it is to-day, and the force which it represents is the outcome of the lives of our leaders; their vital power, their constructive energy. That we praise, that ancient building spirit, we, followers of that through many times and lands. Shall we not trustingly follow still, being ware of our own personal tendency, distrusting mere sentiment and, looking higher, looking deeper, discern in justice, in calmness, in patience and in compassion that universal principle which is the only true Brotherhood because it looks only at the spiritual identity? Let us make no pact with the spirit of disruption, for we are the trustees of the future, a far-reaching spiritual responsibility is ours.

J.W.L. KEIGHTLEY.

## NOTE

1. {Think or believe.}

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*Reminiscences of H. P. Blavatsky and "The Secret Doctrine"* – 1893, pp. 121-129.

## A PRIVATE LETTER.

R.S. {PROBABLY JULIA KEIGHTLEY}

VIII.

### A PRIVATE LETTER.

DEAR COUNTESS WACHTMEISTER,

As you are preparing a book upon H.P.B.'s method of writing *The Secret Doctrine*, you may like to include a sketch of her method of personally teaching her pupils at a distance.

Nothing has heretofore been printed upon this subject, nor could I do so if my name were appended to the account. Yet I think you and others will accept my statements especially as some of you have had proof that I was so taught, as, I doubt not, were others, though I do not know of them.

It is because this method in part resembles her description of how she was taught herself, and how she wrote *Isis* and *The Secret Doctrine*, that I think it will be interesting in this connection.

Living some thousand of miles from England, I never met Madame Blavatsky in person. It is now seven years since first I heard her name, and the word "Theosophy." Like others of my acquaintance, I first heard of both by coming across the S.P.R. pamphlet denouncing her as an impostor and asserting the Hodgson-Coulomb slander as a true fact. Against this weak background with its feeble personalities, her colossal individuality stood sharply outlined, astonishing the spectators of this shallow age. It is not my habit to judge of persons by any specific acts, but by the whole tendency of their teaching or their lives. H.P.B. herself wrote at about that time:—

"Follow the path I show, the Masters who are behind: do not follow me or my path."

I first took this as pointing out in herself, that common human liability to fail in living the truths it teaches and would fain attain, and I was willing to extend to

Madame Blavatsky, the courageous Messenger, that lenient judgment which we ourselves ask for in like case.

Soon, however, I began to realize, through my own experience, that she was not what she seemed to be. Upon this point I will not dwell, further than to say that the evidence I had, caused me to ask H.P.B. to teach me; and the fact that I fully trusted in and believed her, is precisely what gained for me the fulfilment of my wish. The mental attitude of belief sets up, in our aura and in our inner bodies, magnetic and attractive conditions, very different to those of contraction and densification, which exist where doubt or criticism fill the mind. A literal quickening of my aura and inner body took place; the former was felt even by persons to whom my thoughts and Theosophic interests were all unknown. The contraction in which men and women enfold themselves is too little understood. To be known, faith and devotion must first be had. I have heard tell of one of her readers who said that Madame Blavatsky never published anything about the human aura. What a ripple of amusement then went the rounds of those who have any clues to *The Secret Doctrine* or knowledge of certain other matters!

The situation was then this. I was at a great distance from H.P.B. Madame Blavatsky died before I ever met her. I was not, I never became a "Psychic" as that word is generally used. I had no wish for "powers," never sat for "meditation" or "concentration." It is, however, natural for me to concentrate upon whatever I do, and Theosophy is never out of my mind. I was not and I am not a vegetarian. I had taken no ascetic vows. I had never had any "psychic," clairvoyant or subjective experiences (except those of thought) in my life. I lived quite another life until Theosophy expanded my mind and urged me to strenuous efforts in study and T.S. work, in order that help might come to all those minds obscured by the chill sense of being alone and helpless in a world of chance, where no internal peace could be gained save through the narcotization of Dogma, Doctrine or Convention. The use of narcotics — even for the mind — becomes in time a new form of suffering.

After H.P.B. accepted me as a pupil, no rules were laid down, no plans formulated. I continued my daily routine, and at night, after I fell into a deep sleep, the new life began. On waking in the morning from a sleep so profound that the attitude of the previous night was still retained, I would vividly remember that I had gone, as it were, to H.P.B. I had been received in rooms which I could and did describe to those who lived with her — described, even to the worn places or holes in the carpet. On the first occasion of this kind she signified to me her acceptance of me as a pupil and in no other way. After that, she would receive me in varying fashion, showing me pictures which passed like panoramas across the walls of the room.

There are but few that I could verbally describe, containing as they do methods of Motion, of vibration, of the formation of a world from the first nucleolus, of "Spirit molding matter" into form, of Motion that was Consciousness and that was precipitated in my brain as a picture of a fact or a truth. There were definite things too, facts given in *The Secret Doctrine* and in other teachings, none of these being published at the time. Many more things than I can name were thus taught to me, such as future events, events then actually occurring, and facts still unknown relative to the lives of other persons or of the T.S. At other times, times more rare, I would awake to find her standing at the foot of my bed, and as I leaned upon my elbow, her sign-language would begin, the harmonies of Nature would fill the moonlit room, while the wondrous living pictures passed across the wall. All this was perfectly objective to me. I was fully awake to all the surroundings, to all the natural sounds of the night, and I have taken my pet dog into my arms because it shivered and whimpered at sight of her. All the expressions of H.P.B.'s face became familiar to me. I can see her now, her old

bedgown — what dingy old gown was ever so cherished? — folded about her, as she opened out space before me, and then, too, expanded into her own real being.

I have hardly more than half-a-dozen letters from her, and these contain no teaching; they bore upon external theosophic affairs and have this peculiarity. At night she would tell me to advise certain persons of certain things. I would obey, giving her as my authority, and a few days afterwards, but never long enough for the full voyage, would come her letter giving in writing the instructions previously heard at night. Thus I was enabled to prove that I really heard her wish overseas, for always the request concerned some sudden emergency which had just arisen a day, two days at most, before. I was able to check off my experience in this way, as I was also able to speak at times before an event occurred. I never went into a trance but once, and that was after Madame Blavatsky's death. I never had anything to do with spiritualism or mediums. After a short time, I was able to see and to hear at will, without training or effort, as simply and as easily as one breathes. I could see a distant place or person or hear a reply to a question at will. I never made a mistake, though those who had the right, tested me. But let me hasten to add also that I never did any of these things for idle curiosity, but only for the work of Theosophy, and that such use of force at will is with me comparatively infrequent. I do not know how far it extends, simply because I do not care to know.

There are persons who hope to turn us to the belief that H.P.B. was no more than a chela, deserted at the last. But to this day the things she foretold keep on coming true, aye, even to their tempting us, even to definite events for which she prepared us by forewarning us. So all the clatter and chatter, the turmoil and revelations leave us undisturbed, and the apostles of a revised teaching reveal their ignorance of what she taught as clues, clues which they cannot find. The proof, the ever-recurring, ever-living proof, is ours.

There were thus two classes of events. First, those in which she taught me, or in which persons, to me objective, would appear and would show me certain things, or when voices would speak bringing news which came again later on, by post or otherwise. The second class was made up of those minor occasions in which I used my own will. Well do I remember that night when H.P.B. commanded me to use the developing powers for the Theosophical Society only, and to beware of the psychic will-o'-the-wisp.

What I write may seem vague. I will give instances. I was about to enter upon a plan of work with a person whom I was meeting for the first time. All at once I saw in the air H.P.B.'s beautiful hand — the hand with the seal ring upon it — drawing along the atmosphere, just at the height of my eyes, a series of pictures. These pictures represented a course of events and caused me to change my plans; some time after I verified the occurrences. Once I was forewarned of a death which took place at some distance, at the very hour of the warning. Again, I trusted and leaned much upon a certain person, who was gaining an influence over my mind as one learned in spiritual things. One night H.P.B. came, leading this person by the hand, and drawing the skin away from the body of her companion, showed me the internal organs in a hideous state of disease. H.P.B. then pointed to the corner of the room; a bright star seemed to shoot from the heavens and to fall into an abyss. H.P.B. made a sign (and her language was one of signs which vibrated through the ether and seemed to fall into my brain as thoughts), the sign and gesture meant:— "Trust not the fallen star." All this came true, horribly, sadly true.

These events continue to take place, but I must note a difference in their method of occurrence since the death of Madame Blavatsky.

1. I do not see that person.

2. The events occur almost always in the daytime.

3. I am almost always fully conscious on the objective material plane as well.

4. The exceptions to 3 are when my consciousness seems to function in another time or place or body, but even then they occupy but a few seconds apparently, inasmuch as the people about me will have noticed nothing, and I have apparently continued my previous occupation, while I have, so far as my own consciousness goes, been living quite a time in other ages, planes or places. For instance, while dressing in the morning and thinking of the day's plans, I have at the same time felt myself to be in the body of a friend who was then in a steamer in mid-ocean, fastening his collar-button before a mirror, cursing it because it would not fasten, and thinking of me. His sea-trunk lay open behind him. I took a note of the day and hour and subsequently verified his action. The curious part of it is that I felt myself to be both persons and continued both trains of thought at one and the same time.

5. I use my will much more frequently than I did.

And finally, this. A few days after Madame Blavatsky died, H.P.B. awoke me at night. I raised myself, feeling no surprise, but only the sweet accustomed pleasure. She held my eyes with her leonine gaze. Then she grew thinner, taller, her shape became masculine; slowly then her features changed, until a man of height and rugged powers stood before me, the last vestige of her features melting into his, until the leonine gaze, the progressed radiance of her glance alone remained. The man lifted his head and said: "Bear witness!" He then walked from the room, laying his hand on the portrait of H.P.B. as he passed. Since then he has come to me several times, with instructions, in broad daylight while I was busily working, and once he stepped out from a large portrait of H.P.B.

In closing this partial sketch of an inner life which goes on *pari passu* with the outer, let me impress upon you the fact that I never seek or look for any of these things, just as I never use my will to see or hear except when impelled from within. H.P.B. taught me to be "positive" on the psychic plane and "receptive" to higher planes or Beings alone. She taught that the mind was all. Whatever development I gained, came unsought, I never made myself "passive." I am, when awake, at all times able to use whatever gifts I have; I found them within myself and I use them instinctively, naturally, although I had no trace of them before I found H.P.B. Rarely, very rarely now, do I get things in dreams.

It is my firm conviction, based upon experience, that to the sole fact of my devotion to the Lodge, the T.S. and H.P.B., do I owe any of these teachings. This devotion no shock can impair, for my double life and all my consciousness daily prove what these high truths are. In that belief and in the hope that my experience may quicken the seeds of devotion in other minds, I give this out impersonally, for H.P.B. showed me that the mind was all, and how she came to break the molds of human minds and to set them free. The real H.P.B. was disclosed, and I am one of those who have no difficulty in reconciling all the facts of her outer existence, for some there are who can see behind the veils used by the high occultist when dealing with the unseen at the heart of material things.

Thus taught, in the harmonious nights, that H.P.B. who wrote;—

"My days are my Pralayas, my nights are my Manvantaras."

Blessed, indeed, are those who shared her Manvantaras, and who "have not seen and yet have believed."

R.S.

NOTE. — It has been suggested to me that this rapid unfolding without ascetic practice, was due to my “getting back” what was before known to me. I cannot say yea or nay to this, for I know nothing about it. What appears to be necessary, in occultism, is that *each should follow the doctrine of his own Teacher with regard to himself*. There are many souls at various stages of evolution, each with its own requirements. Moreover, the requirements of practical occultism, the evolution of force in one’s self, are again different. To these I have not been attracted, in this life at least. But above all, Devotion to the ideal of the Teachers and to the work, is the firm ground upon which to stand.

R.S.

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*The Path* – February 1891, Vol. 5, pp. 334-339.

*The Vow of Poverty, and Other Essays* – April 1904, pp. 14-24.

## THE PURPOSES OF SOUL.

JASPER NIEMAND

One night, I watched with my dead.

This comrade was smitten in departing; his soul cried out through the body, “*Oh! my wasted life.*” Silence followed, for him the silence of high spheres; for us, the silence of the grave in that dark hour above which exhausted faith could not lift us. It was an hour of bleak despair, and, beneath that, an icy blank.

Yet other hours dawn for the student when a voice out of negation cries, “Look in thy heart and write.” In such an hour, the cry of the departed one was illumined as by the awful torch of Truth. For there is terror for the human soul in that great glory; it blinds as with tempest and pain.

“Oh! my wasted life.” Yet he had worked, striven, done, apparently, all. But the high soul knew well indeed that all had not been done; the conscience-stricken mind confessed its failure.

I wish, my comrades, that we could live our lives, as it were, upon the slopes of death, trying their issues by the light of the new dawn of consciousness. Think you we should not find, by that test, that these lives are full of small issues, tortuous, involved, guided by the opinions of the mass and the needs — not so much of our own bodies and minds, but of those of a complex civilization? The unseen currents pour upon us, through us; the pictures and suggestions thrown upon us by them, as upon a screen, are mistaken for “our own” thoughts and wishes. These are the traps of nature to detain us, as matter attracts and detains spirit. Can we not wish and think what we *will*, from our own centers, in accordance with the impulse of our higher mind? Is it not our first duty to do this; our duty to mankind and to ourselves; to the Law above all? What avails it, think you, to creation or to ourselves, if we allow so-called consideration for others to imbed us more deeply in the material life? Is it not for the higher good of all that we should remain apart from it, even while in it? Apart in thought, in heart. To yield to another is sometimes to assist that other in encumbering his higher soul and our own with details the mind should outgrow, but to which, lacking strength, it still clings. It clings for fear of loss, forgetting that it cannot lose its own. Could we not simplify, think you, if we saw death drawing near, a sheaf of wasted years in his hands? In the death moment, when those years flash across the abnormally quickened brain; when the evolutionary purpose stands clearly forth; when the life result is tested by that purpose and we see that the intent and impulse of the reincarnating ego have been crushed under innumerable petty details of a life foreign, for the most part, to the *real*

needs of souls, how is it with us then? A dread accountant appears, the scales of justice in his hands, a look of alienated majesty on his brow. It is the Master, the Higher Self, denied, outraged, to whom we cry: "I have sinned before heaven and against thee, and am no more worthy to be called thy son."

What, then, is this evolutionary purpose? Listen! *We are the Sons of God*. May we reverently consider the Deity.

There are things too mysterious, too awful for expression. Therefore when speech is attempted, others say, "But I know that." They do not know it, for to know it is to be and do it. Therefore they only know some minor differentiation, which they still neglect.

Consider with me the One Life. "The One Ray multiplies the smaller rays. Life precedes form, and life survives the last atom of form. Through the countless rays proceeds the Life-Ray, the One, like a thread through many jewels." This Ray is the Mystery. It is a conscious Flame. It vibrates in the Dark Centre; it arises; it flashes forth; it is the Knower; it swallows up the merely human consciousness and sets itself on high, the Crest-Jewel of Wisdom.

There is only one way of study. It is this. We must permit that Power to set the lower mind aside. It is ready, every hour of our lives, to declare the evolutionary purpose, the next step; our part is to listen. How then shall we listen and how attract the voice of the Power?

The first step is Resignation. That we know. It is the instant, unceasing acceptance of all results, as fruits of the Law. The next step is Devotion. It evolves causes of a nature sufficiently selfless and pure to ensure higher results. They are higher, inasmuch as they make nearer approach to the universal. This Devotion is the interior preparation of a ground in which the spirit can freely act. By it we hold the mind in concentration upon the Supreme. We encourage it to remain there. Surface waves come and go, but the deep inner attitude invites the Power. Even in the outward it acts, as such thought directs the attractive and assimilative processes of bodies and organs. The myriad atoms, each a life, which we absorb every instant, are for or against the evolutionary purpose as our thought is with it or withdrawn from it.

A formula cannot be given, but we can make an approach to one. Krishna said: "With all thy heart place all thy works on me; prefer me to all things else; depend upon the use of thy understanding and think constantly of me; for by doing so thou shalt, by my divine favor, surmount every difficulty which surroundeth thee." Even in the tumult of our lives this can be done. We must treat our bodies and minds as weak places to be strengthened and upheld. Therefore religious observance is useful. Begin the day with an instant of devotion, and end it so. Standing, with reverential attitude of body and mind, repeat aloud some verse of the scriptures, the mind fixed on the Higher Self, or on the One Life, the aggregate of these selves. Such texts have a life of their own; their spoken word will quicken ours. "The ever unknowable and incognizable *Karana* alone, the *Causeless* Cause of all causes, should have its shrine and altar on the holy and ever untrodden ground of our heart — invisible, intangible, unmentioned, save through 'the still small voice' of our spiritual consciousness. Those who worship before it ought to do so in the silence and sanctified solitude of their Souls, making their spirit the sole mediator between them and the Universal Spirit"...<sup>1</sup> It is useless to say that we must take others with us. "The soul goes alone to The Alone." Having thus set the vibrations for the day, let the student consider the One Life in all life. Let him study every event, referring all to the action of the currents of that Life, and not to the centers through which it speaks. Men are but ganglionic centers, repeating the nerve-auric impulse and passing it along. That is to say, they are this for the most part: there are souls who have achieved their higher being. The

student should form the habit of observing the Life waves, the manifestations of Life, as one. Consider the action of the Life principle in all things. In food, in air, light, sound, persons, events, the human heart; let him refer all things back to it, back to the plane of force, and try to sense them on that plane, to see Krishna in all. This service is no sinecure. But the Lord will repay. Strange lessons will be learned. Life will be seen as made up, not of persons and events, but of manifesting currents, some of which may be rejected and some accepted at the bidding of the inner voice. It alone should command, and not probabilities, eventualities, or temporizing. He who asks, of every crisis, but the simple question, "What is my duty?" and does that regardless of events, to that man the gods appear. He will often find that we do many things because the Life impulse is checked by some counter current of sympathetic attraction, which, by contrary vibration in specific centers, blocks its way. Then the general current urges the accomplishment of the thought or action, in which accomplishment the counter current finds equilibrium, is neutralized, and the main current is re-established. This is the impulse of Nature. If we recognize the counter attractions as Karmic illusion, and do not pour our mind into their molds, the attractions disappear because we have fallen back upon the higher one, the Universal Life, whose flow in us we have increased until it sweeps all obstacles away.

Thinking thus always of the One Life in the outer circumstances of our days, there is still another thing we can do. The Deity is always manifesting in us, as everywhere. It impels us by means of impulses springing deep within us and registered upon the consciousness; registered further upon the brain in the proportion in which that brain is prepared to receive it. This preparation consists in keeping the thought turned expectantly toward The One. We need to keep watch for its commands; to learn to distinguish these from lower impulses, suggestions from without, so to say. Above all, we need to obey them. Increase and continuance come from use. While we fulfill the real duties of external life (which are fewer than we think), this interior watch can be kept up. We can be observant of all the impulses arising in us. Who has surprised the swift Will upon its hidden throne, or Motion, the power behind the throne? Only the man who has waited upon the gods. We are here for the purposes of soul.

At first we shall make mistakes in action, but soon an uneasy, subtle undercurrent of warning or dissatisfaction will accompany action which has not been suggested by the true Source. In practical occultism, regular chelas of a group set down all the events of each day; these are compared, and a guiding current is soon seen. Soon they distinguish this from every other *by its tendency*; in the unencumbered field it manifests in glory and power. This course must be followed by him who desires to avoid the death cry of a wasted life. He must also give a fixed time daily, were it but five minutes, to the consideration of The One. He must hold this ground sacred against every invasion. If he be so fortunate as to know the face of a Master, let him bring that before him as an embodiment of the Deity, trying to see it clearly before him in every free moment. "If it be a real Master, he will send his voice. If not, it will be the higher self that will speak." This subconsciousness, this undercurrent of fixed attention, of revolution around the One Life, can be cultivated and enlarges our orbit.

The true student will not speak of the Unknown One. He will be devotional in attitude and in manner when studying high themes. Such habits train the body and free the mind. The place of study should be as simple as possible, and due regard should be had to the making or breaking of currents, for these are *the messengers of the gods*. At such times all externalities should be firmly set aside, and a place cleared in life for the use of the Deity, nor should others be permitted to overrun this place, whether in opposition or in love. Example is our highest duty. We must point out the Star of the Law. If we allow the pain of another — pain unrighteous — to draw us from our duty to that

other and to all, we have in so far helped him along the path of future despair. True Love is Wisdom. Is not my best goal that of my comrade also? Then I am not to linger in delights of self with him, but to draw him up to the light. Will he not come? Then I must go on and do my duty. His pain is resistance to Law.

It is a sad truth that the love of friends and associates often binds them and ourselves. A true lover of humanity says to the Beloved: "The Soul is free. Be free, Beloved! Wait upon the inner impulse; follow it alone. If thou art mine, I cannot lose thee. Spiritual gravitation makes for us. If not mine, I relinquish thee to thine own ray. Even so, thou art mine, as all are myself and thee in the One. I question not thine impulse, thine act. Come; go; do; abstain. The same law is mine." Rich rewards, revelations unguessed await him who loves thus. It is the only right Love. For if I tell another he is free to do as he will, and yet question the wisdom of his impulse or display my pain, is the liberty real? Not so. If I feel pain, it is my service to conquer that ignorance. If he errs, then he learns that lesson. Oh! for a wider trust in the Law. Then the Deity would speak. The life would not be overlaid with material shapes and forms of fear. It congests in these molds. Obeyed every hour, the evolutionary law would manifest. Alas, my comrades! These friends cling to old observance and diurnal habit because in them they know us; they take these to be our established character, the guarantee of our love, and fear to lose us by losing these. And we do the same thing.

I make a great call for Freedom. I raise this standard reverently. Not license attracts me, but Freedom under Law. Freedom to clear a spot where we may listen, hear, obey. That spot Arjuna was told to sit upon because it was his own. Freedom to lop off the excrescences of life; errors of action, errors of thought. Freedom to speak the real mental fact now present to us, without encountering the wounds of affectional habit. Freedom to accept facts as they are, without personal tincture or emotion, so that we may study their meaning with our comrades, accomplishing thus a higher bond, with hearts that accept the freedom of soul. If any others are pained by the Soul's obedience to the laws of her Being, it is our slavery and not our souls they love. Each should see and desire to unveil the higher nature of the other, that God may become manifest in him. The Power only manifests in the free. A soul denied essential freedom, in escaping at death, appeals to the great ones to witness its wrongs, and the Lipika record the penalties of the Law. Mistakes made through "Love" (too often mere attraction or synchronous vibration on one or several planes, without root in the highest bond) do not save us from Karmic retribution. True Love is Cohesion. The One Ray is known also as Eros, because it expands freely to all; freely expands, freely obeys the impulse given by the Eternal. No Love is worthy of the name which is not a sub-ray or copy of That, and "perfect Love casteth out fear."<sup>2</sup> No life so environed that it cannot prepare for the Power. We say we desire the Light and the Path, but we do not use the keys given us, while yet we ask for more, for other ways. There is only one way, and it will be harder to take in each successive life after man has been offered the keys and refrains from using them. We can never break away from the Material, to turn upward, without a shock. It will never be easier than it now is, to cut our way through.

Thus in the death-watches spoke a voice to me. The eloquence of wasted lives cries aloud to all the nights of Time. It has cost others blood and tears to learn these things. May you learn at less cost. May the One Ray shine upon us. May we know our whole Duty. AUM.

JASPER NIEMAND.

The spiritual is its own proof. Only to Consciousness can Consciousness be known.<sup>3</sup>

## NOTES

1. {*The*} *Secret Doctrine*, {H. P. Blavatsky.} I, 280.
2. {1 John 4:18.}
3. {This sentence is not in *The Path* article, but *is* in the book following the chapter.}

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*The Path* – January 1888, Vol. 2, pp. 296-300.

*The Wonder-Light, and Other Tales* – 1890, pp. 73-81.

## RAHULA'S INHERITANCE.

J. CAMPBELL VER PLANCK

...The spirit promised me that I should dwell with  
the crooked moon in her eternal beauty.

In that wonderful Age which our nurses call Once-upon-a-time, the Prince Rahula came into the Hall of Sages and demanded his birthright. The Wise Ones heard him in silence, and he seemed to be dismissed without an answer. On the following day he came again, with the same ill success; so the third time and up to the seventh demand, being always unnoticed and even, as he thought, unseen. On the eighth day a messenger returning to the Council of Sages, found Rahula seated upon a plinth at the entrance to the temple.

“What doest thou there, my Lord?” demanded the messenger.

“I have taken up my abode here, nor will I stir hence until the Wise Ones shall have heard me,” answered Rahula.

“But is it meet that thou shouldst sit here so lowly, Prince that thou art?”

“It is meet that a man do all things to obtain his birthright. For him there is nothing else, and great or small, honey or poison, mine shall be mine.”

The messenger bowed before him. “Thou art more than royal: thou art wise,” he said. Then he hastened within, and when the Sages heard what he had seen they sent for Prince Rahula, who presently saluted them reverently and said: “I am come to claim mine own. I am the Prince Rahula and I am well known to you; seven times already have I claimed it.”

“Yes, my Son,” answered the Elder; “but it is customary to prove a man, that his determination may show him the true heir, so that no impostor shall receive the inheritance kept for him by the Sons of Wisdom. Only those who know their rights and wrest them from Fate by strong courage, are true Princes of the royal line. But there is still a sign and countersign to pass between us e’re we bestow thy birthright upon thee. Dost thou know them?”

The young Prince smiled a smile that was rarely sweet, drew himself to his full height, and tossing back his mantle, displayed to the Sages a crimson heart, transfixed with a golden lance. The Sages rose and saluted the Emblem, and parting their robes, each showed such a heart beneath his own breast. Only in the center of theirs was written the word *Humanity*, and the lances were of living light, and a musical throb that was in itself a perfume was the pulse of each heart.

"Thou knowest the sign indeed," said the Elder to Rahula. "Take now the countersign. Remember that the wise and perfect heart pulsates for man alone. Thou hast demanded thy birthright in the name of the pierced heart: take it, and go in Peace."

At his signal the messenger brought to Rahula a large and brilliant crystal. It was shaped like the crescent moon: one side of it was covered with hieroglyphs cut into the stone; the other sparkled from innumerable facets like a field of hoar frost at sunrise. Rahula looked at it seriously. "A strange gift for a warrior," he said. "What is its use, my Lords? What shall I do with it?"

The Elder answered: "It is the birthright deposited with us at thy coming into the world and we can give thee no other. Its use is for thee to discover. We are but the guardians, not the interpreters. I have spoken."

Vainly Rahula besought him, no other word was uttered; the Sages had resumed their silence and at last, lit by the rays of the shining moon, Rahula left the temple and re-entered life. Long he considered the jewel: of the characters he could make nothing. So he determined to hang the great crystal beneath the royal gateway, where all men might see it, and perchance its use might be discovered. This was done, and the life of the great city passed on beneath the mysterious crystal. Soon strange tales were told of it; at night its wonderful brilliance shattered the darkness with a thousand rays, which were never so softly penetrating as when they lit the weary to his home, or pointed out his task; which were never so blinding and sharp as when they shone into the face of sin and confessed it. These living rays seemed to single out certain men and passing before them, to light them to happiness and good fortune. It was found that such men had always sought after the light with single hearts, so that people began to desire to be well considered by the spirit of the gem, and to take its rays for guidance. Others still, looking for the solution of grave problems of labor and of want, found the answer in the hieroglyphs of the crystal moon, and translated them into many longing lives. Nor was this all. The gem reflected the heavens and their mysteries to those who looked down upon it from hard won heights, and cast also an illumination from those holy lands upon the wayfarers beneath who could not climb so far. It shed from its resplendent facets the life and warmth of the sun, and through the solemn marches of the nights it testified to the living Truth beyond the stars, and so renewed the religion of the people. All who appealed in faith to its hidden spirit were helped: the sick who struggled to touch it were made whole or given great patience and content. At the first touch of sunrise, at the last ray of sunset, seven musical notes rang from its flashing rim and turned to ineffable harmony the lives of all who heard them. Thus the light of a great peace fell over the city; friend and foe alike came from afar to share it and the reign of Rahula blessed even his enemies.

The Prince thought long over the strange power of the crystal as the happy people passed and repassed beneath it. He thought it too diffused; he determined to concentrate and heighten it, and summoning his servants, bade them take down the crystal from the gateway and bring it into one of the great halls of the palace. When this was done, and the soft shining no longer lit those stony ways, the people murmured, so that the Prince went out and himself spoke with them:

"I have been long learning the use of my birthright," he said, "The crystal is too rare a thing to hang thus exposed to the elements, to the enterprise of my rivals, the greed of envious men and to all the chances of fate. I have built an altar in the palace hall; the gem shall hang above it; incense shall rise; the gods will answer me from between the horns of my crystal moon, and send riches to me and to my kingdom. These I will myself dispense to you, and the jewel shall still bless you, but my foes shall be confounded."

All were silent a moment. Afterwards a woman in the crowd fell to weeping and cried out: "Do not this thing, my Lord! Hide not the light of thy birthright from us. We love the gem, and that love is more to us than any riches."

"You shall still love it," replied Rahula "more, you shall worship it, for this crystal is the abode of a mighty spirit; it is the signet of the Gods."

"To worship is not always to love," sobbed the woman, and the crowd complained loudly. But Rahula replied again: "The gem will make my reign renowned. It shall not be profaned by the dust and steam of the byways, by the fevered touch of the sick and the desecration of unhallowed eyes. In the shelter of a sacred place it shall shine for the good alone, and those who do homage to me and who are taught of my priests, these the crystal shall bless, and not my enemies; yea, it shall still bless all my true people. I have said." Rahula disappeared and the crowd went away muttering.

A great change came over the city. Little by little, the old turmoil came back, the old discord and wrangling went on beneath the gateways. The memory of that soft shining died out of the fevered hearts, and soon only the aged and the little children remembered to mourn for the lost gem. But within the temple incense rolled, priests knelt consulting the oracles, wise men interpreted the hieroglyphs seeking riches and fame for Rahula, while over all the white moon hung pale and shuddering in the perfumed breeze. A change came over it like the change in the city. The smoke of worship obscured the rays, then obstructed them; then they ceased shining altogether and the face of the moon was veiled in mist. The temple music drowned the bell notes, and though it was stopped when this was discovered, those notes sounded no more, for the sunrise and sunset glow no longer flooded the crystal rim. The hieroglyphs told wonderful tales of fame and pomp and war, but all turned out illy, and Rahula found that his priests had read them backward, that only the people knew their language by instinct, as the language of their infancy. The glory and beauty of the great gem were gone: none but the priests would do it homage, and it hung, a dulled and impotent thing in the chill silence above the altar. Rahula felt a certain awe, a sense of coming disaster. He bade his servants take down the crystal, set cunning artificers to brighten and restore it, and then, ordering a great festival to be held, he had the stone replaced above the gateway, and waited for the joy and praises of the people.

Instead he heard jeers, flouting and anger. "Does he weary of his pleasure, that he flings it forth to us again?" cried some. Others said: "The stone has brought him ill fortune, and he would cast it over the city instead." Some pointed at it as an old superstition; some prostrated themselves in loud worship, but these were men of evil conscience who sought to propitiate the Prince for their own ends. Some indeed there were who tried to read words of comfort or peace in the gem, but the artificers of the Prince had altered the signs unknowingly and all the real meaning was defaced. While Rahula saw this, first with anger, then with deadly pain and grief, a black storm slowly rolled up, gathered, burst, and in an hundred lightnings the stone was shattered, its splintered fragments hurled down the tempest and lost. The people fled the city in terror, crying that the gods had punished them for reverencing a birthright other than their own, as was forbidden to man. When the storm was over, one pallid star looked out of the clouds upon a deserted palace, and a lonely Prince brooding over his lost birthright, questioning the mystery of that destruction.

Long he searched his heart in the solitude but it gave no answer that he understood; he too had forgotten a language. He rose with sudden recollection; he would go to the hall of Sages. Even as he thought this the Elder stood before him. The Prince shot a glance of hope into that calm face, a glance that changed to one of dismay as the Sage said gravely: "What hast thou done with thy birthright?"

"'I? Nothing,'" stammered Rahula. Mocking echoes multiplied the word. "Nothing! Nothing!" came back to him from all his empty halls like an accusation. He turned quickly upon the Elder:

"Answer me this," he said. "What is this gem, whose power and value are so great, and yet so small? What is it that is both everything and nothing?"

"It is Life. Life which bestowed upon the world is of priceless worth to thee and to all, and which for selfish ends is but an empty thing; Life which thou shalt lose if thou keepest it for thyself. Used as a means, Life is glorious in power and opportunity, fruitful in blessing. Used as an end, a thing sought and worshipped in itself, it is the scorn of mortals and the sport of gods. This was thy only birthright, and thou hast lost it."

"But I will find it again; I will seek the world for the fragments," spoke Rahula. "They shall once more mirror heaven and once more shine upon the people." He went forth to search strongly, a weary search of centuries, for wherever mankind may dwell, there still wanders Rahula, seeking those broken fragments, seeking to restore their scattered meaning. Happy he, who having received Life whole from the gods, gives it back to them in unbroken integrity through the lives of all the people.

J. CAMPBELL VER PLANCK

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*The Path* – January 1888, Vol. 2, pp. 289-290.

## RAYS FROM THE EAST.

J.

(FRAGMENTS OF MSS., WRITTEN DOWN BY J.....)

The longings of no human heart are to be lightly set aside; each one of them is a sub-tone in the great harmony of life; each one is the cry of some brother who has often forgotten his language, but still feels his wants. In his heart burns, however feebly, the spark from the Divine ever seeking the way back to the center from which it came.

True it is that a man may have been initiated, in his past lives, into many degrees of knowledge and power, who yet had not had certain experiences necessary before entering on the next degree; and furthermore, that not one single degree can be lost to him, even though he may now appear before you, in a human garb not inviting, not puissant, not impetuous, nor in any sense free from faults.

\*\* once wrote: "An abyss opens behind each step; he cannot go back, and an irresistible impulse urges him forward."

That "abyss" is the "era of achievement," the passage from an "intermediate form" into a "new type." It is *not* mere absorption. Absorption goes on for periods anterior to it. During the absorption, and after saturation, the being goes on assimilating. Adjacent tissue — so to say — alters by either what your scientists call *infiltration*, or by what Patanjali calls *supply of natures*. There could not be, when the process is completed, any recession to the old type after the intermediate form has disappeared. But truly, just as in your material world, during vast shadowy periods, the vacated — almost — intermediate types floated about until the *habît* of nature had changed and they became useless, and many beings had again and again reoccupied these forms, so in each daily life, or moral life, the intermediate forms remain until *your*

habit has totally altered. They then disappear forever. So it is an abyss, great, profound, wide, silent and tenantless.

In a sense it is like the closed valve in the circulation, which permits no blood to engorge the heart. And the impulse that urges forward, has its source in the great heart which urges on the astral light that makes our poor human hearts beat to and fro. And as the mere motion of the heart cannot be stopped at ease because it is the servant of the great heart, so the impulse cannot be resisted by him who has voluntarily gone into the vast circulation of the great Adam; who, urged on by reverberating echoes from a *living* past, has started toward the goal. Often he knows not why he does so, and is perhaps unaware that the echoes have transformed themselves, by the subtle alchemy of nature, into unconscious leanings very often called “atavistic” (wrongly) by scientific men. So he knows them not as echoes.

Perhaps failure to carry out a chosen plan is part of a necessary step. Our failures to encompass a set end are our best teachers, provided we recognize the real work that inevitably is contained in the failure.

The very rush of the onset made by him who impetuously enters *the path*, has in itself the recoil, and a brave ship is required; and not only a brave ship, but also the pilot called by the name “experience,” and the captain who has sailed in many seas.

Each man keeps his own account — with his eyes closed; but his hand writes down the correct sums, and the balance *has to be struck*.

*The examiner of accounts is deaf, dumb and blind; the entries are in relief, and he measures them by touch.*

I charge you to give these words to those whom you know are waiting and anxious to hear or see any words of mine.

May we be guided towards the living Truth.

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*The Path* – February 1889, Vol. 3, p. 355.

## REFLECTIONS.

UNSIGNED {PROBABLY JULIA VER PLANCK}

When I am annoyed by an ungovernable animal, I am reminded that the brutes would not oppose man if man understood and entered into his true relations with all things. The brutes are unconsciously aware of the general human opposition, which they see focalized in each human being. When I am in harmony with all things, men *cannot* and brutes *will not* oppose me. In underrating instinct, the brute is more true than is the man, to the unwritten Law.

The “idle word” condemned by Jesus is inactivity of Being. It is the cessation of the homogeneous resonance, the Logos or Word. The Word in its highest activity is pure spirit; in stagnation it is hell. To each man it is given in trust for all men; if he misinterprets it he is tortured. If he sequesters it, he is condemned to eternal death that it may be free; for it is eternally free. Through misuse, he may learn its use. If he denies it, he is lost; for by it alone he lives.

It is better for a man to sin deliberately against the Law than to chafe under the mandates of conscience. The first is a renegade who chooses another King; the second is coward and slave who rebels but dares not disobey. The energy of direct sin may, by reaction, compel return, but the lethargy of fear bears no fruit.

If you wish to receive, *give*. If you wish to ascend, *descend*. If you wish to live, *die*. If you wish to understand these words, read them by the lamp of the spirit, and reject that of the understanding.

Apparent evil is a necessary result of manifestation or duality. The good alone is *in Time* inactive. Evil is the balance of good: the Equilibrating power reigns above and is alone eternal.

When the silent Eternal gives birth to the activity of Spirit in Space the worlds are evolved, and, seeking equilibrium, return again to the eternal silence. So with the soul of man.

More saving grace may be found in the society of thieves than in that of fine persons who never reverberate to a true thought. In the first there is rebound; the latter is the negation of life. Expiation is the kernel of sin. "Evil" containing its own punishment continually defeats itself, and sows the seed of "good" in its own regeneration.

He who would see Perfection must become It. How? By beginning the attempt. Its first step is the full realization of imperfection in himself.

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*The Path* – September 1886, Vol. 1, pp. 184-188.

## RETICENCE OF MAHÂTMAS AND EVOLUTION OF THE INDIVIDUAL.

JULIUS

Members of the Theosophical Society and the general public have alike manifested a wide divergence of opinion both as regards the fundamental aim of the Society, and its adaptation to individual cases. To get a right view of these points, it is first absolutely necessary that the Society should be considered as a whole, and to remember that like every movement in the physical or spiritual world, it must be governed by the great law of Evolution. This is its primal Cause, and the evolution of the individual its primary work. It is not, as its history shows, an ephemeral institution, to last for a given period, like a hospital, or a society to benefit animals, or poor children, or fallen women. It is a spoke of the universal wheel of Evolution. When the world contained a body of persons sufficiently developed on the spiritual plane, they naturally formed a nucleus, from which rays presently diverged to various parts of the globe. Stimulating centers of energy which are constantly expanding through the individual efforts of their members. What is true of the whole body is true also of its component parts, and each individual, in mental capacity and psychical conditions is precisely what his previous experience, or his evolutionary ratio entitles him to be. Only by means of ever increasing effort on his own part, can he invigorate these powers.

In founding the Theosophical Society, it was hoped that the united labors of all for each and of each for all, might result in so much enlightenment and expansion of individuals as the friction of many minds, all directed to one issue, should through the correlation of moral forces afford. Hence the Society was based upon the idea of Universal Brotherhood.

There are at present two classes of persons who misinterpret this aim of the Society. The first class is variously composed of,— (A) those persons who suppose the Society to be solely devoted to a large phase of the subject, such as the progressive development of the entire body of the present race, or to the united interests of great

masses of people, leaving the individual altogether alone in the up-hill path of his own spiritual development. (B) Various persons in different parts of the world who have seen fit, coincidentally with giving in their adherence to the idea of Universal Brotherhood, to ridicule it as “a mere sham” or “a pure formula” or “an utopian impossibility:” the wavering incredulity of every such person arises no doubt from individual or constitutional peculiarity. (C) Such as suppose this basic idea to be an elastic declaration which may always be used as a shield to ward off the unpopular or chaffing accusation of an interest in Mysticism. (D) Those who base their denial of universal brotherhood upon the very sensible rule requiring applicants for initiation to have endorsement from active fellows of the Society. “If you make distinctions you are not universal,” is the cry of these last.

All the above persons will sooner or later discover that the Society as a whole progresses through the spiritual advancement of individual members. If the individual retrogrades, the common welfare is minus so much; if he progresses, it is plus so much, and when many rise all are presently lifted as by specific gravity, into a higher plane. For this reason not only the exoteric and much slandered founders of the Society, but also the hidden and real founders have always given much of their time and thought to individuals. At the same time they have unceasingly insisted upon the necessity for individual efforts, that each member might develop himself. This is the true meaning of Evolution. It is not the expansion of the man by means of an external force acting upon inert tissue, but an impulse from within outward and upward, enhanced by the cumulative effect of previous impulses, and further assisted by such favoring environment as his condition may permit him to assimilate.

It is in this final respect that the second class under consideration have erred. They demand greater extraneous aid for the individual. Such persons, having joined the Society and asserted their belief in the existence of Mahâtmas, or Adepts, or highly advanced human beings, have after a time uttered complaints because they had no personal communications from these Great Beings, while they feel such attentions to be their due. These persons have said,— “We have declared our belief in these wise and holy Men; we have joined the Society, but we have not been favored with any proofs directly from them.” Such persons require a letter under seal, projected in a phenomenal manner through the air or otherwise. Nothing short of this will satisfy them, and if they do not get it, they are likely to leave the fold of the Society, as they themselves intimate. Their complaint, in general terms, is that the Mahâtmas are reticent, altogether too reticent to suit their requirements. They say that it is declared that certain other persons have received such evidence in the shape of letters, and they cite Messrs. Sinnett, Olcott, Damodar, Hume, Madame Blavatsky and several Hindus as the favored recipients. The complainants then state that their aspirations, their need, their merit, equal that of these persons, that they are, to put it roughly, “every bit as good.” Some who do not say as much, think it, and a general outcry arises of,— “Why do we not get such letters as proofs? Are we not justified in ascribing undue reticence to the Mahâtmas?” When in addition it is said that some others have seen the Mahâtmas, or heard their voices and received gifts from them, the injured ones reiterate the complaint,— “Why are the Mahâtmas so reticent?” This attitude has finally become that of the press and the public at large, so that the question presents itself,— “Are the Mahâtmas unduly reticent?”

The solution of this question is bound up in the subject of the “Evolution of the Individual.” As regards the general evolution, the Mahâtmas cannot be thus accused, for had we their knowledge of the whole, so as to be able to feel and know what all minerals, plants, animals and men feel collectively, we should see that in this department Mahâtmas are never accused even in thought of withholding either knowledge, favor or blessing. The whole moves by law (which law includes the

Mahâtmas themselves), and as a whole recognizes this law and knows no possible departure from it.

As heretofore stated, the work of the Theosophical Society lies within the department of individual evolution, and just as its sphere may only be enlarged through the constant labors of its members, so every individual follows the same law, *will be, will be*.<sup>1</sup> The Mahâtmas are not reticent. They can justly be no more than the favoring environment to the individual soul. They give to each human well just the water it can hold; to overflow it would be waste. It has been well said that the human mind, like the atmosphere, has its saturation point. To realize when we have reached this point is the first step on the path of self-knowledge: to strive to expand our boundaries by incessant study and observation, carries us leagues further on our way. Those who journey thus have neither time nor desire for complaint. We enter into this life through our parents, subject to law. From one mystery we pass, ignorant of the future, into another mystery: lessons are learned in each. So is the soul born into the higher life and becomes by degrees acquainted with its mysteries. Through each order of life runs the law of natural selection. "A man is a method, a progressive arrangement, a selecting principle,"<sup>2</sup> says Emerson. As the man chooses the friends and the pursuits best adapted to him, so by the law of spiritual dynamics is the soul attracted to just such food as it can assimilate, to the influences necessary to its present development. If the individual mind fails to grasp this idea and to see that we ourselves, (and not the Mahâtmas,) create our own possibilities, how far less fitted is it to profit usefully by the very opportunities it demands. The gratification of curiosity, the quickening of interest in personalities or phenomena as such, are not growths of the soul, nor can they advance the evolution of the individual. The Mahâtmas do not withhold us from Truth, but we ourselves. When we come to be a part of it, we shall know it: when we come to live in its laws, who can shut us away from it? The upright heart cries,— "Mine is mine, if the universe deny me, and not all the Mahâtmas combined can convey to me one truth in which I am not ready to dwell. The Spirit communicates itself; the Masters but interpret the vision, as soothsayers the dreams of Kings. I am a king when the Spirit exalts me, made so by the super-royal act. I will not covet borrowed robes, nor whine as a beggar for charities, but wait until I am come into mine own estate. Then the Wise Ones will teach me how to rule it."<sup>3</sup> The heart that chooses in truth this noble part, has felt already the quickening touch of the Divine. Like Jove of old, it bids the earth-bound waggoner abate his cries, and put first his own shoulder to the wheel.

Let complainants therefore reflect how ignorant they are of their own capacity to understand psychological data, and how necessary it is that they should first develop themselves in that direction. A ray of light may shoot by us unseen and unknown, to be lost in the further space, for want of the timely interposition of a reflective surface. Or it may stream directly into the eye, and even so may still be lost, should the eye lack the power to receive the impression. Thus an attempt at direct communication or illumination may be and often is frustrated for lack of the perceptive eye and soul. Shall we expect to receive these at other hands, as by a miracle, when we know well that we never fully profit by any experience which we have not lived out for ourselves. Who amongst us has not seen a child reject with impatience the teachings of his elders, and presently return home brimful of wonder and dogmatism over the very same fact which some companion had knocked into him? The strong soul must be self-delivered. Amongst our number there are indeed those who have the spiritual eye in part, and the Mahâtmas, desirous to arouse it more fully, now and then project a beam of wisdom which the eye fails to receive and it passes on to those who are better fitted to absorb it. "No man can learn what he has not preparation for learning, however near to his eye is the object. A chemist may tell his most precious secrets to a carpenter, and he

shall never be the wiser,— the secret he would not utter to a chemist for an estate. God screens us evermore from premature ideas. Our eyes are holden that we cannot see things that stare us in the face, until the hour arrives when the mind is ripened; then we behold them, and the time when we saw them not is like a dream.”<sup>4</sup>

Let us then press forward to this harvest time, neither asking for help, nor doubting that it is at hand though unseen, and remembering above all that what we consider reticence, or silence on the part of the Mahâtmas, is often but a higher order of speech which we do not as yet understand, and to whose golden accents untiring endeavor alone can give the key.

JULIUS.

## NOTES

1. {*Hamlet*, William Shakespeare. As found: “*will be, nill be.*” Today it is commonly written: ‘willy-nilly.’}
2. {*Essays, First Series*, Ralph Waldo Emerson.}
3. {The source of this quote could not be found, and could have been written by the author or in personal correspondence to her.}
4. Emerson. {*Essays, First Series.*}

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*The Path* – March 1891, Vol. 5, pp. 374-376.

## “REWARD FOR UNMERITED SUFFERINGS.”

A STUDENT {PROBABLY JULIA VER PLANCK}

KARMA AS JUDGE, GUIDE AND REWARDER.

In the *Key to Theosophy*, on page 161, the author uses a phrase which has been objected to on the ground that a strict construction of it overthrows the whole doctrine of Karma. The words referred to and the contiguous sentence are:

“Our philosophy teaches that Karmic punishment reaches the Ego only in its next incarnation. After death it *receives only the reward for the unmerited sufferings endured during its past incarnation.*”

The italicized portion is the part objected to, and the objection raised is that, if all that happens to us so happens because it is our Karma, then it cannot be *unmerited*: hence, either the statement is incorrect or Karma is not the law of justice, but there must be some other one governing man and the vicissitudes of his life.

Let us go further down the same page and see if some sentences in the same paragraph do not bear upon the meaning of the author. She says: “If it may be said that there is not a mental or physical suffering in the life of a mortal which is not the direct fruit and consequence of some sin in a previous existence; on the other hand, since he does not preserve the slightest recollection of it in his actual life and feels himself not deserving of such punishment, and therefore *thinks* he suffers for no guilt of his own, this alone is sufficient to entitle the human soul to the fullest consolation, rest, and bliss in his *post-mortem* existence. Death comes to our spiritual selves ever as a deliverer and friend.”

All students of theosophy known to me believe that Karma is the great governing law, that all suffering and reward come from and through Karma; and, as I understand from the published and unpublished views of H. P. Blavatsky, she holds the same

opinion. Therefore, such being the case, what we have to enquire into is the meaning intended to be conveyed by the passages cited. There is no doubt whatever that the author of the *Key* agrees, except perhaps about hell, with the Buddhist priest who, writing several years ago in the *Theosophist* <sup>1</sup> upon this subject, said:

“In this light Karma may be defined as ... that irresistible force which drags the criminal into the hell fire amidst his loud lamentations, the powerful hand that rescues the wretch from the merciless hands of the infernal angels and takes him to a happier place for the amelioration of his miserable condition, or the heavenly angel *who bears away, as it were, the enraptured soul to the blissful abodes above* and takes it back after a very long course of heavenly enjoyments to this world, or to hell itself, paying little or no attention to the sorrowful tales of the reluctant soul.”

Construing together the sentences in the paragraph from the *Key to Theosophy*, we find that she says, in effect, in the later sentences on the same page, that all suffering is the direct fruit and consequence of some sin committed in a previous existence, but that as the *personality* in the life when the suffering comes has no recollection of the cause which brought it about, the punishment is *felt* by that personality to be undeserved, and another cause is thus set up which has its action in the *post mortem* condition. The difficulty raised by the objection put is that the whole matter has been made objective, and Karma has been looked upon as a material or objective law, and the *post mortem* state placed in the same category. The true Ego neither suffers nor enjoys, and is not bound at any time by Karma; but as *Devachan* is a subjective condition in which the Ego therein creates for itself out of its own thoughts the surroundings fit for it, so we may say, without at all interfering with our conceptions of Karma, that after death this Ego receives the reward for the sufferings which *it thought* were unmerited in the life just quitted. The word “unmerited” as written in *The Key* is not to be construed as being used by any Karmic power, but as the conception formed by the Ego during life of the propriety or impropriety of whatever suffering may have been then endured.

For, as we have seen in other studies, *Devachan* — the *post mortem* state under consideration — is a condition wherein no objective experiences are undergone by the Ego, but in which the thoughts of a certain sort had during life act in producing about it, or rather within its sphere, the blissful subjective experiences necessary for the resting of the soul. Hence if when in the mortal frame it considered itself unjustly treated by fate or nature, it set up then and there the causes for bringing about a so-called reward for the suffering which to it seemed unmerited, just so soon as it would be released from the body and the causes be able to act in the only place or state which will permit their action.

This blissful state, as intimated in the quotation made from the *Theosophist*, is Karmic reward in the plane of *Devachan*. The “Karmic punishment” referred to in the *Key* is not the opposite of this, but is the opposite of Karmic reward acting on the plane of objective earth life. For the opposite of devachanic reward or bliss must be on a similar plane, such as the “hell” spoken of by the Buddhist priest, or *Avitchi*. If these distinctions are clearly borne in mind, there cannot be much difficulty with any of these questions.

To me Karma is not only judge, it is also friend and deliverer. It is essentially just. The conditions are laid down. If I comply, the result inevitably follows. It is my friend because it will, just as inevitably as life and death, give me a rest in *devachan* where the tired soul which needs recuperation as well as the body will find what is best for it. And a mere phrase like “unmerited suffering” invented by me in my ignorance here upon earth will be one of the factors used by this very Karma to bring about my peace and joy, albeit that still again inexorable Karma awaits me at the threshold of *Devachan* to

mete out in my next appearance upon this terrestrial stage my just deserts. And thus on and ever on and upward we shall be led from life to life and stage to stage, until at last the conviction has become an inherent portion of our being that Karma is not only just but merciful.

A STUDENT.

## NOTE

1. Vol. 1, *Theosophist*, p. 199.

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*The Path* – January 1887, Vol. 1, pp. 304-308.

## ROTATION — INDIVIDUAL EVOLUTION.

JASPER NIEMAND, F.T.S

[BY THE AUTHOR OF “LINES FROM LOWER LEVELS.”]

The paper on “The Higher Life,”<sup>1</sup> and the remarks which it has called forth, have led me to further reflections upon the subject. That subject is in fact, Individual Evolution, and the warning expressed by Murdhna Joti, in that article about “impetuously rushing into the circle of ascetics,” opens up an important phase of the topic most vital to humanity. For this sentence is not a mere advisory caution; it points out the only available procedure, the one course conducive to successful evolution, or final perfection. This course may be briefly summed up in one word: Rotation. Upon examination we shall find this fact proved by the laws governing Universal Brotherhood.

To begin with, when we take into consideration the personalities of the real Founders of the Theosophical Society, we find ourselves safely concluding that the institution of this principle of Brotherhood as the basis of that Society, did not occur from any arbitrary selection, nor yet from ethical or even humanitarian considerations merely. We may say that it was not chosen; it presented itself as a central fact, one which correlates with all things, and is itself one of the aspects of the Great, the Mysterious Law. It must be moreover that level of the Law most nearly related to the human being, and by which alone he can raise himself from this “Slough of Despond” called matter. Upon no lesser precedent than this would the Masters, those supreme exponents of the Law, proceed. The outcome and teaching of that Law is Unity; the power of Unity is its exoteric expression. (Its hidden expression, Great Spirits alone can declare.) This power is conferred by the economic tendency of Nature, which uniformly moves along the line of least resistance and of larger currents of energy, which draw in turn all minor streams of being into their resistless tide. In order to bring home to all mankind the primary fact that only as a united body, only by living in and working with and for all, can unbroken advance to the Perfect Goal be achieved, this unitarian necessity had to be conveyed by a term which would appeal to the untrained, as well as to the cultured mind. No man or woman so grossly ignorant but can sense the advantages of “Universal Brotherhood,” while the more profound the thinker, the more he warms to the sublime comprehensiveness of this idea.

Many readers will doubtless recall an italicized sentence in the “Diary of a Hindu,” also published in *THE PATH*.<sup>2</sup> It ran as follows: “*No Yogee will do a thing unless he sees the desire in another Yogee’s mind.*” These were the words of a teacher, and those who

may require it have here an authoritative recognition of the need of humanitarian unity. For man's strength lies in his perfect equilibrium, and by man I now mean the whole, triune man. That this fact is also true on the physical plane alone, is evidenced by medical testimony to the effect that while perfect health is perfect balance, the more complete this balance, the more readily is it disturbed. Thus trained athletes are compelled to take dietetic and other precautions, which men of minor strength disregard with apparent impunity. I say "apparent," because the result is of course visible in their inferior physical powers. Only when the triune man has attained equilibrium is he a moral force; then alone is he in complete harmony. Harmony with what? With the Law that works for perfection or reunion, faith in which and accordance with which, is the sum of the highest consciousness of the human being. Now remember that there is at all times a body, (be it numerically large or small,) of individuals cognizing and waiting upon this Law. They perceive its tendency, they only act with and through it, and the cumulative energy of this compact body, plus certain impersonal forces, is in itself a tremendous power, so vast in fact, that plus the energizing spirit again, it may be said to form the exoteric expression of the Law itself. Imagine some one member of this body attempting to act from his separate impulse, and not from the general instinct. By disengaging his unit of force from the sum total, he at once neutralizes its effect and limits its expansive ratio; hence it is that action from self, however disinterested, is enfeebling in its tendency. This man may join himself to the powers of evil and act in opposition to the Law: he has then the accruing benefit of that energetic total, but this must fail in the long run, because it is minus the creative spirit, which works for eventual harmony. So true is it that a given cause produces similar results on all the planes alike, that in the spiritual as in the physical world, there must be united action to produce large results. The inutility of weak, single effort was acknowledged by St. Paul when he said — "Because thou art neither cold nor hot I will spew thee out of my mouth." Unless the Yogee therefore, perceives an idea in other related minds, as the reflection of the Universal mind, he does not act. When the individual mind has freed itself from all desire for personal action and resting in the Universal Mind, acts passively with it alone, saying: "I rise with thy rising, with thee subside," then the individual has attained Nirvana. So that our present unit of power depends upon our greater or lesser assimilation with the highest aggregate of mind, and its continuance, upon our adherence to that manifested body of the Universal Mind which works for Good, with faith into the Perfect Law. This body in turn depends upon the individual efforts of its members, for the continuous elevation and expansion of its highest Ideal. Being thus interdependent, I think we may easily recognize that Universal Brotherhood is the starting point towards final success, and that its complete realization is the goal itself. Each may attain Omniscience, but only as one of a body, not as a separate part. "You shall enter the light, but you shall never touch the flame."<sup>3</sup> So we may be part of the universal spirit, yet never that spirit itself.

This Brotherhood then, in its harmonious equilibrium, implies subservience to the Law of Evolution. The course marked out by this Law is one of gradual progression through a series of interlinked processes, not one of which can be intermitted or dropped, any more than we can omit a link from a chain without break of continuity, which would in this case imply a break of individuality, either as applied to a member or to the whole body. We find this course substantiated by Nature, who is our great initiator. Murdhna Joti's phrase about not rushing "into the circle of ascetics," refers to the rotation prevalent in Nature, and may be used in a large general sense, and not merely applied to any especial circle, such as the Hindu, Mahomedan, Christian or other group of ascetics. He refers to the disadvantages consequent upon any violation of this rotatory course; these apply quite as much to the farmer who fails to rotate his crops, as to any thing or person rushing into any plane, before being in all

respects fitted to go there. Each plane in itself constitutes a "circle of ascetics," and must be entered in the proper manner. In every department of Life we meet with an acceptance of this fact. No man is admitted to the privileges of naturalization until he has resided in a country, and has had time to accustom himself to its manners and laws. It is ever held necessary to serve a certain apprenticeship before entering any profession or trade. The social usages even make "circles of ascetics" in this sense. A boor, a ploughman, or even unsuitably attired persons, are not desired or admitted in a parlor full of people in splendid array, and a natural instinct makes them shrink from entering there. When exceptions occur, there is an under-current of discord perceptible; all are alike ill at ease. So in Nature, minerals, plants and animals are limited to their proper sphere. Birds cannot swim nor fishes fly. I would say, as birds or as fish *per se* they cannot do so, nor can the boor, as a boor, be at ease with elevated minds. But advancement is the common lot of all, provided it be made step by step in the natural series of succession.

What then is this process in practical Life? It is, firstly, the identification of yourself with the highest consciousness accessible on your present plane, the engrafting upon your entire life of the best ideal attainable, so that you may act upon it in every thought and word. If you can do no more, select in your own mind the most unselfish and pure-hearted person in your horizon, and study the workings of such gracious aspirations and deeds. Noble ideals will soon spring up within you, and by this lodestone similar minds will swiftly be attracted, until you shall collectively form a nucleus of persons identical in aim and influence. If one receives a ray of Truth, he will speedily reflect it to all, and thus our attainment is largely regulated by that of our compeers. Largely, but not entirely. There are exceptional souls who progress with amazing velocity, far outstripping the comrades of their starting-level. But even these hearts of power reach up to the more perfect spirits above them, and to feel this attraction they must have prepared themselves for it, in the uniform, if rapid, rotation of previous existences. Each must trace out the prescribed circuit, but he may travel fast or slow. Let him not rashly conceive himself to be endowed with unusual spiritual momentum: time is better spent in caution than in failure.

Murdhna Joti gives valid warning not to rush in until all is ready. The circle is prepared, but you may not be so. Again, your fitness may be assured and the circle for the moment closed. The course of physical nature will exemplify my meaning. The blood leaves the heart by the arteries and goes on to the capillary interchange with the venous system, even as man descends from Spirit in to matter, and at the point of choice, turns, and reascends towards Spirit. The veins take up the function of returning the blood to the heart: in these are valves; they receive, hold and transmit the impulse from the central heart. All the blood between any two valves has to stay there until the next impulse comes from the heart; when this arrives, it passes on. The valves close behind each quantum of blood thus ejected through: it is not possible for the blood to recede; retrogression is impeded by the closed valve. Nor can it remain; progress is imperative when the next impulse drives it forward, and so it goes on to the heart. In the same manner each person should stay in his appropriate place, not only until he is ready, but also until the great Heart of all is ready to give the next impulse. Then he will inevitably go on to the next place.

Masters have said that for "chelas and adepts alike there is an abyss behind each step; a door closed. To stop or to go back is impossible." That which is true for the Adept is true for the humblest disciple, each in his own manner and degree. It behooves us then to concentrate our attention upon the natural and fitting method of progression, and to assist those about us in maintaining a high average of ideality, that the entire body may progress evenly, steadily, and that nowhere may ignorance or undue haste clot or clog the way. In the end, the reward of patience is holy. In every

effort you make to lighten the mind of another and open it to Truth, you help yourself. "Those pearls you find for another and give to him, you really retain for yourself in the act of benevolence. Never lose, then, that attitude of mind. Never, never desire to get knowledge or power for any other purpose than to give it on the altar, for thus alone can it be saved to you. When you open any door, beyond it you find others standing there who had passed you long ago, but now, unable to proceed, they are there waiting; others are there *waiting for you!* Then you come, and opening a door, those waiting disciples perhaps may pass on; thus on and on. What a privilege this, to reflect that we may perhaps be able to help those who seemed greater than ourselves."<sup>4</sup>

The consent of the Spirit has hallowed those thoughts. Another Messenger of Truth once said:— "The first shall be last and the last first; contain yourselves, therefore, in Peace."<sup>5</sup>

JASPER NIEMAND, F.T.S.

## NOTES

1. See July and August PATH. {"Living the Higher Life," Murdhna Joti — *The Path*, July 1886, pp. 114-121; August 1886, pp. 152-154.}
2. {"A Hindu Chela's Diary," Unsigned — *The Path*, July 1886, p. 101.}
3. *Light on the Path*. {Mabel Collins.}
4. Letter from a friend. {See *Letters That Have Helped Me*, Letter 1.}
5. {Partially, Matthew 19:30.}

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*Lucifer* — June 1888, Vol. 2, p. 272.

## SCENE: THE GARDEN OF A TEMPLE.

UNSIGNED {POSSIBLY JULIA VER PLANCK}

*Dramatis Persona*, SERVIA, a novice.

MARK, a man of the world.

THE WISE ONE.

*Servia*: The problem of life appears to me to be that one can never attain the right condition for learning its lesson. One is always learning, but one has never learned.

*Mark*: Why not say rather that new experiences crowd out the old ones before one has time to digest their various morals or lessons?

*Servia*: In each life it is as in this garden. Certain flowers only are permitted by nature to grow. Therefore they should be able to come to full fruition as they do in this garden.

*Mark*: Then they are busied in sowing seed and have no time to consider the lesson involved in flowering properly. And after all, is there any lesson in it?

*The Wise One*: No, except to those who wish to become more than flowers and are weary of for ever sowing seed only to become flowers again. This temple is good, and well-built; but who would for ever build temples? The lesson of the temple is the object for which it is built.

## SELF-EXILED.

JASPER NIEMAND

I looked out over the night. There was one passed along my road. He passed unnoticed by others, but I saw that he had taken the vow of poverty. And where the moonbeams fell upon his brow I saw a mark; it was the brand of pain worn by all the exiles.

Weary and athirst he pushed onward; he stayed not for hunger nor for weariness. His dim eyes were fixed upon the horizon. In them I saw the reflected image of the Far Land.

After him followed the Companions, unseen, bearing the mystic gifts in their hands.

And his thirst was so great that it stayed him. He threw himself down, struggling with faintness and pain.

Above him stood the Companions, the silent witnesses. And I said to them: "Is he not our Brother?"

They made no answer, but the Star of Compassion upon their breasts shone out with tenderest light; It irradiated the form of the exile.

"Why do ye not give to him who thirsts?" I said. "Is there no living water?" A Companion held up a cup, full to the brim.

"Give then," I cried. "Give, ere it comes too late."

Then they all turned their sad eyes upon me and I knew that they would have given if they could.

I asked: "Are there any who may *not* drink?"

One answered: "Thou hast said it. He whom imposes the conditions under which he will receive, he may *not* drink."

"Is it the Law?" I questioned him. He held out his cup to the exile, saying: "Here is water."

The weary one answered: "It is but the water of the Far Land I thirst for. How should ye have it, ye who come up from behind?" He dipped his finger into the cup and put it to his lips. A cry broke from him: "It is exceeding bitter," he said.

"Yet drink," the Companion answered him.

But the exile turned aside, murmuring: "Purify me that water and then perhaps I may drink."

The Companion sighed, and said: "I have not so received it and I shall not so impart it. It is the Law."

With his hand the exile thrust aside the cup. On it this legend sparkled out upon the night.

"I am that Amrita which in the beginning is as ashes and in the end is the water of Life."

The Companions turned and all looked at me. And I knew that none but himself had power to open the eyes of the exile.

The Companions disappeared, bearing the magic gifts. And through the dark night I heard the sobs of our Brother who fancied himself to be alone. I dared not weep; but I pondered on the awful mysteries of Life.

The Companion offers himself. He is that cup. He is the container of all that he can draw from this universe; the water of Life is not to be contained even by this universe. But each Companion sets his own limits; he contains all that he can.

He then comes to the patient worker, to the exiles who hear the brand. He offers himself thrice.

Rejected the third time, he departs.

Another day — or another life perhaps — there comes another. He too offers himself for acceptance or rejection.

And so the Loving Cup goes round and round, despised and rejected of men.

Men look for it under conditions of their own making. But it was not so received. Without limit or condition it was received; without limit or condition it must be taken.

But that which is rejected of men, is the headstone of the Master Builder.

Such are the stones in the living wall set to protect the race.

JASPER NIEMAND.

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*The Path* – September 1890, Vol.5, pp. 180-185.

## THE SENTIENT DAGGER.<sup>1</sup>

J. CAMPBELL VER PLANCK

In the boudoir of a charming woman of the world, this tale was told to me. If you do not believe it, I shan't blame you. Even now, I can hardly believe it myself.

The boudoir was a strange one for a woman. With Nina Grandville the unusual was always to be found. She was like, and unlike, other women. On the surface, *grande dame de par le monde*. Beneath that polished surface, which afforded no hold to the cynic claws of her own sex, who shall say what swift dilation of the nostril, what smoldering fire of the eye, what scorn in her walk amid the crass, material crowd might not confound the observer? Distinguished by a quiet elegance, the surface woman was accepted by all save the philosopher and the fool. I have always been a little of both. As I looked at the tiger skins, the panoplies of weapons, the savagely grotesque bronzes of her boudoir, refusing to blend with crown Derby and plush *poufs à la mode*, I wondered, for the thousandth time, more or less, over that hidden nature to which this admixture must be the key. The late Grandville, remarkable only for *fadéur* and a keen taste in sauces, was never responsible for it, I was sure.

Waiting there for the lady, my eye wandered down a sunbeam, its quivering point touching an object hitherto unnoticed by me. It was a small dagger, sheathed in bronze, with a figure of Mephistopheles holding up a wine cup while he mocked and sang, upon the handle. The impish devilry of the little figure attracted me. It hung upon a velvet disk just above Madame's lounge, and when I unsheathed the blade it was a slim, oval-shaped bar of steel, sharp on both edges, with a wasp's sting point. A lovely bit of steel with only one defect where a dark stain marred the blue polish of the blade. Mrs. Grandville appearing at the moment, I held the dagger out to her, remarking: "What a pity to let such a weapon rust. Do let me have it cleaned."

She stood in the doorway, grasping the curtain, her lithe undulation arrested by my words. She turned from red to white — a fiery, luminous whiteness — and from that to ashy grey. Her throat quivered, but no words came. Her nostrils dilated, she went white again, her grand figure expanded, towered; by some subtle alchemy of nature the woman seemed to turn tigress before my eyes; in a bound she was at my

side, clasping my wrist, and our eyes burned, each into the other's. As a spectator of some great natural upheaval, it did not occur to me to say anything. I held my breath and the dagger while we sounded one another a long moment. In her gaze I saw only a fierce question. What she saw in mine must have satisfied her, for she relinquished my wrist and seated herself with a shrug and a laugh.

"Certainly, Lord Hatfield; take it to every gunsmith when you return to town and ask him to remove the stain. You will find that most of them know it. If they succeed I will pay them any price they may ask. And to you I will give one of the rarest things on earth, a woman's loyal and profound friendship."

While she spoke I had been looking at the stain on the blade. It somehow affected my brain with a kind of heat and tumult. I attributed this effect to the blade because of some emanation proceeding from it, like a hot and jarring mist, which blurred the mockery of Mephistopheles. Altogether, I was wrought up beyond my usual mood. So I looked full at her, saying:

"Suppose I wanted even more than that? Suppose I wanted what is less rare, but closer, more human,— a woman's love?"

I don't think I had known that I loved her until then, but I took a quick advantage and threw all my newly-found heart into my voice. Her eyes shone, then contracted; one saw she was happy, then sad.

"In that case I — I should tell you the tale of the dagger," she replied.

"Tell it to me, then."

"It is not easy, Hatfield."

"Say it is impossible, but tell it. Strong tasks are set to the strong. You are very strong."

A pink flush suffused her pallor at my praise. I have seen rosy sunrise clouds flit over the Jura snow peaks so. But in her eyes was a piteous dread.

"Tell me," I entreated again.

"That you may laugh?"

"That I may learn."

"Learn? What?"

"What a woman's soul is, when it is real."

She studied me briefly; then she plunged into this tale:

"I will tell you. When I have done, you shall pronounce the verdict, 'Guilty,' or 'Not guilty.' A horrid weight will be lifted from me. My mind will not revolve about it anymore, like a trapped rat in a wheel. To know how a sane mind judges my moral status,— this is the relief you offer me. It is a real and terrible thing I am about to tell you, but the majority of persons would call it a phantasm of the mind. Only the very sane can admit the reality of subjective phenomena. Few know that the unseen is more real than the seen. That stain is on the dagger, plain to every sight, but the ethical cause of it would be denied by most men and women.

"Before my marriage with Mr. Grandville, I lived with my mother in Italy. You know she was a Florentine. I had artistic talent and studied under Luigi Fiamamente, an artist of reputation. I became engaged to him. My cousin, Lavoisini, studied with me, and in view of these circumstances my mother's chaperonage often relaxed. What happy days those were! We were young, full of life and health, aspiring to high ideals, pure as daybreak. Ours was the blissful confidence of innocence, ignorance. It was disturbed. It was disturbed indeed.

"One day, as I painted, I heard a footstep coming up the long flight of stairs leading to the studio. Leisurely, emphatic, elastic, confident, it came on and on. Louder, more aggressive, self-assertive by the time it reached the studio door, I felt that an

enemy stood there. The man who entered completed my instinctive dislike. In his auburn hair, his ruddy cheeks, his massive but supple form, scarlet lips and hawk-like, contemptuous eyes, the lust of life was exemplified. He came to buy a picture. He remained to insinuate the poison of materiality into our hearts. Into mine, hatred. Into Luigi's, fascination. He said that the artist refreshed him like spring water. At the bottom of the clearest human nature you may stir up mud if you will. The spring became polluted. Luigi became unnerved, listless, hollow of eye and cheek in a few days. He sought me less; when he did, he treated me with apologetic kindness. Marshall — so the stranger was called — appeared interested in me also. I repulsed him without disguise. He said that, since I would not receive him, he must content himself 'with our Luigi.' The words were a veiled threat. He soon held my poor boy as in a vise. Steeped in material pleasures, he winced under Marshall's contempt of all finer feeling; his ideals were rendered ridiculous, his virtues contemptible, but he submitted to the influence. I was not able to remonstrate. I was so young, you see; I could hardly define what had happened. But I hated Marshall. The hatred grew. It reached a climax one day when I found Luigi prostrate on the studio floor, his body convulsed with sobs. I begged him to tell me what had happened. He only muttered that it was too late. I told him it was never too late for truth and love. He replied that he had neither; he did not even desire them. His face, aged and lined, his wasted frame, his dimmed eyes, all confirmed his words. 'Hateful as is the gulf where I have fallen,' he said, 'I do not wish to leave it. Outside of the sensations it affords, I am a dead man. Even while I lament, an interior voice mocks me and assures me that my thirst for the lowest forms of pleasure is unslaked, that I shall soon enjoy them again, and with *him*, even as he enjoys partly through me. This promise delights me. Go; Nina; go.'

"Terrible words for a young girl to hear! I left him, loving him more than ever. I shut myself in my room, planning his release, nursing my detestation of Marshall. I did not perceive that he had thus infected my mind also. While I thought out various plans, all at once I seemed to see Marshall lying upon the studio lounge, where he took his noon siesta, after an opium cigarette. Above the lounge this dagger always hung. And then I seemed to see it planted in his heart. This picture delighted my fancy. A spark lit and flamed in my brain, while I mentally contemplated it. Then I laughed aloud. A new thought had struck me. There was a private passage way connecting our house and the studio. At noon, everyone was asleep. And — why not? *Why not?* Something seemed to harden, inside of me. I rose like one refreshed. I was young and strong. I loved Luigi. I would free him.

"Well; the day and the night passed somehow. Through the long hours I reveled in a mental picture of a dagger stained with blood. Life, for me, seemed to end with Mephistopheles sneering above a dead man's heart. Noontide found me in the studio; Marshall lay there, asleep. I felt as cool and as hard as a rock. I leaned over him, took the dagger from the wall, unsheathed it, planting myself firmly upon my feet. The sleeper turned towards me, smiling in his lethargy. I smiled back. I raised my arm, looked at the weapon to guide my aim. Heaven! What was that I saw upon the blade? What was the deadly stain? Whence came those drops of blood? The blade had a voice. It yelled MURDER at me. The air resounded with crisp tongues that took up the cry. I shrank. I cowered. I fled.

"Back in my room again, alone with the dagger, I tried frantically to remove the stain. I could not. The silent witness of my moral guilt remained. Marshall walked the streets, but I was a murderess. The thought was the deed; it lived, even though the final blow was wanting. I saw this, but I would not believe it. I stole to the studio and hung the unclean thing upon the wall again, quaking with fear lest someone should unsheath it and expose that eloquent stain."

She sobbed a moment, hysterically, from exhaustion.

"I will not keep you much longer." While I lingered, my cousin came in. I burst into tears at sight of him. He led me before Luigi's best work; it was cut to pieces with a palette knife. 'It is Marshall who obsesses him,' he said; 'Can nothing be done?' I shook my head and gazed at the dagger on the wall; hate was in my heart, together with the rage of impotence. His eyes followed mine; they dilated, then remained fixed. After awhile I left him, still staring at the dagger.

Next day the city rang with news of Marshall's murder. Later, my cousin was arrested with the dagger in his possession. He seemed benumbed, dazed, and did not defend himself. At the trial he admitted his guilt and said that the dagger had a blood stain upon it and a voice came from it, urging him to kill. Some thought him crazed. Others believed that he affected mental disorder to escape extreme punishment. He did escape that, having always been a gentle, peace-loving soul. They sent him to the galleys for life. Before going, he gave me the fatal dagger. 'You know its power,' he said; 'keep it safe from human eyes.' In a short time, he too was dead. My heart seemed dead also. My love for Luigi was gone. The shocks had sobered him. Perhaps we might have raised one another, but we were both too tired to feel. Mamma brought me to England. The rest you know. "And now, who murdered Marshall?" She rose to receive my sentence. "What do you say? Guilty or not guilty?"

I said nothing. With the force of that extraordinary tale upon me I stammered some consolatory commonplace and said I must have time to think. I got away to my rooms in town; the dagger was still in my hand and my brain felt light as a feather. I fell asleep from sheer exhaustion. Late next morning I awoke, right as a trivet, clear as a crystal, and all the cobwebs swept from my brain and my practical commonsense restored. My thoughts ran somewhat thus.

"Guilty? Poor girl! How should she be? The melodrama of her mother's blood is in her. Social strain has made her morbid. I'll tell her so. I'll tell her I love her, by Jove, and we'll go on a wedding tour to Norway. No air braces one up like that." With such thoughts I tubbed, dressed, took breakfast, and drove to my gunsmith's. I wanted to take her the dagger, clear and clean. The man said he could do it, then he was puzzled. Finally he said it couldn't be done, so I had to renounce that little plan. I was soon on my way out to Windsor, but concluded to walk through the park to calm myself, for I was as full of ardor as any lad, dreaming God knows what dreams of love fulfilled. Something rustled near me. There, beneath the branches of an oak, I saw a stately stag of ten, gazing at me. The next instant he turned to run. The hunter's thirst for prey must have taken me by the throat. I ran after him, feeling for some weapon; something flew from my hand; he fell; there was a dagger in his palpitant side, and Mephistopheles leered at me, while all the little voices of the wood cried "Guilty! Guilty! Guilty!"

I got home somehow. And I never again saw Nina Grandville. Between us there seemed to be the shadow of a crime. Absurd, if you will, but my soul gave the verdict "Morally Guilty." And I could not argue it down.

Somewhere about the world is a small bronze dagger, with Mephistopheles on the hilt and a stain on the blade. Let no man possess himself of it unless he desires to kill. It has been steeped in thoughts of crime until it has become an entity whose life is hatred, whose impulse is murder.

J. CAMPBELL VER PLANCK.

## NOTE

1. Copyrighted, 1890, by Mrs. J. Campbell Ver Planck.

## “SHE BEING DEAD, YET SPEAKETH.”

UNSIGNED {PROBABLY JULIA KEIGHTLEY}

{1 of 3}

In the will of the late H. P. Blavatsky was made the request that her friends should assemble on the anniversary of her death and read passages from the *Bhagavad Gîtâ* and the *Light of Asia*. This was accordingly done on May 8th, in Adyar, London, New York, and other places. In New York, among other interesting items reported at the time, Mrs. J. Campbell Keightley read, after a few introductory remarks, extracts from the private letters of H.P.B. In response to many requests we print these as follows. The remarks, being extemporaneous, are quoted from memory.

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MR. PRESIDENT, FRIENDS:

This being the first occasion upon which I have ever spoken in public, I will ask you to condone my inexperience while I make a few remarks upon the extracts chosen from the letters of Madame Blavatsky to a few friends.

In regard to Mme. Blavatsky, the world, to use a phrase of Charles Lamb, was “the victim of imperfect sympathies.”<sup>1</sup> It failed to know her; that failure was its own great loss. Among the many accusations flung at her was one which, at the last ditch, it never failed to make; it said that Mme. Blavatsky had no Moral Ideal. This was false.

She had this ideal; she had also the Eastern reverence for an ideal — a reverence to the Western world unknown. We might hence expect to find her teaching that Ideal to a great extent under the privacy of a pledge, and there are indications of this in all that has been published concerning the Esoteric School. That her ideal was ever present to her mind and heart these extracts from private letters to her friends will show.

Her main teachings can be reduced to the following propositions:

That Morals have a basis in Law and in fact.

That Moral Law *is* Natural Law.

That Evolution makes for Righteousness.

That the “fundamental identity of all souls with the Oversoul”<sup>2</sup> renders moral contagion possible through the subtle psychic medium.

That the Spiritual Identity of all Being renders Universal Brotherhood the only possible path for truth-seeking men.

She distrusted the appeal to sentiment. She saw that existing religions fail in it; that modern civilization frustrates it; that emotionalism is no basis for the Will which annuls all temptations of the flesh, and the Faith which shall make mountains move.

Hence she taught the *scientific* aspect and bearing of sin. Taught that Universal Law in every department, rigidly opposes and avenges the commission of sin, showing the free will of man counterbalanced by the declaration “Vengeance is mine, saith the *Lam*; I will repay.”<sup>3</sup> She taught that the awful responsibility of the occultist, extending down to the least atom of substance, forever forbade our asking that question of Cain which we do ask daily “Am I my Brother’s keeper?”<sup>4</sup> She taught that the deep reply reverberated down the ages, as we may read it in our bibles: “What hast thou done? The voice of thy brother’s blood crieth to me from the ground.”<sup>5</sup>

Justice she taught, and the true discrimination of it; Mercy, too, and Love. She wrote of one: "He has developed an extraordinary hatred to me, but I have loved him too much to hate him." Above all she taught that "the pure in heart see God;" taught it as a scientific fact; showed it to be, so to say, materially as well as spiritually possible through the spiritual laws working in the one Substance, and, in the showing, lifted our courage higher than the visible stars.

The first of these extracts from H.P.B.'s letters is dated Nov. 29, 1878, and is interesting from the fact that it speaks of the original institution of three degrees of the T.S., a fact often disputed in these later days.

"You will find the aims and purposes of the Theosophical Society in the two enclosed circulars. It is a brotherhood of humanity, established to make away with all and every dogmatic religion founded on dead-letter interpretation, and to teach people and ev-ery member to believe but in one impersonal God; to rely upon his (man's) own powers; to consider himself his only saviour; to learn the infinitude of the occult psychological powers hidden within his own physical man: to develop these powers; and to give him the assurance of the immortality of his divine spirit and the survival of his soul; to make him regard every man of whatever race, color, or creed, and to prove to him that the only truths revealed to man by superior men (not a god) are contained in the Vedas of the ancient Aryas of India. Finally, to demonstrate to him that there never were, will be, nor are, any miracles; that there can be nothing 'supernatural' in this universe, and that on earth, at least, the only god is man himself.

"It lies within his powers to become and to continue a god after the death of his physical body. Our society receives nothing the possibility of which it cannot demonstrate at will. We believe in the phenomena, but we disbelieve in the constant intervention of 'spirits' to produce such phenomena. We maintain that the embodied spirit has more powers to produce them than a disembodied one. We believe in the existence of spirits, but of many classes, the human spirits being but one class of the many.

"The Society requires of its members but the time they can give it without encroaching upon that due to their private affairs. There are three degrees of membership. It is but in the highest or third that members have to devote themselves quasi entirely to the work of the T.S. ...

"Everyone is eligible, provided he is an honest, pure man or woman, no free lover, and especially no *bigoted* Christian. We go dead against idolatry, and as much against materialism."

"Of the two unpardonable sins, the first is Hypocrisy — Pecksniffianism. Better one hundred mistakes through unwise, injudicious sincerity and indiscretion than Tartuffe-like<sup>6</sup> *saintship* as the whitened sepulcher, and rottenness and decay within. ... This is not unpardonable, but very dangerous, ... doubt, eternal wavering — it leads one to wreck. ... One little period passed without doubt, murmuring, and despair; what a gain it would be; a period a mere tithe of what every one of us has had to pass through. But every one forges his own destiny."

"Those who fall off from our *living* human Mahâtmas to fall into the *Saptarishi* — the Star Rishis, are no Theosophists."

"Allow me to quote from a very esoterically wise and exoterically foolish book, the work and production of some ancient friends and foes: 'There is more joy in the Kingdom of Heaven for one repentant sinner than for ninety-nine saints.' ... Let us be just and give to Caesar what *is* Caesar's, however imperfect even vicious, Caesar may be. 'Blessed be the peacemakers,' said another old adept of 107 years B.C.E., and the saying is alive and kicks to the present day amongst the MASTERS."

## NOTES

1. {From *Essay of Elis*,(?) Charles Lamb, 1823.}
2. {*The Secret Doctrine*, H. P. Blavatsky, Vol. , p. 17.}
3. {Romans 12:19. As found: “Vengeance is mine saith the Lord.”}
4. {Genesis 4:9.}
5. {Genesis 4:10.}
6. {*Tartuffe* is a play by Molière (1664), positing that ‘true devotion leads to the path to heaven.’}

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*The Path* – July 1892, Vol. 7, pp. 121-124.

## “SHE BEING DEAD, YET SPEAKETH.”

UNSIGNED {PROBABLY JULIA KEIGHTLEY}

{2 of 3}

(Continued.)<sup>1</sup>

“The Esoteric Section is to be a School for earnest Theosophists who would learn more (than they can from published works) of the true Esoteric tenets. ... There is no room for despotism or ruling in it; no money to pay or make; no glory for me, but a series of misconceptions, slanders, suspicions, and ingratitude in almost an immediate future;<sup>2</sup> but if out of the —— Theosophists who have already pledged themselves I can place on the right and true path half a dozen or so, I will die happy. Many are called, few are chosen. Unless they comply with the lines you speak of, traced originally by the Masters, they *cannot* succeed.<sup>3</sup> I can only show the way to those whose eyes are open to the truth, whose souls are full of altruism, charity, and love for the whole creation, and who think of themselves *last*. The blind ... will never profit by these teachings. They would make of the ‘strait gate’ a large public thoroughfare leading not to the Kingdom of Heaven, now and hereafter, to the Buddha-Christos in the Sanctuary of our innermost souls, but to their own idols with feet of clay. ... The Esoteric Section is not of the earth, earthy; it does not interfere with the exoteric administration of Lodges; takes no stock in *external Theosophy*; has no officers or staff; needs no halls or meeting rooms. ... Finally, it requires neither subscription fees nor money, for ‘as I have not so received it, I *shall* not so impart it,’ and that I would rather starve in the gutter than take one penny for my teaching the sacred truths. ... Here I am with perhaps a few years or a few months only (Master knoweth) to remain on earth in this loathsome, old, ruined body; and I am ready to answer the call of any good Theosophist who *works for Theosophy on the lines traced by the Masters*, and as ready as the Rosicrucian pelican to feed with my heart’s blood the chosen ‘Seven.’ He who would have his inheritance before I die ... let him ask first. What I have, or rather what I am permitted to give, I will give.”

“Many are called but few are chosen. Well, no need breaking my heart over spilt milk. Come what may, I shall die at my post, Theosophical banner in hand, and while I live I *do* fervently hope that all the splashes of mud thrown at it will reach me personally. At any rate I mean to continue protecting the glorious truth with my old carcass so long as it lasts. And when I do drop down for good, I hope in such Theosophists as —— and —— to carry on the work and protect the banner of Truth in their turn. Oh, I do feel sick at heart in looking round and perceiving nothing save selfishness, personal vanity, and mean little ambitions. What is this about ‘the soldier

not being free?<sup>24</sup> Of course no soldier can be free to move about his physical body where he likes. But what has the esoteric teaching to do with the outward man? A soldier may be stuck to his sentry box like a barnacle to its ship, and the soldier's Ego be free to go where it likes and think what likes best. ... No man is required to carry a burden heavier than he can bear; nor do more than it is possible for him to do. A man of means, independent and free from any duty, will have to move about and go, missionary like, to teach Theosophy to the Sadducees and the Gentiles of Christianity. A man tied by his duty to one place has no right to desert it in order to fulfil another duty, let it be however much greater; for the first *duty* taught in Occultism is to do one's duty unflinchingly *by every duty*. Pardon these seemingly absurd paradoxes and Irish Bulls; but I have to repeat this *ad nauseam usque* for the last month. 'Shall I risk to be ordered to leave my wife, desert my children and home if I pledge myself?' asks one. 'No,' I say, 'because he who plays truant in one thing will be faithless in another. No real, genuine MASTER will accept a chela who sacrifices *anyone* except himself to go to that Master.' If one cannot, owing to circumstances or his position in life, become a full adept in this existence, let him prepare his mental luggage for the next, so as to be ready at the first call when he is once more reborn. What one has to do before he pledges himself irretrievably is, to probe one's nature to the bottom, for self-discipline is based on self-knowledge. It is said somewhere that self-discipline often leads one to a state of self-confidence which becomes vanity and pride in the long run. I say, foolish is the man who says so. This may happen only when our motives are of a worldly character or selfish; otherwise, self-confidence is the first step to that kind of WILL which will make a mountain move:

"To thine own self be true, and it must follow, as the night the day, thou can'st not then be false to any man."<sup>25</sup>

The question is whether Polonius meant this for worldly wisdom or for occult knowledge; and by 'own self' the *false Ego* (or the terrestrial personality) or that spark in us which is but the reflection of the 'One Universal Ego.'

But I am dreaming. I had but four hours' sleep... Give my sincere, fraternal respects to —, and let him try to feel my old hand giving him the *Master's grip*, the strong grip of the Lion's paw of Punjab (not of the tribe of Judah) across the Atlantic. To you my eternal affection and gratitude.

Your H.P.B."

"To live like cats and dogs in the T.S. is *positively* against all rules — and wishes of 'the Masters,' as against our Brotherhood — so-called — and all its rules. THEY are disgusted. THEY look on, and in that look (oh Lord! if you could only see it as I have!) there's an ocean deep of sad disgust, contempt, and sorrow..., The ideal was besmeared with mud, but as it is no golden idol on feet of clay it stands to this day immovable ... and what the profane see is only their own mud thrown with their own hands, and which has created a veil, an impassable barrier between them and the ideal ... without touching the latter... Have a large Society, the more the better; all that is chaff and husk is bound to fall away in time; all that is grain will remain. But the *seed* is in the bad and evil man as well as in the good ones,— only it is more difficult to call into life and cause it to germinate. The good husbandman does not stop to pick out the seeds from the handful. He gives them all their chance, and even some of the half-rotten seeds come to life when thrown into good soil. Be that soil... Look at me — the universal Theosophical manure — the rope for whose hanging and lashing is made out of the flax I have sown, and each strand it is twisted of represents a 'mistake' (so-called) of mine. Hence, if you fail only nine times out of ten in your selections you are successful one time out of ten — and that's more than many other Theosophists can

say... Those few true souls will be the nucleus for future success, and their children will —. Let us sow good — and if evil crops up, it will be blown away by the wind like all other things in this life — in its time.”

“I am the Mother and the Creator of the Society; it has my magnetic fluid, and the child has inherited all of its parent’s physical, psychical, and spiritual attributes — faults and virtues if any. Therefore I alone and to a degree — can serve as a lightning conductor of Karma for it. I was asked whether I was willing, when on the point of dying — and I said Yes — for it was the only means to save it. Therefore I consented to live — which in my case means to suffer physically during twelve hours of the day — mentally twelve hours of night, when I get rid of the physical shell... It is true about the Kali Yuga. Once that I have offered myself as the goat of atonement, the Kali Yuga<sup>6</sup> recognizes its own — whereas any other would shrink from such a thing — as I am doomed and overburdened in this life worse than a poor weak donkey full of sores made to drag uphill a cart load of heavy rocks. You are the *first* one to whom I tell it, because you force me into the confession... You have a wide and noble prospect before you if you do not lose patience... TRY... to hear the small voice within.”

“Yes, there are ‘two persons’ in me. But what of that? So there are two in you; only mine is conscious and responsible — and yours is not. So you are happier than I am. I *know* you sympathize with me, and you do so because you feel that I have always stood up for you, and will do so to the bitter or the happy end — as the case may be.”

“He may be moved to doubt — and that is the beginning of wisdom.”

“Well, sir, and my *only friend*, the crisis is nearing. I am ending my *Secret Doctrine*, and you *are* going to replace me, or take my place in America. I *know you will have success* if you do not lose heart; but do, do remain true to the Masters and *Their* Theosophy and the *names*. ... May *They* help you and allow us to send you our best blessings.” ...

“There are traitors, conscious and *unconscious*. There is falsity and there is injudiciousness... Pray do not imagine that because I *hold my tongue as bound by my oath and duty* I do not know who is who. ... I must say nothing, however much I may be disgusted. But as the ranks thin around us, and one after the other our best intellectual forces depart, to turn into bitter enemies, I say — Blessed are the pure-hearted who have only intuition — for intuition is better than intellect.”

“The duty,— let alone happiness — of every Theosophist — and especially Esotericist — is certainly to help others to carry their burden; but no Theosophist or other has the right to sacrifice himself unless *he knows for a certainty* that by so doing he helps someone and does not sacrifice himself in vain for the empty glory of the abstract virtue... Psychic and vital energy are limited in every man. It is like capital. If you have a dollar a day and spend two, at the end of the month you will have a deficit of \$30.”

“One refuses to pledge himself not to listen without protest to any evil thing said of a brother — as though Buddha our divine Lord — or Jesus — or any great initiate has ever condemned any one on hearsay. Ah, poor, poor, blind man, not to know the difference between condemning in words — which is uncharitable — and withdrawing in silent pity from the culprit and thus punishing him, but still giving him a chance to repent of his ways. No man will ever speak ill of his brother without cause and proof of the iniquity of that brother, and he will abstain from all backbiting, slandering, and gossip. No man should ever say behind a Brother’s back what he would not say openly to his face. Insinuations against one’s neighbor are often productive of more evil consequences than gross slander. Every Theosophist has to fight and battle against evil,— but he must have the courage of his words and actions, and what he does must be done openly and honestly, before all.”

(Concluded next issue.)

## NOTES

1. Quotations from the letters of H. P. Blavatsky, begun in Path for June, {18}'92.
2. Dated December 1, {18}'88. Subsequent events proved the prediction true.
3. Her correspondent had quoted the Simla letter of "K.H." in *The Occult World*.
4. Referring to the dilemma of an F.T.S. soldier in the army, presented to her.
5. {*Hamlet*, William Shakespeare.}
6. *Kali Yuga* — the Dark Age, the present cycle.

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*The Path* – August 1892, Vol. 7, pp. 161-162.

## "SHE BEING DEAD, YET SPEAKETH."

UNSIGNED {PROBABLY JULIA KEIGHTLEY}

{3 of 3}  
(Concluded).<sup>1</sup>

"Every pledge or promise unless built upon four pillars — absolute sincerity, unflinching determination, unselfishness of purpose, and *moral power*, which makes the fourth support and equipoises the three other pillars — is an insecure building. The pledges of those who are sure of the strength of the fourth alone are recorded."

"Are you children, that you want marvels? Have you so little faith as to need constant stimulus, as a dying fire needs fuel! ... Would you let the nucleus of a splendid Society die under your hands like a sick man under the hands of a quack? ... You should never forget what a solemn thing it is for us to exert our powers and raise the dread sentinels that lie at the threshold. They cannot hurt *us*, but they can avenge themselves by precipitating themselves upon the unprotected neophyte. You are all like so many children playing with fire because it is pretty, when you ought to be men studying philosophy for its own sake."

"If among you there was one who embodied in himself the idea depicted, it would be my duty to relinquish the teacher's chair to him. For it would be the extreme of audacity in me to claim the possession of so many virtues. ... That the MASTERS do in proportion to their respective temperaments and stages of Bodhisattvic development possess such Paramitas, constitutes their right to our reverence as our Teachers. It should be the aim of each and all of us to strive with all the intensity of our natures to follow and imitate Them... Try to realize that progress is made step by step, and each step gained by *heroic* effort. Withdrawal means despair or timidity... Conquered passions, like slain tigers, can no longer turn and rend you. Be hopeful then, not despairing. With *each* morning's awakening try to live through the day in harmony with the Higher Self. 'Try' is the battle-cry taught by the teacher to each pupil. Naught else is *expected* of you. *One who does his best does all that can be asked*. There is a moment when even a Buddha ceases to be a sinning mortal and takes his first step towards Buddhahood. The sixteen {six? (or seven or ten)} Paramitas (virtues) are not for priests and yogis alone, as said, but stand for models for us all to strive after — and neither priest nor yogi, Chela nor Mahâtma, ever attained all at once... The idea that sinners and not saints are expected to enter the Path is emphatically stated in the *Voive of the Silence*.

"I do not believe in the success of the ... T. S. unless you assimilate *Master* or myself; unless you work with me and THEM, hand in hand, heart... Yes; let him who

offers himself to Masters as a chela, unreservedly,... let him do what *he can* if he would ever see Them. ... Then things were done *because I alone was responsible for the issues*. I alone had to bear Karma in case of failure and *no reward* in case of success. ... I saw the T.S. would be smashed or that *I had to offer myself as the Scapegoat for atonement*. It is the latter I did. The T.S. lives,— I am *killed*. Killed in my honor, fame, name, in everything H.P.B. held near and dear, for this body is MINE and I feel acutely through it. ... I may err in my powers as H.P.B. I have not worked and toiled for forty years, playing parts, risking my future reward, and taking karma upon this unfortunate appearance to serve Them without being permitted to have some voice in the matter. H.P.B. is not infallible. H.P.B. is an old, rotten, sick, worn-out body, but it is the best I can have in this cycle. Hence follow the path I show, the Masters that are behind — and do not follow me or my PATH.<sup>2</sup> When I am dead and gone in this body; then will you know the whole truth. Then will you know that I have *never, never* been false to any one, nor have I deceived anyone, but had many a time to allow them to deceive themselves, for I had no right to interfere with their Karma. ... Oh ye foolish blind moles, all of you; who is able to offer himself in sacrifice as I did!

## NOTE

1. Extracts from letters of H.P.B., read on “White Lotus Day,” May 8, 1892, at the New York Headquarters.
2. {“A Private Letter.” R.S. (Julia Keightley) *Reminiscences of H. P. Blavatsky and “The Secret Doctrine”* – 1893, pp. 121-129.}

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*Lucifer* – October 1888, Vol. 3, p. 168.

## THE SHUTTLE OF KARMA.<sup>1</sup>

UNSIGNED

Thinking over the correspondence on the subject of Karma in the July LUCIFER, it does seem to one observer at least that some writers on the philosophy of human life from the Theosophical Society’s standpoint are more concerned about our deserts than our duties, more anxious to explain “undeserved” misery than ready to accept the idea of our all needing lessons, be they bitter or be they sweet. To the mind wont to regard the workings of Divine Providence as absolute perfection in their sphere of education, the notion of Karma lapsing here or there from justice and “making it up” on another occasion is as droll as the other suggestion (*vide* footnote p. 415).<sup>2</sup> That circumstances cropping up in a casual kind of way, like a stray bullet may hit the wrong man!

## NOTE

1. {This is not by J.C.V.P., but is additional comment on: 1888 07 v02 p415 Correspondence: Is This Right? — J.C.V.P. (*Lucifer*).}
2. {Footnote as found: Quite correct; but it is not the *injustice* or *mistakes* of Karma which are the causes of such “undeserved misery,” but other causes, independent of the past Karma of either the producer or the innocent victim of their effects, new *actions* generated by the wickedness of men and circumstances; and which arouse Karmic law to fresh activity, *i.e.* the punishment of those who caused these new *Niddnas* (or casual connections), and the reward of him who suffered from them undeservedly — ED.}

## THE SIGNING OF A PLEDGE.

JASPER NIEMAND, F.T.S.

To those who have ears to hear  
And will to act;  
Who have counted the cost  
And are ready to lose themselves that they may be the whole:  
These words are written.

Those theosophists who have taken a new Pledge are at the outset of a study which will require the concentrated attention of the outer and inner man. As some slight indication of the method to be employed in this study, it is here proposed to examine the bearings of certain portions of this Pledge and memoranda accompanying it; to note the words employed, their shades, their exact extent, and, above all, their under meaning and relation to things spiritual.

In Clause No. \* of the Pledge, for example, stress should be laid upon the words,— *“before the world.”* Our support is to be given openly, firmly. We are not called upon to argue, nor to thrust our belief upon unready minds, but, just as standard bearers hold the flag aloft, we are called upon to let our faith be known, and to defend it and its champions, when need arises, from all attacks.

In Clause \* we also find the words,— *“without delay.”* This includes mental as well as physical delay. We are to act without pausing to debate or to question. The time for these things was *before* signing the Pledge. Once our adherence given, our faith declared, we are to live up to them promptly, sure that in the results of our action we shall learn the wise reasons for its being demanded of us. This is the best and most impressive way of learning, and what we are trying to do is precisely to impress — that we may in time control — the lower mind, the outer man. Moreover, opportunity passes more swiftly than light; we are not to deceive ourselves as to our present inability to act, but we should at once begin to act in thought and to inquire of ourselves how the thing is to be done, setting aside all other things *except our duties*, until we are able to do what has been asked of us, whether in thought, in action, or both. The word “delay” applies also to doubt. If we doubt the wisdom or expediency of the request made to us, we impair the efficacy of our action, and cause “delay” on the inner planes of being by that doubt. It is supposed that we have taken this pledge in obedience to an inner prompting and conviction. If these are not strong enough to carry us through our self-imposed task, or if we are too weak to stand by them firmly, then we had better have left this Pledge unsigned.

In Clause \* there is the word,— *“constant.”* It denotes that mere effort is not sufficient. It is the *constant* effort that succeeds. When men roll a stone up hill, it is the unrelaxed strain does the work. If the velocity of a falling body increases in every second of its descent, this is only because the movement of that body is, for the time, constant or regular. If the object fell by jerks, with pauses between, the increase of velocity or moving force would not occur in anything like the same ratio. Spasmodic attempts, with intervals of neglect, will not help others or ourselves. A moderate and constant effort has far better results than fierce but fickle ones. In another document an Adept says that neither He nor His Brother Associates will desert H.P.B., because her fidelity to their work “has been *constant*.” This suffices to show the importance of

that word; the state of mind denoted by it; and the scrutiny to which all phrases from occult sources should be subjected, in order to extract their full meaning.

In Clauses \* and \* the words — *“all in my power,”* and *“what support I can”* — are full of significance. We have invoked a Mighty Power; called upon Its inflexible Justice; asked, in fact, that we may be dealt with as we deal with this Pledge. The gauge of our power, of our real ability to do these things, now rests with that Power. We cannot cheat It. We are tried hereafter by a higher Law than that of man, and by a judgment for which we have asked.

While we were wholly blind and unconscious, as far as the physical brain is concerned, of these truths, we were not held to that strict account which we have now opened by the declaration that we have seen the Light and are prepared to follow it as conscious men. We must then look well to ourselves, that we neither flatter, deceive, nor excuse ourselves unduly. We are to use all our talents, faculties, outer and inner, opportunities, and means to this work, in so far as we can consistently with our duties and the justice due to others. If our powers are small, that matters nothing. It is the simple inner attitude, the action of doing just what we can, neither more *nor less*, that counts. We have voluntarily undertaken to devote ourselves to the spiritual enlightenment and ethical reform of humanity; the self sacrificing spirit of pioneers must be ours. We are not asked to sacrifice anything but ourselves: nor to combat with persons, but with frauds, shams, and lies, whether organized or vague and half concealed. The honest word in the right place is a deed of weight and valor. In the preliminary Memoranda this point is again stated in the words;— *“to the extent of time and ability.”* No one will appear to call us to account if we trifle with this Pledge. We shall answer to no man, but to the Law we have summoned, which will crush us or aid us as we keep or neglect our vow.

On page \* of the \*\*\* a great truth is stated in the words,— *“too many were quick to doubt and despair.”* They indicate a law of Thought. When trouble arises, if we set ourselves promptly and unflinchingly to think how it may be met and overcome, we attract the assistance we deserve: if we generate the contrary energies of doubt and despair (or repulsion), we create about us, by contraction, a dense atmosphere which the helpful influences cannot penetrate. They cannot be forced through to us by other wills, in despite of the inertia we have created around ourselves, because that would be contrary to Karmic Law. If any being infringes the Law but once even, to bring about some present good to any temporary individual, far greater injury results by reaction to both the actor and the befriended man; and the higher the Being, the more *conscious* he is of having evaded the Law, the greater the subsequent penalty to both.

It is further stated that only our solidarity makes help from Masters possible. A body, like an atom, is a center of energy and of life. The greater the energy, the greater the influx of fresh life. Now the energy of a body does not depend upon its gross size, but upon the coordination or union of all its parts. Together, the signers of this Pledge form a body corporate which exists upon several planes of being. If it be weak, dismembered, ruptured by dissensions, it cannot attract an efflux of energy from higher (or inner) spheres. Its functions cannot increase if its members are atrophied. Or, to put it differently, we can only receive, assimilate, and advance, as a body, whose energy each one of us can lessen or increase by his individual thoughts. From thoughts action follows, whether upon the plane of thought only (and this is the most potent and swift effect) or upon the plane of physical action also. He who breaks a pledge, he who indulges in doubt, despair, or evil thoughts, forces his brother to pay the penalty of retrogression along with himself. Let each one be strong for the rest. Be it remembered that Masters are rarely justified in helping individuals, and then only in due proportion to their usefulness to Humanity at large. But what we cannot yet merit as single individuals, we may merit as a body, especially when the units composing that body are

harmoniously devoted to the advancement of the race. Our center of energy need not be numerically large, if it be large in purpose, in thought, and in usefulness: the *quality* of the energy engendered determines its attractive and assimilative power, and ensures the rapid evolution of the center or organization from which it proceeds. Individual progress, within the body, will depend upon concentration of thought, upon an effort to think for one's self, to answer one's questions from within; to open up the avenues of the soul; to stand firm without regarding what we may hear from books or from the lips of men; to secure the affirmation of our own souls to every step, and then to take that step, or to constantly try to take it, in the teeth of every obstacle, whether inward or outward, whether bred in our own nature or in so-called worldly circumstance. *Effort is growth*; we may not succeed in the specific things attempted, but the constant struggle ensures growth as a whole. Of our own progress we can never judge, and it should not occupy our thoughts, for that enhances the perception of self.

In regard to necessary discrimination and thinking for one's self, a hint may not be misplaced. Many good theosophists frequently lay stress upon Madame Blavatsky's denial of infallibility. This is very good and very true in its way, and we must learn to think for ourselves, but still it is possible to swing too far the other way. *In that denial we must also discriminate*. It has been done for us by a Master who says that "with occult matters she has everything to do." The denial refers to external affairs conducted by the personal nature. When M.C. wrote in notes on *Light on the Path* that one could live in the same house with an Adept, see him daily, yet never come near him, she gave a hint to the wise. Any teaching given is to be taken for consideration without doubt or suspicion being admitted, for, as is well known, the disciple is the gainer by his pure devotion to the person who stands to him as teacher. Even should that chosen guide make mistakes, the disciple is not harmed if he has followed them in the self-forgetful spirit of devotion, whereas if he infringes his pledge by suspicion or doubt, he precipitates the very catastrophe he dreads. We may say, over and over, the mental attitude is the chief consideration. When that is far removed from self, nothing can harm us.

There comes then the question of condemning others. Impersonal things and acts we may and must condemn. But we have not the smallest right to condemn or to criticize any man. Even human law requires that a judge shall be, (a) appointed by authority: (b) fully possessed of all the facts. We are neither. The facts are *never* before us. The unseen causes we never know. Often the faults and crimes of men are the punishment decreed by Karma for Sin in other lives, and what we behold is the inexorable execution of the Law, the entailed suffering by which alone the erring soul experiences and learns to know its mistake. We have to live out even our mistakes in order to know them. We who condemn *persons* do so through a subtle quality of nature which will, in after lives, bring us to be sharers of the faults we now condemn. Not seeing the forces which impel a man along his prescribed course, we are madmen if we permit ourselves to be moved by scorn or criticism of *him*. The attitude of criticism of a person, whether captious or justified (apparently) by the prevailing views of Life, is one which is fatal to inner growth, and to the development of the inner body, which it eats like a canker. We have no rights except in our Brotherhood. By the one Ray, all the worlds come forth into manifestation. It is the Power of Powers; if we exclude it from our hearts we are lost men. A quotation from a private letter of Madame Blavatsky fittingly concludes this point.

"Poor blind men, not to know the difference between condemning in *words*, which is *uncharitable slander*, and withdrawing in silent pity from the culprit and thus punishing him, but still giving him a chance to repent of his ways."

In rule \* the reference to other associations "*for the purpose of mystic study or occult training*" includes all colleges, esoteric "Calls," and societies, and serves as a warning

that no man, once he is pledged in this direction, shall listen to contrary or other teachings in the spirit of a disciple, or even of a credulous hearer. Nor can he belong to any other occult body. It is a law in nature — hence inviolable — that we cannot serve two Masters. The attempt only injures us. No authorized teachings will come to him by any other external source than those named in this document, for Masters are just to their chosen agents, and this is the rule. Nor is it true, as sometimes said, that there is another school of *White Adepts*. The White Adepts all the world over form one Hierarchy in which there is no distinction of nationality or of creed. They form this school, not because of personal inclination, but in virtue of the laws of Being, which we may faintly picture to ourselves as acting in this respect as a kind of spiritual gravitation. Black magicians, on the contrary, stand each for himself alone.

Much may be received through attention to our inner nature, and we will do well not to pay attention to various teachings to be found all about us, but to concentrate on that which comes to us through — Section, as it will require all our powers. There are persons who fear that they may be called from their home or other duties. To such we offer these grand words of Madame Blavatsky's.

“A man tied by his duty to one place has no right to desert it in order to fulfil another duty, let it be however much greater, for the first duty taught in occultism is to do one's duty unflinchingly *by every duty*.”<sup>1</sup> How like Thor's hammer falls that word Duty again and again upon the anvil of the heart. Then she continues:

“He who plays truant in one thing will be faithless, in another. No real, genuine MASTER will accept a chela who sacrifices *anyone* except himself to go to that Master.”

May we then search our hearts well before it is too late, and, this done, may we prepare with calm confidence and courage to fulfil our pledges *in the spirit of Brotherhood*.

JASPER NIEMAND, F.T.S.

## NOTE

1. {See *The Path*, July 1892, Vol. 7, pp. 121-124. “She being Dead, Yet Speaketh.”}

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*The Path* — August 1886, Vol. 1, pp. 144-149.

## THE SINGING SILENCES.

JULIUS

Theosophists may be interested in an experience which I have named as above; “Singing” — because of a peculiar resonance which I then hear; “Silences” — because this resonance only reaches me in moments of retirement and silence.

Occurring throughout a life-time, at infrequent and remote interval, they have, since I became a Theosophist, increased until they embrace all isolated moments. They consist of a resonance difficult to describe, but resembling the vibrant note of a distant locomotive, resounding in the night atmosphere of a mountain gorge, and partaking somewhat of that melodious wail caused by running the moistened finger around the rim of a glass. Sometimes, though rarely, a low orchestral harmony unites briefly with this monotone. Unable to find any word which conveyed this cadence, I now discover that the word “*Aum*,” (hitherto unknown to me,) does so exactly, the A sound being the opening note, which prolongs itself into the M, or closing sound, when the keynote is then struck over again. Thus the “Singing Silences” mainly consist of innumerable

repetitions of the word “Aum,” distinctly and musically uttered, having a resonant or vibrant quality, and a measured rise and fall, such as all sound assumes if one alternately closes and uncloses the ear. If the analyst will alternately inhale air with the mouth and expel it with the nostrils, he will gain a fair idea of this sound minus its musical vibration.

It is, moreover, invariably accompanied by a sensation of physical repose, even peace, and a perfect mental quiescence which falls about me like an enfolding mantle. The frequency of these moments has greatly increased since my attention has been specifically turned to them. Hitherto, beyond a momentary curiosity as to their nature, I attached no importance to their occurrence; the very rarity caused them to be easily forgotten in the whirl of everyday life; I admitted to myself with surprise, however, that my innumerable pleasures, my keen enjoyments, shrank to nothing before the deep delight of these brief but peculiar moments, and I applied to them the opening lines of Faber’s hymn to music.

Reading the article on “Aum” in the April “PATH” I was startled by such passages as this: “There is, pervading the whole universe, a homogeneous resonance, sound, or tone, which acts, so to speak, as the awakener or vivifying power, stirring all the molecules into action.”<sup>1</sup> I then called to mind various facts connected with Sound, as for instance, that a regiment marching over a bridge is ordered to “break step,” lest the regular footfall strike the “co-efficient of vibration,” which would destroy the bridge: also that the measured trot of the smallest dog will cause a perceptible vibration in a wire bridge, no matter what its size. Moreover, the monotonous sound of the railroad, in time changes the texture of the car wheels and axles from fibrous into crystalline, with consequent fracture.

In Reichenbach’s *Researches on Magnetism* we find this statement. ... “The following laws prevail in nature. A. There resides in matter a peculiar force, hitherto overlooked, which, when the crystalline form has been assumed, is found acting in the line of the axes.”

Since then, the homogeneous tone acts upon all the molecules of creation, may not this singing resonance cause such a transformation of brain energy as to vivify or awaken it in time, to the True, or Central Idea? We have seen that Sound, so to speak, polarizes certain particles of matter attracting them to the earth, the great magnet, from which they came; it confers upon other particles this same magnetic power, as in the case of crystallization; it awakens similar tones, as when several untouched harps vibrate in harmony when the musical key note is struck upon one alone. Why then may not the thought awakened by a fixed musical sound be in time attracted to the real source of that sound, of all sound? And as thought causes a disturbance among the molecules of the brain, some sound, however aerial, must accompany this vibration; does not my brain then answer this singing resonance with the note homogeneous to all the ethereal space?

In the article from “THE PATH” before quoted, I find the following lines. “Having taken the Bow, the great weapon (Om), let him place on it the arrow (the Self), sharpened by devotion; ... Brahman is called the aim. It is to be hit by a man who is not thoughtless.” The “Singing Silences” are superinduced by meditation, thought, devotion: the closest imitation of them possible to the human voice consists in chanting, half aloud, the word “Aum,” over and over, as heretofore described. Do those Yogees who repeat “Aum” thousands of times daily, follow this practice in order to produce the resonance, or homogeneous tone, and to calm the mind, (as they claim to do,) by means of the harmonious monotony thus engendered? True, it fails to lead them to the higher knowledge, but is this not because the mental condition is self-induced, like the delusive trances of self mesmerization? On the other hand, if (as they

claim again,) it throws them into a trance like state or crystallization of thought, is not this because it is after all, in some measure, akin to the natural resonance? The idea herein advanced would thus seem to be further supported, since this mechanical repetition of “Aum,” and its sedative power, is as the power of the microcosm, faintly outlining that of the macrocosm, (or real resonance,) to lead towards the calm which incubates the dawning thought and leads towards the true Illuminated State. “THE PATH” goes on to state that we are “led by the resonance, which is not the Divine Light itself, towards that Radiance which is Divine; the resonance is only the outbreathing of the first sound of the entire Aum.”

This constant and peculiar singing, provocative as it is of a peaceful abstraction so great as to exclude all outer things and thoughts, seems to induce a state which draws the hearer into the border lands of Spirit. Works on eastern travel and foreign witnesses, alike affirm that many faquirs repeat “Aum,” and also “Rama,” thousands of times, merely because they are told that such a thing is useful, while others do it with the mind fixed on realizing the True. Studious investigation always reveals a deep philosophy underlying religious forms, from which there is no reason to suppose this one to be exempt.

Listening attentively to the “Singing Silence,” I fall, after a brief space, into an unbroken and dreamless sleep which lasts for hours; hearing, without listening, I experience a sensation of physical refreshment and mental placidity. It came to me uncalled for, unnoticed, unrecognized; when finally a sense of pleasure fastened upon my mind, I idly accepted it, but without questioning, as a curious personal peculiarity. It was only when, giving myself up to thoughts of higher things, I met it upon the threshold of meditation, found it daily recurring, daily growing in distinctness and power, that I recognized it as a possible psychical experience. As I never strove to produce it at the outset, so I never attempt to increase or evoke it now; I should not know how to set about doing so. *It influenced me*; I have no control whatever over it. It comes as it wills, and is not subject to my command.

Is this then one of the practical significances or uses of “the word Om, as expressed in tone?” Does this bell-like resonance have such an effect upon the molecules of the human body, (including those of the brain,) as to polarize them in time to The Spirit? If there are those who doubt the existence of a great undercurrent of universal tone, described by “THE PATH” as Nada Brahma,— the divine resonance upon which “depends the evolution of the visible from the invisible,” — they will at least grant its probability when they consider that this has been admitted by some of the greatest intellects of the world, many of whom firmly believed in the “music of the spheres.” Plato taught it. Maximus Tyrius says that “the mere proper motion of the planets must create sounds, and as the planets move at regular intervals, these sounds must be harmonious.” The *Cyclopaedia Britannica* says, “the origin of musical sounds consists in the regular, periodic vibration of some surface in contact with the air, whereby motion is imparted to the air. The loudness or intensity of the note depends on the magnitude of the motion or pitch.” The regular motions of the planets of our system, as well as those of known moving stars, such as Sirius, may well be accompanied by a rhythmical sound arising from the ether waves thus set in motion. That we do not hear it, may be due to the density of our atmosphere, yet it may be none the less transmitted along the ether waves and heard by the inner ear of those whose sense is developed. Pythagoras was the first philosopher to suggest this idea, which is mentioned by Shakespeare:

There's not the smallest orb which thou behold'st  
But his motion like an angel sings,

Still quiring to the young eyed cherubims:  
*Such harmony is in immortal souls;*  
But while this muddy vesture of decay  
Doth grossly close it in, we cannot hear it.<sup>2</sup>

He also speaks of it again in *Pericles*.<sup>3</sup>

“Kepler’s idea of the universe was essentially Pythagorean and Platonic. He thought that the planetary movements were related to musical intervals.” (*Cyclo. Brit.*) Montaigne, Milton, Donne, Pope, Newton, Tycho-Brahe and others believed in the “music of the spheres.” Faber beautifully attributed it to the vibration caused by the shooting rays of light on their journey earthward:

Thou art fugitive splendours made vocal,  
As they glanced from that shining sea.<sup>4</sup>

All are agreed that the idea has come down to us from the earliest times.

Finally, if this resonance exists as the great undertone of nature, it is probable, natural and consistent that it should be a stepping stone towards reaching Spirit, since harmony and accord are vitally necessary to our progress in either the physical or the psychical world. The effect of harmonious sound on the moral nature of man has received much scientific attention in relation to its influence over the insane. The Rev. H. R. Haweis speaks of it in *Music and Morals*, as “the much neglected study of Musical Psychology.” His remarks are greatly to our present point. “What has Nature done for the musician? She has given him sound. ... Thoughts are but wandering spirits that depend for their vitality upon the magnetic current of feeling. ... Emotion is often weakened by association with thought, whereas thoughts are always strengthened by emotion. I have endeavored to ... to show that there is a region of abstract emotion in human nature; ... that, this region of emotion consisted of infinite varieties of mental temperature that upon these temperatures or atmospheres of the soul depended the degree, and often the kind of actions of which at different times we were capable. ... Who will deny that the experience of such soul-atmospheres must leave a definite impress upon the character? ... But if, as we have maintained, music has the power of actually creating and manipulating these mental atmospheres, what vast capacities, for good or evil must music possess! ...” The Bible itself pays a tribute to the emotional effect and power of changing the soul’s atmosphere possessed by even such a primitive instrument as David’s Harp. “When the evil Spirit from God was upon Saul, then David took an harp, and played with his hand. So Saul was refreshed, and was well, and the evil Spirit departed from him.” (1 Sam. xvi, 23.) I have no doubt whatever that the acknowledged influence of music over the insane might be far more extensively used; indeed if applied judiciously to a disorganized mind, it might be as powerful an agent as galvanism in restoring healthy and pleasurable activity to the emotional regions. Who can deny then, if such a mysterious command as this is possessed by music over the realm of abstract emotion, that music itself must be held responsible for the manner in which it deals with that realm, and the kind of succession, proportion and degrees of the various emotional atmospheres it has the power of generating.

Testimony upon these various points might be multiplied, but is not the above sufficient to indicate a possibility at least that these “Singing Silences” are closely allied to “Nada Brahma,” the omnipresent sound, the vibration caused perhaps by the speeding of Light, (which is the first Divine Thought,) from the Central Sun, and in the mighty harmony of its coming, awakening and vivifying all things?

...I guess, by the stir of this music  
What raptures in heaven can be,  
Where the sound is Thy marvellous stillness,  
And the music is light out of Thee.<sup>5</sup>

JULIUS.

## NOTES

1. {*The Path*, April 1886, p. 4.}
2. {*The Merchant of Venice*, William Shakespeare.}
3. {*Pericles, Prince of Tyre*, George Wilkins and William Shakespeare.}
4. {*Hymns*, Fredrick William Faber, p. 364.}
5. {*Hymns*, Fredrick William Faber, p. 365.}

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*The Theosophical Quarterly* – October 1906, Vol. 4, pp. 133-134.

## SIX ASPECTS OF RENUNCIATION.

JASPER NIEMAND

{ONLY JULIA KEIGHTLEY'S RESPONSE INCLUDED HERE}

Renunciation is not an act. It is a state, a condition.

When the man first turns his thoughts towards Renunciation, he imagines that it consists in a single act of the will; that he has but to desire to renounce, to declare that he renounces, and that Renunciation is complete. But when he has done this, he has but turned towards the path leading to that Great Gate of Renunciation, the Gate whereby the mortal shall enter into Immortality.

When Jesus told the rich young man to give up all that he had before he could follow the Lord's path and teaching, we cannot suppose that the Master had in mind material possessions only; His thought did not dwell upon material things. The true Renunciation, that which is able perfectly, wholly to say, "Thy will, not mine, be done,"<sup>1</sup> was doubtless in His thought. This it was that caused the rich youth to go away sorrowfully. It is far easier to part with all our worldly wealth, than it is to renounce the human will *in its entirety*. This immense task can only be achieved after innumerable efforts; efforts which tax body and mind and heart to the uttermost; efforts which deal with the whole range of human life.

First, perhaps, he who perceives the power and beauty of Renunciation and who is fain to achieve it because he yearns towards the spiritual life and to do The Will, thinks to reach this condition by self-denial, by ascetism. He gives up tastes and habits to which he is attached, choosing his own means of self-discipline, of self-mortification. He who does this, if so be he is in earnest, then receives further enlightenment. First he comes to see that this path he has chosen is but the path of bodily renunciation; that he has chosen his own path and not that of The Will divine. These things he has selected as typical of Renunciation are not — it may be — chosen for his Renunciation by that Will at all. They are — it may be — duties of his place in life to be understood, administered, fulfilled, not cast away. His wealth, his tastes, his customs, were perhaps his teachers, his opportunities. Thinking to renounce, he has embraced a fiat of his own mind only. Thus he comes to see that Renunciation is a mental act, a surrender of his own thought and idea to Divine Law.

On this, the man endeavors to renounce *mentally*. He tries to surrender his fancies about Renunciation, and to read instead, in his daily life and its routine, the Divine Will concerning him. He has now made another step towards Renunciation. And he finds himself before a barrier. This barrier is erected by his own mind and heart.

For no man, however sincere, is able all at once to perceive the Divine Will acting within his life, until he has burned away all the dross of his own desires, until he has purified his own heart.

Thus of this stage it has been written: "Before the Soul can stand in the presence of the Masters, its feet must be washed in the blood of the heart."

The feet of the Soul typify its lower nature, the personal desires of the human soul. The heart must of its own accord forsake every desire arising within itself, from the human nature, and must in every moment and in all things — even the most trifling — learn to ask instinctively: Lord, what is Thy Will concerning this thing? When he can do that, the voice of the Silence answers him.

Even then, when the man has heard and obeys, and his soul stands in the presence of the Masters, he has but set his feet upon the first step of that pathway of Renunciation which leads from Man to God.

For now he has to repeat the process upon a higher plane. Are we not told that to conquer the desires of the individual soul is the work of ages?

Yet every human heart that is learning to say — however imperfectly — "Thy will not mine be done," has tasted the sacrificial bread of Renunciation.

JASPER NIEMAND.

## NOTE

1. {Matthew 26:39, Mark 14:36, Luke 22:42.}

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*The Path* – July 1893, Vol. 8, pp. 108-110.

## THE SLEEPING SPHERES.<sup>1</sup>

JASPER NIEMAND

### PART 1. {1 of 2}

One came to me, calling me out of the form in which I dwell, and showed me the sleeping Spheres.

Now the object of this Messenger<sup>1</sup> who had come to me was to make clear to me some of the hidden things: things hidden, I mean, from the eye of flesh, yet not lying so remote from our ken if we only make some *mental* effort toward seeing. And the further idea appeared to be that if I were to see them, as it were, objectively, though with the astral organ of sight, I might be able to make this, the Devachanic State, clearer to the thought of some of my fellows. For the sleeping Spheres are Devachanic entities. In Devachan<sup>2</sup> we are not yet united with the UNKNOWN SOURCE. Hence the need, on the part of the Ego, of form — or container — of some kind. I have chosen here, arbitrarily perhaps, the name of "Sphere" for this Devachanic form.

These Spheres, than which there are none more beautiful, do not lie in any given place; they are self-contained; they have condition, but no place.<sup>3</sup> When I asked my Companion how this could really be so, he pointed out to me that they interpenetrated

many other states of matter, cohering by means of their own vibration,<sup>4</sup> just as do all other forms, of whatever kind and however ethereal, throughout the whole of nature.

I had passed from my body into the air<sup>5</sup> and the airy form, and from thence into the ether. All about me lay the sleeping Spheres, delicate milky films on the golden ocean of light. Ever and anon a thrill of faintest color trembled across their deeps, and I trembled too, for it was given to me to know that these color-motions were, in reality, Thoughts of profound delight. Yes, these palpitating Spheres had pure joy in their own opalescent motions; joy as they throbbed in the living ether, and a joy which had great meaning. This was plain to even my understanding, which at the moment was that of the airy body<sup>6</sup> only. (I presuppose my readers to know even better than myself, that the consciousness of one body differs greatly from that of another. This is true whether the different bodies are all contained together in their own outer shell, or are at the time separate from that temporary covering.)

Imagine, then, that I saw these radiant shapes, now silvery, with a bluish frost upon them, now blooming into tints so translucent that the eye of the soul alone could perceive them, and that every tint was a Thought, an experience. These fair Thoughts were the dreams of the souls disengaged from earth. Dreaming thus, the Spheres slept. How blissful the dreams! For those colors were both living Light and Intelligence; each color was Thought; Thought of the most exalted order known to the human Mind. Thought quivered through the Spheres, changing their Consciousness; fusing them anew;<sup>7</sup> quickening their higher Life; illumining their purer Light, in a world-plane whereon Light, Life, and Thought are one magnificent act of Being, and not the trivial things known to most men in this everyday world. Each Sphere thus became more and more incandescent with this three-fold LIFE, and I saw them blooming and growing, through this sweet iris-hued ebb and flow, as a flower unfolds towards greater perfection by means of assimilated sun-light. The unfoldment was divine, the peace profound. Silence, like a brooding mother, covered them over; it was only enhanced by an occasional soft semi-tone, the harmonious breathing of the sleeping Spheres.

Would that I need say no more!

Yet even while I watched their gracious Being, it became plain that, like flowers, they must fade. Although they were composed of atoms of living Light, Light that was itself a grand Consciousness, yet I soon observed a marked change<sup>8</sup> to take place and to become prevalent in all of them. This change was at first exceedingly beautiful, and consisted of a slight rhythmic motion in the atoms of a Sphere. The atoms danced; living opals shot through with tenderest Light.

Seeing this, I could but ask myself, "What new Thoughts are in the dreams of the Spheres?" This motion was soon imparted to the Spheres themselves. They trembled into coruscations of Light and grandly awoke.<sup>9</sup> From them, thus swaying, issued glories that no tongue may name, nor do words contain them. Each Sphere thus joining the choral dance emitted a choral song; music whose ordained instrument is the naked soul; music that is visible flames of sweetest, intensest desire. All my being awoke into delicious longings in which reverence had no place. I said to my Companion: "What is the burden of this bewitching song?" Very gravely he replied: "It sings of the Life of the world." I wondered to hear him speak so solemnly of what gave me so great delight, but when I turned again to the Spheres I felt a new perplexity. The accelerated motion had produced colors more vivid, more of the gross and solid nature of earthy pigment; the music now shrilled across the etheric spaces; there was in it the strident note of crass emerald, the bugle blare of blazing crimson. The Spheres would sleep no more. Yet I saddened now at their brilliant awakening; in my inner heart a deep voice said: "This is the end of all desire."<sup>10</sup>

The music augmented in volume; the aerial dance became a mad whirl to madder — yet harmonic — sound. This sound marshalled the turbulent atoms at the spheric centers, where they set up tentative efforts towards crystallization,<sup>11</sup> — form. These efforts impeded the spheric motion. Labored, troubled movements, indicative of troubled Consciousness, set in. The fair Thought of the Spheres was disturbed. Streams of red fire, strange contractive motions, throes whose every convulsion made the Spheres less ethereal, sound whose every note made the atoms more gross, until suddenly the formative nucleus at the center shuddered forth into form — a form which caught only a dim reflection of the original Light, a form which could not exist at all on the original plane of the Spheres.

Must the awakened Spheres hereafter bear that grotesque burden? Suspended there, fringed only with the gracious spheric hues, gross cause of the dispersal of beauteous Being, still I recognized it, still I wept<sup>12</sup> as I said: “Comes the earth-child thus forth? Surely this is Death that I have witnessed, and not Life.”

My Companion answered: “That is in truth what thou hast witnessed. A death to Devachanic existence, a birth into the material Life which thou and thy blinded fellows call ‘the world.’ The form whose birth thou hast seen is but the model of the earthly one which it informs. It is thy lot to know more of this matter of so-called Life and Death. Another time I will again meet thee; thou shalt then undergo some experience of Devachanic Life.” He disappeared, leaving me in my ethereal body adrift upon the night.

JASPER NIEMAND.

(To be continued.)

## NOTE

1. {All footnotes in the body of the article, refer to *Commentary* below by Willem B. Roos of Mexico City, Mexico, from *The Canadian Theosophist*, 15 March 1953 and August 1982, which follows:

### THE SLEEPING SPHERES.

EDITOR, *THE CANADIAN THEOSOPHIST*

### FOREWORD.

The article, “The Sleeping Spheres,” together with commentaries by Willem B. Roos, was published serially in *The Canadian Theosophist* in the March, April, May, June and July, 1953 issues. In recent years the Editors have received a number of suggestions that it be reprinted; however, this was felt to be impractical due to its length and to the fact that the magazine is now only published bimonthly. The present format has therefore been chosen to make this interesting and thought-provoking writing on the after-death states available to a new generation of students of Theosophy.

The following pages contain the complete 1953 publishing of “The Sleeping Spheres,” including the introductory remarks by the then Editor, Dudley W. Barr. The only changes that have been made is the relocation of Mr. Roos’ notes closer to the text to which they refer.

THE EDITORS

*The Canadian Theosophist*

January, 1979

Reprinted August 1982, with minor changes. Passages referred to in Mr. Roos' notes have been marginally numbered; and their page numbers have been indicated in the notes. Also, a key to the abbreviated references has been added at the end.

## THE SLEEPING SPHERES.

EDITOR, *THE CANADIAN THEOSOPHIST* AND WILLEM B. ROOS

Through the efforts of Mr. Willem B. Roos of Mexico City, Mexico, we are able to present a long lost article on the post mortem states of the human Ego, written by 'Jasper Niemand,' a close friend of and an active coworker with Mr. William Q. Judge. There will also be published Mr. Roos's commentaries on the text and a biographical note on 'Jasper Niemand' which were included in a pamphlet prepared by Mr. Roos.

In the Preface Mr. Roos states:

"In *The Path* for July 1893 appeared under the signature of Jasper Niemand Part I of *The Sleeping Spheres*. At the end of that article is printed '(To be continued)' indicating that the author intended to publish a second part under the same title. From the contents of the last paragraph of Part I it is also clear that this second part would deal with a subjective devachanic experience of its author. But in the magazine *The Path* there was never published the continuation of *The Sleeping Spheres*. The final number of *The Path* is dated March 1896, after which the name was changed into *Theosophy*. This coincided with the death of its editor and founder, William Q. Judge. Up till now I have not been able to find out when and where the second part was published, yet it must have been published inasmuch as many years ago I obtained from Germany a German translation of *The Sleeping Spheres* in pamphlet form, containing both Part I and II. This pamphlet is entitled '*Schlafende Sphären oder Das Leben der Seele nach dem Tode, von Jasper Niemand.*' The publisher is given as Paul Raatz, Theosoph. Verlag, Friedrichstrasse 16. No city is indicated, nor is the name of the translator given. What is worse, all reference to the source is omitted, and it is not even stated that the article is a translation from the English...."

Mr. Roos goes on to state that having finally given up all hope of finding the original English text of Part II, he decided to retranslate the German version. He had loaned his copy of the German text to a Dutch lady from whom he later obtained a photographic copy. "Only the importance of this article in the study of Theosophy, on the subject of which there does not exist anything comparable to it, could induce me to undertake this task, a task wholly foreign to my usual activities."

Mr. Roos's retranslation of Part II, together with the original English version of Part I and commentaries on both Parts, were published by Mr. Roos in a pamphlet which was presented by him at the 22nd Anniversary of the Cosmopolitan Group of Students of Theosophy in Mexico City on February 15, 1951.

Mr. Roos was in Toronto later in 1951 and told us the interesting story of his search for the missing Part II and of his translation of the German text. A copy of his pamphlet was left with us to be published later in the Magazine.

And now comes a curious sequel — a bound volume of the magazine in which the original of Part II was published, came to the Editor in 1952. This magazine was *The English Theosophist*, Vol. III, 1899-1900. This volume was among the books of the late Mrs. J. K. Bailey who for many years was Treasurer and

Travelling Librarian for the Toronto Lodge. After her death in February, 1952, her books were given to the Toronto Lodge. This bound volume was given to the Editor as it seemed to be of historical interest and was not required for the Circulating Library. Glancing over the index we found *The Sleeping Spheres*, including the long lost Part II. A typed copy was sent to Mr. Roos and later the bound volume itself was sent on from which Mr. Roos had photostatic copies made.

In making his retranslation Mr. Roos did not attempt a literal translation from the German text, but endeavored to reproduce the style and spirit of the original article, in which task he was aided by having the original English text of Part I. That he was eminently successful in doing this is indicated by a comparison between the original of Part II and his retranslation.

We have often thought of the manner in which many threads of action came together in this little incident. If Mr. Roos had not visited Toronto in 1951 and aroused our interest in the article; if Mrs. Bailey had disposed of her books before her death or had given this particular volume to an interested friend, if her collection of books had not come to Toronto Lodge; if the volume of *The English Theosophist* had been put among the five thousand other books in the Lodge Library, the missing Part II might not have come to light for many years. Possibly if we could view such an incident from the inner realms we would see that such things do not occur by chance and that there is a pattern binding all together.

EDITOR.

## COMMENTARY

WILLEM B. ROOS

### I. THE OBJECTIVE VISION

1. *The Messenger*. Although J.N. does not indicate who this Messenger was, from the fact that R.S. was taught at nights by H.P.B.<sup>1</sup> it is more than probable that H.P.B. was that Messenger. We do not know the date of the vision. The date of its publication (July 1893) was two years after H.P.B.'s death and nearly two years after J.N.'s marriage to Dr. Keightley. But although the comrade spoken of in "The Sleeping Spheres" is certainly Dr. Keightley, there are no indications that the comrade was already her husband. But even if she were married when she experienced the life of a sleeping Sphere, it does not preclude the possibility of H.P.B. being the Messenger. R.S. in the above mentioned letter to Countess Wachtmeister describes how H.P.B., after her departure continued to visit R.S. several times, although in masculine guise.

2. *Devachan*. This word has often been misrepresented as derived from the Sanskrit and still more often is mispronounced. It is a purely Tibetan word and although it has the same meaning as the Sanskrit *deva-loka* its etymology is quite different. It comes from the root *bde-ba*, meaning, to be happy, to be well; happy, easy; happiness. This root is, therefore, at the same time a verb, an adjective and a noun, and its Sanskrit equivalents are, among others: *subha*, *sukha*, and *kusala*. To this root, *bde-ba*, is added the Tibetan affix '*can*,' signifying: having, being provided with, etc. Jaschke gives as meaning of *bde-ba-can*: the land of bliss (Sanskrit: *sukhavati*) a sort of heaven or paradise, in the far west, the abode of Dhyani Buddha Amitabha (270). Sarat Chandra Das gives in his Tibetan-English dictionary: "Bde-wa-can, Devachan, the paradise of the Northern Buddhists" (670). Madame Alexandra David-Neel, the famous explorer of Mystic Tibet, writes in *Magic and Mystery in Tibet* ... "the Paradise of the Great Bliss (Nub

Devachan),” giving a correct phonetic transcription of the word. (op. cit. 52.) Again, on page 121 she writes: “The Dhyani Buddha Odpagmed, of whom the Tashi Lama is the *tulku*, resides in the Western Paradise, Nub devachan.”

As to the correct pronunciation of *bde ba-can*: the first *b* is mute; the second *b* is pronounced in Lhasa as our *w*; the *d*, *e*, and first *a* are pronounced like the corresponding sounds in Spanish; the *c* is pronounced as the *ch* in “church” while the second *a* is pronounced in Lhasa as the *e* in “when;” finally the *n* is equivalent to the English *n*. (See also *The Mahâtma Letters to A. P. Sinnett*, p. 373 and *Tibetan Yoga and Secret Doctrine*, by W. Y. Evans-Wentz, pp. 220, 246.)

3. *Spheres, having condition but no place*. An analogy is a wave on the ocean, of which it is impossible, or rather, meaningless, to fix the place and of which the constituent particles are constantly changing place with others. “Condition” refers to the rate and intensity of the vibration. “The center of Devachanic activity cannot be localized.” (*The Theosophist*, Vol. IV, p. 268.)

4. *Cohering by means of their own vibration*. Here a general statement is made about the rationale of attraction, a subject as yet unexplained by modern science. Those acquainted with the laws of electricity and magnetism know that between two electric currents going in parallel paths in the same direction, there exists an attractive force, called electrodynamic, which is made use of in many electrical instruments and motors.

5. *Into the Air*. The *element* air, in Sanskrit *vayu*, is here meant, and not the air we breathe.

6. *The airy body*. The *mâyâvirûpa* of Theosophy.

7. *Changing their Consciousness; fusing them anew*. The Spheres are transitory, changing from stage to stage, not only in form, but even in their constituent active elements. The energy, stored up within the Spheres during the lifetime of the indwelling Ego, dissipates objectively in the form of vibrations. Subjectively these vibrations correspond to thoughts and ideas of a spiritual nature.

8. *I soon observed a marked change*. It must not be inferred that Devachan is of a very short duration — on the contrary, it lasts very much longer than the corresponding life on earth, as it is one of spiritual digestion and assimilation, so to say. J.N. was made to see the various stages in Devachan in rapid succession, just as psychometers see a series of pictures passing with extraordinary rapidity before their inner eye, pictures pertaining not only to different parts of space, but also to different periods of time.

9. *The Spheres grandly awoke*. A change of consciousness is meant here, analogous, but not similar, to that of waking up from a night’s sleep. It is the passage from a world of effects to one of causes.

10. *The end of all desire*. Of all *spiritual* desire; as in Devachan the unfulfilled spiritual desires of the personality are satisfied until the complete exhaustion of their original impulse, when the forces of *Tanha* carry the Monad back to rebirth.

11. *Efforts towards crystallization*. The collecting of the Skandhas, the formation of a new astral body, is here described.

12. *Still I wept*. This corroborates her statement that her consciousness “was that of the airy body only.”

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It must be realized by the student that the above covers only a very small fragment of the subject of the post-mortem life. J.N.’s narrative covers the experiences of a rather unusual personality, one already acquainted with Theosophy and in possession of certain clairvoyant powers. A more common human being would have quite different experiences, although the general laws

governing the devachanic state are, of course, applicable in all cases. Finally, the reader must not forget that deaths by accident, violence or suicide produce their own peculiar effects upon the post-mortem condition. Also the post-mortem states of spiritually evil beings, of sorcerers and of soulless entities, are very different from the one described above, and would need a separate discussion.

WILLEM B. ROOS.}

#### NOTE

1. {*Reminiscences of H. P. Blavatsky and "The Secret Doctrine,"* Wachmeister, pp. 121-129.}

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{Introduction only, from} ***New Theosophy Network***:

Note from the editor: In keeping with the theme of the After Death states..., we thought it might be useful to the student to read the following article written by Jasper Niemand. She has given us a glimpse of what it may be like when the soul experiences the Devachanic state. I let you, the reader, draw your own conclusions.

#### **THE SLEEPING SPHERES**

JASPER NIEMAND

##### Introduction to The Sleeping Spheres

*The Sleeping Spheres* is a long lost article on the post mortem states of the human ego, written by Jasper Niemand, a close friend and active co-worker of William Q. Judge. It appeared in *The Canadian Theosophist*, Vol. 34, No. 1 for March 15, 1953.

Jasper Niemand was the *nom-de-plume* of Mrs. Archibald Keightley, also known in the ranks of the Theosophical Society in America as Mrs. Julia Campbell Ver Planck. It was she, Julia Campbell Ver Planck, writing under the pen-name of Jasper Niemand who was the source of much of the material in *Letters That Have Helped Me* by William Q. Judge.

*The Sleeping Spheres* is a first-hand report of the author's experience of the post-mortem view of Devachan.

In Part I, she relates her view of "Sleeping Monads," as seen from the outside, as it were.

Part II is the narrative of her consciousness as she *became* the State of Devachan and re-lived her "past life review," from the 'inside' in a total Near-Death experience.

We have chosen to do a verbatim (minus the introduction) reprint of the article as it appeared in *The Canadian Theosophist* so as to provide our readers with the author's own words, unbiased by our interpretations.

We hope this will be of great interest for our readers of occult material from the Theosophical Archives.

PUBLISHERS}

{Excerpts from various sources on *The Sleeping Spheres*:

**{REVIEW.}**

UNKNOWN

The Editorial Notes of *The English Theosophist* for October make a good point, by setting modern scientific theories in antithesis to “the Exact or Esoteric Science.” Our readers will see that Count Tolstoi does exactly the same thing, in his very valuable and profound essay on “Religion and Religions,” though he rather intuitively guesses than consciously understands the greatness and reality of Esoteric Science. The message of *The Sleeping Spheres* is strong, affirmative, beneficent, the record of direct knowledge, which alone profits. Dr. Buck adds wise words on Light and Leaders.

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*The Dialogues of G. De Purucker* – G. de Purucker, Theosophical University Press, 1948, Vol. 3, pp. 396-397:

**{ELUCIDATION.}**

G. DE PURUCKER

... I remember once reading an article by some attentive student of former days — it may have been ‘Jasper Niemand,’ who was the Mrs. Archibald Keightley of Judge’s time. It was called ‘The Sleeping Spheres,’ as I recollect — a rather attractive title because it gave the idea of vital spheres, which is more or less correct as the phrase brings to the mind the conception of the ovoid or egg-shaped form of the auric egg. But the mistake that this writer made was in thinking that these sleeping spheres were the egos themselves sleeping through devachanic dreams; and this idea that egos are ethereal spheres was quite wrong. The ego in devachan may be utterly dimensionless, have no magnitude or bulk, or what we call volume or size, whatsoever, because an ego is a monad or point of consciousness. It is for this reason also that the ancient Hindû *Upanishads* used to speak of Brahman as *anîyâmsam anîyasâm*. This Sanskrit phrase means ‘atomic of the atomic,’ smaller than the smallest. Equivalently they used to speak of Brahman as ‘greater than the greatest.’ These phrases sound like verbal contradiction, but they are not. The phrases are paradoxes; that is, consciousness can be at one and the same instant vast enough to inspire a whole Solar System and be greater than it, and yet minute enough, infinitesimal enough, to find a universe in the heart of a chemical atom, and to be smaller than the chemical atom.}

## THE SLEEPING SPHERES.<sup>1</sup>

JASPER NIEMAND

### PART II. {2.1 of 2}

The Messenger had told me that, having thus seen the Devachanic life from outside, as it were, I should also go through the experience. His words had speedy fulfilment.

Before recounting what befell me thereafter, two points must be made clear.

1. The experience I passed through next was *my own experience*; it was not that of any other as to its details. For the act of dissolution, or separation, called “death,” varies in details with individuals. So do the *post-mortem* experiences. All die, all pass through Kâma-loka (or the place of desires), all have some Devachanic experience, even though mere materialistic minds sleep it dreamlessly away. But the details of experience are different with each human soul (Manas) that casts off a body. There are as many kinds of death, I may say, as there are souls, and not one unvarying experience for all. And why? Because it is not “death” at all, in fact. If we lived but one mortal life and then died, according to ordinary belief, the act of death might be the same for all. But as the human soul chooses now objective life and now life subjective, making now its own heaven-world, choosing now its own earth-place and experience, we can see that, though all pass the portals called Life and Death, the methods and details must differ with each. At a later period, I came to a knowledge of other and different forms of death and after-death experiences, each typical of a given type of individual, or, to put it more correctly, of soul.

2. The second point is this. My own and first experience, which I am about to recount to you, was, to me, *perfectly real*. I did not, *at the time*, compare it with the previous sight of the sleeping Spheres, nor with anything else. I was plunged in the experience itself. I did not call it “death.” I did not know it as “death.” I lived it. I was that experience itself. I knew it only as a fullness of life hitherto unguessed at, one hitherto absent even from my highest imaginings, my most vivid dream.

Yet remember this. I lost sight of non-essentials only. Never did I forget for an instant the essential fact of the Ego, the fact of Identity; I had full knowledge that the subject of this experience was “I myself.” This seems a clumsy way of saying that my consciousness, though purified and uplifted, broadened also, still identified the Perceiver as “I.” To put it after another fashion: I knew perfectly well all the time that it was “I myself” undergoing this new and beautiful Life. My consciousness, while it perceived the identity of Being, the identity of souls, never passed into the All-Consciousness which is all-in-all and knows no separateness.

This fact alone shows that Devachan is not the highest state.<sup>1</sup> It is the subjective existence of the personal and higher Ego. It is *not* the impersonal, non-separate condition of that Divine and Higher Self which is a state of the Divine Ego, and not a body or form. This Higher Self is a state of the Sphere,<sup>2</sup> and may occur during the lifetime of the physical body, being entered at will by the white Adept who, by exercise of the purified and universal volition, or will-energy, can enter all and any state of consciousness at will. But Devachanic existence is quite other than this highest state.

After I had passed back to the ordinary consciousness, then, and then only, was I able to compare the two events<sup>3</sup> illustrated by the two parts of this article. Part I. is the Seeing. Part II. is the Being. Having had both experiences, I was able to complete one

by the other, and to observe what point of seeing corresponded to the other point of being. For example, I saw what a change of color, such as I had seen, meant in the life of Thought through which I passed.

It is a difficult experience to make clear to you, and my best plan will be to tell you first all that I went through, and afterwards to compare the two experiences of exterior observation, or sight, and interior observation, or being. In this way you will travel along the path taken by myself. If I were to stop at different points of my narrative for purposes of comparison, all the unity of experience will be lost and you will be confused.

Let me premise, therefore, that when this second experience came to me, the friends about me thought that I had in truth died. There were no signs of life, visible to the trained medical observation. Rigor of the body set in and continued for hours. All the death signs were apparent. Hence those who loved me went through the experience in another form, the most harrowing form, for they thought the soul beloved by them had again passed from mortal sight upon the wings of the air; that it might be rejoined, but would not return. So they mourned for me, plunged in anguish while "I myself" was with them in a fulness of life yet unknown. Take comfort, oh you mourners! You alone suffer in your blindness. For the so-called dead there is only exceeding great joy from which no beloved soul is absent, to which no sense of loss is possible.

When this experience first befell me I was lying upon my bed, whither I had been conveyed by reason of sudden heart failure. Great pain, throbs and nervous shocks vibrating deeply through my whole being, had caused me to close my eyes. A voice, well-known and well-beloved, seemed to speak to me from afar, and to pierce through a thick fog in my brain, a fog like an enveloping, down-pressing mist, with which the brain-matter struggled, striving to go through the motions of thinking, motions impeded by that increasing semi-material weight. I could not reply, but the voice spoke again, with an accent so imploring, so urgent, that I made a mighty effort, as it seemed to me.

Lift my heavy swollen tongue I could not; sound would not well up into the throat; not a muscle anywhere would respond to my will. Yet once again that voice besought me, and so great was the anguish it conveyed, that I could not endure the thought of such misery on the part of one I loved. Once again I made a desperate effort; I seemed to myself to writhe convulsively, to struggle with all my body, though I am told that no motion on my part was visible to the bystander; and then, at last, I succeeded in opening my eyes, to see dark earnest eyes, soul-lighted, gazing eagerly into mine. And, then I saw no more. A deep breath passed through me and left me, and I fell into Thought. <sup>4</sup> At this moment I appeared to the bystander to draw my last breath and to "die."

It was not the same so far as I was concerned. That look from eyes I knew so well started a deep train of Thought, in which I was soon steeped, immersed. This train began with thinking of the loved comrade's pain. Then I longed to soothe that pain. Upon this wish followed the thought that our philosophy, which we had tried to live, and which had been as a guide to our steps, must soon step in and forbid all grieving, all sorrow. Then, naturally, I thought of the times when these spiritual teachings had already supported us; on this followed remembrances of the time when I had not as yet heard of these teachings. This thought seemed to act like a sudden spring which, when touched, releases a concealed door; the whole of my Life sprang out and filed before me in review, through that opened door of the brain.

Days of childhood, careless, unconscious, full of nature pleasures, joy in life and motion and the companionship of all the creatures; the human creatures like myself,

and the dear animals who understood the child-life so well, it seemed; the underworld little people seen by childhood's eyes only. Slowly the opening mind grasped more and more of the fullness of Nature, the panorama of the skies swept in, the stately march of sound and color began. Rich delights held revel in the opening consciousness, only to be chilled by the cold dawn of self-consciousness.

The child began to feel itself apart from Nature, apart also from fellow beings who spoke what it could not ratify. Misunderstood, miscalled, misapplied, was its little life. All that children thought was foolish; Life was other than it appeared to the innocent heart of childhood. Most of what was seen by a child's clear seeing did not exist, was not so understood, nor was it seen by the wise elder people; it was only the folly of naughty children, and, if persisted in, was punishable as a lie. The child must conform to accepted ideas, or suffer punishment. Thus children suffer with the pioneers of Truth.

The young heart and mind were docile; they strove to believe as they were bidden; they succeeded in a measure — and what then? What then? This, to wit — that the mind, developing further, observed that grown people did not act what they believed — or said they believed. It seemed as if to think was one thing, *to do* was quite another thing.

A grim puzzle came before the child-heart. It said, in its puzzle, in its dim recesses: "What shall I do? Shall I think true, or shall I *act* true?" And again: "If I say what I think and do it, I am naughty. But if I do what I am told and say what they teach me, I am good, and I want — oh! how I want to be good. But I don't understand it, and it isn't true to me. And if I even do what they tell me, I must think, and then I am naughty again." So a passionate sense of wrong sprang up in the child's heart, a wrong it could not define or name; just a cry far down in its nature for justice and for light.

But Nature wearies. A child cannot cope with the surging tides about it. To yield is easier for the plastic unmolded nature; persistence of struggle is not for the child. So, I say, it yields, or rather, it sinks back exhausted, and then comes the fatal time; the time when the still developing sense-mind perceives the life of sense and pleasure, when these are tasted, understood, enjoyed. And then the lesson of thinking what one does not act upon, of believing things which have nothing to do with our lives — the hateful lesson of not caring about the divorce of Thought and Life, but only for one's mere personal honor, only to speak the truth about objective events, to care for true speech more than for a true life, a true soul — this parrot lesson was learned, well learned, because it made life easy, it stifled care.

The child became indifferent to living a lie; indifferent to saying prayers it did not understand to a God it could not comprehend and ceased to care for, as a child will cease to care for anything which is not vital, not necessary to its inner nature, and contrary to its ideas of justice — that justice for which children care so much and to which we may nearly always appeal. The eyes of the mind widened; they took in pain, cruelty, wrong; they found that no one cared much, that most people put these things out of mind; that they were done by an all-wise, all-merciful, loving God, as punishment.

But not all were punished. The child came to know of sins rewarded by the world and passed over by that God. It felt. It could not reason. It rebelled. Rebelled at its teachers; rebelled at the books; rebelled at injustice; clamored to be understood; cried out to understand. Love was all about it, but love could not soothe it. It wanted to know. The key to the riddle was missing. It was told it thought too much; told to go and play. And, child-like, it played, revolving its riddle. Child-like, it kept silence, for a child learns, soonest of all lessons, that silence is the great refuge from scorn, from

mockery, from rebuke. Thus the first teaching of hypocrisy comes to the child, and it learns pretense as the only right of sanctuary left to man.

Still it wondered, still it dreamed. And then, all at once, in a day or a night a change swept over; material existence paraded its brilliant colors, its seductive sweets; the child rushed into the vortex of existence, it forgot, in pleasure, the need to understand. Life arose before it, alluring, exciting, full of strange things. Oh yes! there were death and joy and passion and new scenes and loves and hates, and all the delicate things of sense in sound, color, taste. In Thought, too, was pleasure, Thought of Art and Poetry, and love of dreams, and ideal hopes, all blended in one swift, ever-changing phantasmagoria. Sorrows came, and were half sweet after too much rejoicing. Gladness came and rescued from grief. All was new and interesting, all, except here and there a moment, an eye-wink, a breath, as it were, a something that blew cold and chill and seemed to wither everything, a moment in which nothing seemed worthwhile, because nothing lasted.

And then came a new pang when the child, grown much older, discovered in itself a horror at the idea that these things *should last*. It had wearied of all, turning from one to the other. How dreadful the idea that any should last long, and longer still!

So Life surged by in a swift, flashing Thought. Distinct scenes too, of danger, of illness, of loss. There were those awful moments when the heart sees the beloved ones dying, and cannot follow them into the unseen with any certain hope. Those other moments too, equally terrible, when the unworthiness and falseness of things or persons trusted and beloved is discovered. The death of bright ideals befell. And over all, under all, the grim traits of unreality, the sense of the falsity of the whole of Life. The soul sought then some God, "for any God to hear the cry." For something *real* to rest upon. In vain, the world it knew was given over to change and unbelief; there was nothing to live and to die by. Slowly one rung after another of Life's ladder was passed, and hunger for something real grew greater, fiercer, more burning, more intolerable, more maddening, until...

Ah! the dawn of the beautiful hour when the soul found *Itself*. Yes, there, within the heart, above the mind, there *was* a something real and true. Some spiritual teaching, it may be, which explained this tangled web of Life. Some truth discovered in sorrow nobly borne for others' sakes. Some truth in duty performed for duty's sake. Some glimpse of Love unfettered by self, a love that went out to the world and gave, and gave and gave again. What can it matter? The fact remains that the heart which had yearned for something true and for some high companionship found these. It reached out for an Ideal whose very existence was denied by the intellect. The heart prophesied the Beautiful which the mind could not discover. And why could mind not discover that Perfection? For a very simple reason which, simple as it is, has baffled whole races of mankind in turn. Because mind, Janus-faced, looks forward into matter and backward into spirit, and reports duality and not identity. For mind, the experiencer and reporter, deals only with effects. It does not sense the Cause, the Rootless Root. And this is because mind cannot of itself discover the formless, for Mind, the Mind Universal, is itself the first manifested Form. Unto the formed, all things have form; unto the spiritual, all things are spirit. Now the Heart of Love is spiritual. I speak, *not* of Love as we know it, for that is a reflected, distorted light. I speak of Erôs, the One Ray, rather. Its reflection, pure and universal, is to be found in the heart of every human being. And the proper office of mind, the pioneer and discoverer of the objective world, is to cull experience after experience, and to offer these up to the heart, until that heart-star shall recall its ancient splendor, until it shall again see that truth and peace are not to be found in a world of reflected effects.

So the heart awoke, struggling with the vain assertions of matter, and all at once saw that itself was at once the runner and the goal, the seer and the thing seen. It came face to face with its Ideal and saw that Ideals are causes, saw that the Ideal is the only Real. Then with infinite pain it arose, and turned back upon the world-path, and closed the eyes of the mind for a space upon the world of matter; it left the material husks and the brutish part of itself and strove to return to the Father. "Every good and perfect gift cometh down from above, from the Father of Lights, in whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning." The heart reached up to that unchanging Father, the Elder Light that "lighteth every man that cometh into the world." The Mahâtma and that Light are not different.

Thus it was that the various scenes of Life passed very rapidly before me. In each I seemed to have a choice,<sup>5</sup> and the choice appeared to be for either spirit or matter,<sup>6</sup> for the formed or for the formless and unformulated, for evolution or against it, for rigidity and coägulation in a fixed, unprogressive mold, or away from the stationary to the ever-living. For the most part I appeared to understand all the varied experiences of this long, long Thought. But here and there were some I did not understand. I had not fully tasted them. I had, as it were, been forced to quit them too soon.

So soon as this thought came before my mind,<sup>7</sup> my experience divided itself into two parts. One part was made up of the higher impulses, the clear intuitions, the brightest dreams for others' good. In these I felt a quiet certainty that I was upon the only path the soul could tread uprightly, the only path in which it could find full satisfaction, interior peace. In the other part a voice within seemed to whisper of great deeds to be done, glories to be achieved, knowledge of Life to be attained, and through my whole being flashed an impulse towards action. I must be up and doing, I must come into objective contact with everything, I must prove everything, and that proof must be external, tangible, visible to the world. My very soul seemed to battle to and fro between these conditions, these two parts of itself. Now the outer action was everything, and now the interior certainty alone was to be relied upon. My thoughts surged to and fro, like lightning flashes.

All at once I felt I could no longer struggle; I must go forth into Life and taste and feel and do. With this, a flame seemed to sweep over and devour me.<sup>8</sup> Every wish I ever had poured into my mind. Armies of wishes, myriads of desires, pressing upon me, tearing at me. More and more fiercely a bottomless sea of cravings poured in tumult through my brain. One interminable, mad dance of remembrance, scene upon scene, picture after picture. Germs of I knew not what woke up and ran, in uproarious riot, through the brain, until lands and ships; stars and homes; men, women, creatures, and angels; meadows and mountains; flowers, books, gems, food, fruits, garments, music, dreams; haunting eyes; snatching hands; innumerable faces; skies and herbage and growths of every clime; wars and silences; banners and colors; hopes, fears, alarms, wealth, disease, poverty, desires, danger, loves, hatreds, deaths, and lives, and all the content of the world of forms pressed in upon the brain in one vivid lightning bolt, distracting, inviting, receding, advancing, and I wanted to do all and to feel all, instantaneously, with a huge, insatiable appetite, a voracious maw for the whole of Sense-Life at a single breath.

I felt a hunger that no experience could satiate; an intolerable need to fill myself full with experience. I desired to lie abroad on all the hills, to live in all the creatures. I burned to be a thousand, a million human beings all at once, and to feel the palpitant, seething whole of life through a million channels; to play every part, to feel, *feel*, FEEL, till every sense was asleep; till every sensuous atom should fail and yet should know itself unsatisfied while yet one single point of Life remained untasted, unabsorbed. This was the saturnalia of Desire. I was learning that the desire for Form-Life does not cease

with gratification. I was in torment in the Kâma-loka,<sup>9</sup> and the World-Desire made sport of me.

Yet not for long! Something within me arose<sup>10</sup> and bade the wild procession cease. It was that other part of me which arose, majestic, calm. From the inner place of peace rang out all clarion-wise and clear the deep “I AM” of the soul. As flee the miasmatic mists before the sun rays, so fled the troops of Desire before the sun of the soul. The deepest need of my nature manifested itself. It was the need of *being*, and not the desire of doing. The noblest dreams I had ever had of principles made manifest through duty done, arose, one by one, gracious and full of peace. I remembered that what I had ever needed and never found, *was* The Peace. And its doors flew open before me; and It became one with me, became my own soul. For I remembered the Teachers, the Light-bringers. I recalled the Master-Soul, the One. And at this thought a clear, sweet bell smote the air, and from the invisible spaces the Companions gathered round about and looked upon the Symbol of the Shadow; the Star of the one Darkness; the mystic emblem of Unity. And I remembered that I was one with Soul and Nature, and not separate, and my soul knelt before the One, the Unity, and adored Truth in silence. And so I entered the Peace. Thus doing, I dreamed, and now I was a sleeping Sphere,<sup>11</sup> calmly resting as a “delicate milky film upon the golden ocean of light.” For I had unknowingly cast aside every body and was a “dweller of the Sphere,” myself that Sphere.

JASPER NIEMAND.

(*To be concluded.*)

## NOTE

1. {All footnotes in the body of the article, refer to *Commentary* below installment 2.2 (below, beginning with #1), by Willem B. Roos, from *The Canadian Theosophist* — August 1982.}

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*The English Theosophist* – November 1899, Vol. 3, pp. 166-176.

## THE SLEEPING SPHERES.<sup>1</sup>

JASPER NIEMAND

{2.2 of 2}

(*Concluded from p. 151.*)

The fret and fever were over; gone the turbulence of desire, the scintillating thoughts. In an infinite leisure I seemed to rest, to repose. Thought was all, was all in all, and my only thought was Peace. So I *was* Peace, in a state of Being where to think is to be. Then slowly arose and expanded before me the highest and holiest aspirations of my life. First, the loved ones, whom I had yearned to know fully. And one by one I knew their soul-selves completely. All their suppressed hopes and loves stood out before me, crystal clear. They were what they had longed to be and not what life had seemed to make them. Here and there must they have been scattered; some as human beings on earth; some as Spheres in the ether; but to me was no distinction; all dwelt in my heart; each was myself. Dream upon dream bloomed delicately before me; I experienced each one. Of each I took my fill. That is to say, I dwelt long in thought upon every noble ideal and lived each one through to the core. I seemed to assimilate each until I became

the very thought itself. I had longed to uplift the downtrodden,<sup>12</sup> and they filed before me, rich in experience, glorious through endurance, helpers of their fellows, saviours of the race. I had desired knowledge, and the stars defiled before me, giving up their secrets for the good of future races of men. I had pined, as the wayfarer in the desert pines for water, for the companionship of the true, the single-hearted, the unswerving companions of the order of Pain. And behold! these were within me and were my very selves, and together in a bond of unbroken sanctity we worked for millions yet unborn. Great Souls aided us. Great Spirits passed through us. Great Thoughts took form within us. We *Became*. And to us, so becoming, was revealed the great Vision. Man does not know it. Eye hath not seen it. Mind cannot name it. *It is*. The silver Spheres bowed themselves and trembled; they opened their azure veils, and seemed to become one with the Unknowable as they dreamed the mystic Vision of the Grail sainted and holy, the Vision of Humanity redeemed and godlike, the dream of the many becoming The One.

I dare not say more. I cannot if I would. Yet oh! my comrades, know this. The highest realization of the Heaven-World is a dream of the *selfless selves*. We are nothing there. We have vanished. In that life at its best there is only the goal, the attainment of unity for those who suffered separation; the realization of peace for the whole of all the worlds. No one is near. No one is far. All are; all rest in the whole of Nature, one, indivisible, and at peace. It matters not whether any one beloved soul travails upon earth or sleeps near at hand, a singing Sphere; to the Sphere-dreamer all are himself, at peace with himself.

Do you ask me, brothers, what of those who labor still upon the groaning earth? What of the cruel wrongs that still endure? I admit that we ignore them in that Heaven-World which is to us the realization of all that is ripe and fair. And so, although we have well-earned all that dream of peace, or whatever state of bliss becomes ours in the Dream-Land, still I say that the Heaven-World is still a state of Self. Fair as its outward and inward seeming may be, it is but an assimilation of our highest dreams. It is the highest subjective snare of souls. The Self-Existent is not found within that well-earned state of rest.

While thus these thoughts endured, they gradually came to lose all form.<sup>13</sup> You must remember that now my Consciousness was that of Thought only. In Thought I lived and moved and had my being. And for a time these thoughts were definite, were realizations of previous hopes and ideals. Let me illustrate for the sake of clearness. I had, while in objective earth-life, ties of perhaps unusual strength with a number of people, all of whom were working, in divers manners, towards a high and common Ideal. On earth, we often differed, sometimes sharply; and yet the tie and the Ideal prevailed. At first, in the Heaven-World, I felt all my *special* comrades to be near me; those whom I best knew imparted, by their seeming nearness, a deep sweetness to my Thought. Presently I became *less* conscious of the identity of these friends with myself, and more conscious of that Ideal which we had shared. Thought of this Ideal expanded, until it grew greater than you can conceive, and this noble Ideal embraced all lands, all ages, all people, and all creatures, born and to be born.

As this beautiful Identity unfolded itself, Thought seemed to turn, with purity and harmony untold, towards every universal conception, in order to realize unity in all. Then all the worlds and beings became friends of my Thought. Then I knew, oh! my brothers, without discord, without separateness. Gone were those shapes of fear which hide us from one another. Gone the cruel masks which Life forces us to wear, the bodies which conceal us, the barriers between soul and soul. I saw you as you are, you, Immortals, Inheritors and Rulers of a Kingdom not made with hands. Even our foes were our sterner selves only. We found Identity in difference, likeness in unlikeness;

our souls looked upon one another, and with an ineffable impulse we united in The Ideal.

After this unspeakable moment the terms of consciousness changed. The universal laws began to be learned.<sup>14</sup> The unattainable knowledge drew near. Thought was expressed in musical numbers; then in sounds full of a meaning never to be expressed to mortal ear; finally in colors, living, mystical, wonderful, every color expressing a formless, spiritual Idea. And all this was myself, was yourselves, was one enraptured Ego. Yet I never lost the sense of individuality; the dewdrop was still distinct from the shining sea. So too, I knew each soul I loved, and when I came to love all souls and each was as my own Thought to me, still I had a distinct and separate consciousness of each. Yet all were One Thought.

Dreaming thus, Truth unfolding itself in flower-like hues, I seemed to sink deeper and yet deeper into a world of pure Ideation,<sup>15</sup> formless, calm, but great with a power I cannot describe. A period of Thought-immersion passed. I do not know how first began that cause which brought my dream-existence to an end. I seemed first to feel vaguely, but with dismay, that all I knew was still the effect of a Cause that still escaped me. Nothing existed in and by, itself. All I knew was the Tree of Life and of Being, of the objective and the subjective. Where was the Root?<sup>16</sup> Where was the fountal well-spring of Being?

So soon as this idea moved into my mental vision I seemed to become something separate from the Thought. Thought and I were rent in twain. Instead of rest in an Ideal, I wanted the Producer of the Ideal. The Self-Existent was wanting. Mind re-awoke and I observed my Thoughts and myself as two distinct entities, or as phases of one Ego. What was wanting to this Thought? Was I so sure that Thought was all? The Cause; the Cause; I clamored for the Cause. And a profound Echo answered me: "Thou thyself art that Cause." I asked of that interior ærial Voice: "Where shall I find myself?" And the Voice answered: "Not in the Heaven-World. Not in the world of effects and rewards whither desire for results hath brought thee."

And then I saw the truth of this, and peace became odious to me. For it was a false peace, a mirage, a deception. In my consciousness dawned a tiny point of differentiation. Thought subdivided. I became, as it were, at war with myself. I wearied of inaction. I wanted to retrace my steps.<sup>17</sup> Soul, the mighty, shook off its sloth, recognized that it was in a "No-Thoroughfare," and girded itself for a return to objective action, hoping in that to find the clue to the final Cause. Then Mind, the critic and divider, again stood forth. Time followed after, coming again into view. The sense of Time had been lost when unity prevailed. Separateness now awoke the consciousness of Time. From some unknown part of my being burning points seemed to spring out, stinging me to action. Thought of action drove away the uniform peace. Pictures of deeds and men once more streamed by — a long unending blazing river of Life. My mind seemed to leap into action. It remembered forgotten things, things left undone, experiences untasted. Rest was a weariness, peace was a insipidity to this burning warrior mind. True, a dim and distant part of myself seemed to look upon the restless Thinker in cold estrangement. My soul quivered, hesitated between the two aspects of itself, hung poised, as it were, between sleep and action.

All at once, I knew not from whence, a torrent of sound swept over, the blare of the world stung my unaccustomed sense. From some gulf far away arose the tumult of Living. I realized that I had forgotten Life in dreams. With all the strength of my being I longed to reach Life again, to feel, to work, to act, to be.

A mad shudder swept Thought away, I became conscious of myself as a separate thing. I became conscious of the starry spaces, the Spheres, the Heaven-land. Out of the deeps of my being rose a cry, the cry for Life, for action. And the cry was

answered. The Heaven-World disappeared. The starry spaces rolled together like a scroll. Down, down, in a red gulf, I saw the red world. Between that world and me rolled a phantasmagoria; the Life to come in all its turbulence passed, as it were, across a screen. I was that screen. I knew it all.<sup>18</sup> Yet was I undeterred, undismayed. The Life-thirst was upon me. I must greedily drink the whole of Life again.

Over the gulf I leaned; I felt myself take form in one unforgettable throe. Discords shrilled through me. Clamor pervaded me. Mad forces warred and keen desires jarred me. The grandeur of action thrilled me. I could not pause. I must look again on Life. I must be my own, one separate Self again. A second throb, and I was born into my Sphere,<sup>19</sup> a form in a world whence forms must fall. I gathered myself together. Over the red gulf I leaned. Its exhalations made my consciousness reel. Into that gulf I plunged, for I must live once more. Even as I fell, I felt a fierce keen joy, as of a conscious flame shooting into a sea of flames.

And then? Then a crash. Then Darkness. Then an end. There was only annihilation until I awoke. Where? In the world of forms. Here, where form conceals the soul. Here, where I have lost my Heaven comrades. Here, where I find so few of you, my brothers! Here, where I put out groping hands and cannot touch you; eyes that are wistful and cannot see you for the tears. The heart calls, and hears no answer. Its call was too weak. Its faith was too small a thing. Where are you, oh my brothers? Let us not longer hide from one another. Let us look upon Life and one another as Souls set within one Universal, Eternal Soul. Then, perhaps, we shall see.

For, as in the Heaven-World<sup>20</sup> the Heaven was our unity, so even here, all about us, a truer Heaven lies. If we will seek for identity and not for difference, we shall find the Heaven of fraternal Thought, and we shall find it, not in the place of dreams, but in this land where we stand, and to which we have come for one another, in order to meet one another, to experience and know one another. Each is here for each and for all. Why do we not remember our dependence upon one another? Each one of us is, as it were, an embrasure from which a different facet of Life is to be seen. Learning one another, we may learn the whole of Life, we may embrace the whole of Existence. From that whole and from it alone, the secret of the Unmanifested is to be gathered. For know this. Minds may differ; they differ as to formulae. Formulae are the forms of the Mind, the pictures cast upon the Screen of Life by various orders of minds. But hearts do not differ. The heart always ignores the differentiations of formulae, or forms, and relies upon the underlying unity, the identity of aim or of Nature. "One touch of Nature makes the whole world kin." In these feelings of a substratum of identity the highest secrets are locked up. In them is a key to a higher place than the Heaven-World, the Svarga Land. That place is the Land of the Divine Darkness, the Causal Fountain. It is the home of the Self-Existent.<sup>21</sup> It is where Non-Being, or the Ideal, has not yet gone forth into manifested Being.

Need I say more? I think not. You will have seen that the atoms of Desire inherent in the Sphere woke up from their latent, subjective condition and vibrated newly toward another Life, a birth into the manifested worlds again. For the subjective current had died away. The cycle of objectivity had reawakened. Under the play of this new force the Life-atoms felt the breath of their lower fires and tended to the lower world. Desire of objective Life bred objective form, and form bred need of objective action,<sup>22</sup> and by this path I returned from the Heaven-World. Yes; I returned, still seeking the Root of Being.

I awoke. I was lying in my bed. The winter wind blew over me. The house I had reentered, that house I call my body, was stiff and stark. I awoke in the outer skies;<sup>23</sup> I was drawn towards the chill body by a vital cord, as it were. The body was hideous. It was shrunken, emaciated, drawn. I loathed to enter such a dwelling. The sun was rising

redly over the empurpled trees of the great wide park. I hesitated. I thought to take the path of the sun. I could not come in contact with that form like a shriveled monkey. All at once, I saw the Messenger beside me. He touched my forehead. My eyes unclosed. I saw that this hideous parchment body lay across the knees of one who wept bitterly, who, weeping, upheld it to the rays of the rising sun, and called upon the Sun of Life, and called upon the hidden Sun of Souls, and wept bitterly.

"Wilt thou reënter?" said the Messenger. "I will reënter," I answered. "For what reason?" asked the Messenger. Fiercely I turned upon him. "To quench one human tear, will I reënter," cried I. The Messenger bowed his head, "Enter in the name of the Lords of the Law, and mayst thou be blessed in thy pilgrimage towards the hidden Sun," he whispered. He withdrew, and, shuddering, I reëntered that horrid form as one enters the darkness of the mother's womb. A shock, a shudder; and then I felt no more, I knew nothing.

I awoke.<sup>24</sup> I was again conscious of the bodily environment. Like a heavy weight it surrounded me. My dulled ears heard a low sound. The sound grew a little louder. It was a curious sound; commingled gasps and sobs, with a note as of laughter. Someone was weeping for joy. Someone rejoiced to regain me. I looked down upon the comrade weeping with bended head. And I too wept in that cramped house, my body. I wept to feel that my Soul and I were twain. God — the One Life — had joined us together, and man, the human mind, desirous of new experience, had put us asunder.

My comrade wept for joy. I wept, but for sorrow. The comrade was glad to rejoin me. I was sad, for in the Heaven-World we had been wholly one; in the world of forms we must know some separation. Here we were twain. Here we were shut away from one another by bodily environment and differentiation of mind. In the Heaven-World I had leaned upon the twin-soul, I had become one with all souls amidst unnumbered glories; here must I vainly seek the beloved souls beneath the garb of form! Form, which hides us from one another! Mind, whose differences prevent our recognizing one another! How bitter the thought! I had tasted at least a higher form of union in the Heaven-World, and with that memory still freshly upon me, the highest form seemed but dull, gross earth.

So we wept together; one for joy, one for sorrow. He, because he had regained me in the flesh. I, because I lost him in the flesh. Slowly we came to look, each upon the other's grief, and to understand each the other. Repentant, he cried: "I have dragged thee back to earth." Repentant, I moaned to him "I would have cut thee off from experience and from duty, because I longed to roam the heavenly fields with thee." As each entered upon the feeling of the other, the heart of pity made us one again.

The Messenger stood before us. He spoke thus: "Do you not see that in Compassion and in duty done for duty's sake alone, lies the path to the Self Existent? All else is Desire of Results and lands you in the World of Effects.<sup>25</sup> The Sphere blossoms forth into objectivity<sup>26</sup> and indraws into the root of subjectivity,<sup>27</sup> but Permanence is only found when the human heart desires no results, but hungers for the Self-Existent Cause alone."

He vanished. We clung together, and the Truth came home to our minds. In the heart of Compassion only, in duty done for the sake of all, in pure Renunciation of result for self, thus alone can mankind escape the snare of the Heaven-World, the exalted dreams of an exalted Egoism; thus alone can the soul know itself,<sup>28</sup> pure as the first dawn, strong as the Eternal; thus alone can mankind become the indivisible One Self, thus only can the sleeping Spheres become the universal Sphere, the Ring "Pass-Not" — the Manvantaric Goal, the Root, the Unity.

JASPER NIEMAND.

## NOTE

1. {All footnotes in the body of the article, refer to *Commentary* below (beginning with #12), by Willem B. Roos, from *The Canadian Theosophist*, August 1982.}

## COMMENTARY.

WILLEM B. ROOS

### II. THE SUBJECTIVE EXPERIENCE

{Notes from 2.1:}

1. *Devachan is the subjective existence of the personal and higher Ego.* The personal Ego is that aspect of manas which manifests as a specific personality and is generally called the “lower manas.” It consists of two parts, one of which, the animal part, is subject to Kâma, the desire principle, while the other part follows the light of Buddhi, the immortal Monad. After death this spiritual part of the lower manas is assimilated by the higher manas, the incarnating Ego, and goes as “Manas-taijasi” to Devachan. The dissipation of the stored-up energies of Manas-taijasi produces the subjective devachanic life. “It is a law of occult dynamics that ‘a given amount of energy expended on the spiritual or astral plane is productive of far greater results than the same amount expended on the physical objective plane of existence’.” (*The Secret Doctrine*, Vol. I, p. 644.) And with regard to the long time passed in the devachanic state, note the explanation of T. Subba Row Garu: “Energy exerted on the astral plane produces effects which last for a longer period of time than those produced by an equal amount of energy on the material plane, for the reason that less friction or opposition is encountered on the astral plane.” (*The Theosophist*, Vol. VI, p. 110.) To this may be added the fact, demonstrated by modern science, that on the subtler planes greater amounts of energy are found associated with matter. It is sufficient to consider the quantities of mass associated with equal amounts of mechanical, chemical and nuclear energies, to realize the likelihood of encountering on still subtler planes larger and larger amounts of energy.

2. *This Higher Self is a state of the Sphere.* This state is known as Nirvana by the Buddhists and is the highest spiritual state attainable by man while incarnated on earth.

3. *To compare the two events.* Apparently J.N. never wrote the promised comparison.

4. *I fell into Thought.* “At the last moment, the whole life is reflected in our memory and emerges from all the forgotten nooks and corners, picture after picture, one event after the other. The dying brain dislodges memory with a strong supreme impulse, and memory restores faithfully every impression entrusted to it during the period of the brain’s activity ... No man dies insane or unconscious ... The man may often appear dead. Yet from the last pulsation, from and between the last throbbing of his heart and the moment when the last spark of animal heat leaves the body — the *brain thinks* and the *Ego* lives over in those few brief seconds his whole life over again. Speak in whispers, ye, who assist at a death-bed ... Especially have you to keep quiet just after Death has laid her clammy hand upon the body. Speak in whispers, I say, lest you disturb the quiet ripple of thought, and hinder the busy work of the Past casting on its reflection upon the Veil of the Future.” (*The Mahâtma Letters to A. P. Sinnett*, pp. 170-171.) “The experience of dying men — by drowning and other accidents — brought back to life, has corroborated our doctrine in almost every case.” (*The*

*Mahâtma Letters to A. P. Sinnett*, p. 170.) “The events of a long life, to their minutest details, are marshalled in the greatest order in a few seconds in our vision.” (*The Mahâtma Letters to A. P. Sinnett*, p. 128.) Dr. Carl Du Prel enumerates many instances of such “Memory in the Dying” (*Philosophy of Mysticism*, Vol. I, pp. 92-93, Vol. II, pp. 42-50) and so does H.P.B. in her article “Memory in the Dying.” (*Lucifer*, Vol. V, pp. 125-129.) (*H. P. Blavatsky Collected Writings* (Twelve numbered volumes published to date.), Vol. XI, pp. 446-453.)

5. *In each I seemed to have a choice.* In this “death-bed vision” the Ego views the pictures from its own exalted position. The memory of the kamic organs of the body cannot interfere, because these organs are already dead. “The brain is the last organ that dies.” (*The Mahâtma Letters to A. P. Sinnett*, p. 128fn.) Hence the Ego will be its own judge during this vision. Admiral Beaufort had the same experience upon having fallen into the water and having lost normal consciousness: “... in short, the whole period of my existence seemed to be placed before me in a *kind of panoramic review*, and every act of it seemed to be accompanied by a consciousness of right and wrong, or by some reflection on its cause or its consequences ...” (Du Prel, op. cit. Vol. I, p. 93.)

6. *The choice appeared to be for either Matter or Spirit.* Quite right, because in the final instance these are the only alternatives. All our deeds can be classified in either one or the other of these two categories. But their full significance implies much more than is commonly realized. Let the student keep this constantly in mind!

7. *So soon as this thought came before my mind.* Here we have the first deviation from a normal post-mortem process. Had J.N. really died she would have lost consciousness at this point. “Every just disembodied *four-fold* entity — whether it died a natural or violent death, from suicide or accident, mentally sane or insane, young or old, good, bad, or indifferent — loses at the instant of death all recollection, it is mentally-*annihilated*; it sleeps its akasic sleep in the Kâma-loka.” (*The Mahâtma Letters to A. P. Sinnett*, pp. 186-187.)

8. *A flame seemed to sweep over me.* Now comes a description, a medley of images, a motley crowd typical of a confused state such as one may imagine Kâma-loka to be *at its best*. For those who die a natural death, the interval of Kâma-loka is described as follows by a Tibetan Ge-long of the Inner Temple — a disciple of Bas-pa Dharma, the Secret Doctrine (the Bumapa?): “According to the karma of the previous birth the interval of latency (*i.e.*, Kâma-loka, W.B.R.) — generally passed in a state of stupor — will last from a few minutes to an average of a few weeks, perhaps months ...” (Tibetan Teachings, *Lucifer*, Vol. XV, p. 100.) (*H. P. Blavatsky Collected Writings*, Vol. VI, p. 108.) Again Mahâtma K.H. writes: “From Kâma Loka then in the great Chilicocosm, — once awakened from their post-mortem torpor, the newly translated “Souls” go all (*but the shells*) according to their attractions, either to Devachan or Avitchi ... Reviving consciousness begins after the struggle in Kâma-Loka at the door of devachan, and only *after* the ‘gestation period.’ ” (*The Mahâtma Letters to A. P. Sinnett*, pp. 199-200).

9. *I was in torment in the Kâma-loka.* As J.N. had not really died, no separation between her “shell” (the Kâma-rûpa, or form of Desire) and her Ego had taken place. So it was possible for her to pass consciously through a quasi Kâma loka, and bring its remembrance back upon returning to her body. In Kâma-loka dwell the shells, which are soulless entities; the victims of accident and violence; the suicides; the Mara-rûpas, doomed to annihilation in the Eighth Sphere; and the Rakshasas, astral forms of sorcerers. (cf. *The Mahâtma Letters to A. P. Sinnett*, pp.

107, 198.) But not even these are necessarily subject to suffering — only the very wicked and impure suffer there all the tortures of a horrible nightmare, lasting years. (cf. *The Mahâtma Letters to A. P. Sinnett*, pp. 123, 136.)

10. *Something within me arose.* Here her kâmalokic condition ends and the next few short paragraphs describe her transition to the state of Devachan. Again, due to her exceptional condition, there is a great difference between her transitional state and that “Gestation State” which is normally preparatory to Devachan. This Gestation State lasts very long, yet is proportionate to the Ego’s spiritual stamina. (cf. *The Mahâtma Letters to A. P. Sinnett*, p. 105.) The consciousness ... “will return slowly and gradually toward the end of the gestation ... and *fully* to the Ego at the moment of its entrance into the Devachan ... the Ego does not fall headlong but sinks into it gradually and by easy stages. With the first dawn of that state appears that life (or rather *is once more lived over* by the Ego) from its first day of consciousness to its last. From the most important down to the most trifling event, all are marshalled before the spiritual eye of the Ego; only, unlike the events of real life, those of them remain only that are chosen by the new *liver* (pardon the word) clinging to certain scenes and actors, these remain *permanently* — while all the others fade away to disappear for ever, or to return to their creator — *the shell* ... Out of the resurrected Past *nothing* remains but what the Ego has felt *spiritually* ...” (*The Mahâtma Letters to A. P. Sinnett*, p. 187.)

11. *And I was a sleeping Sphere.* Here her Devachan starts with one of the divisions of Rûpa Loka where forms and personalities are still perceived.

{Notes from 2.2:}

12. *I had longed to uplift the downtrodden.* She passes now to a higher and less personal realm of Rûpa Loka.

13. *These thoughts ... gradually came to lose all form.* This happens in the highest division of Rûpa Loka, preparatory to the entering of the Arûpa, or formless world.

14. *The universal Laws began to be learned.* The first division of the Arûpa Loka is purely mental. Knowledge is the one object in Arûpa-Loka, starting with the concrete and gradually changing into the abstract.

15. *I seemed to sink deeper and yet deeper into a world of pure Ideation.* Now she progresses farther and farther into the Arûpa regions. Her power to describe these regions becomes more and more limited.

16. *Where was the Root?* This clamor, this desire for that which cannot be found even in the highest of the Arûpa regions, again constitutes an essential difference between J.N.’s conditions and that of a real Devachani. No dissatisfaction ever mars the thoughts of the latter and all that now follows is therefore due to her not being really dead, but being still a complete sevenfold entity. This also explains why the peace became hateful to her.

17. *I wanted to retrace my steps.* This shows that J.N. possessed the element of reflective consciousness which in devachanis is always lacking: “Although the spiritual energy evolved by an inhabitant of Devachan is a factor in the spiritual development of the race, yet the entity wanting in the element of self-consciousness (as all entities are in Kâma-loka and Devachan when left to themselves), cannot be credited with unselfishness any more than the tree can be styled unselfish for affording a shelter to the weary passerby. In each fact of consciousness there are two elements, the mere perception and the reflective consciousness of that perception.” (Mohini M. Chatterji, *The Theosophist*, Vol. VI, p. 143.) In Devachan there is never a longing to return upon one’s steps: “The

disincarnate must consecutively mount each rung of the ladder of being upward from the earthly subjective to the *absolutely* subjective. And when this limited Nirvanic state of Devachan is attained the entity enjoys it and its vivid though spiritual realities until that phase of Karma is satisfied and the physical attraction to the next earth life asserts itself.” (*The Theosophist*, Vol. IV, p. 271.) The Devachan ends very gradually: “As in actual earth-life, so there is for the Ego in devachan — the first flutter of psychic life, the attainment of prime, the gradual exhaustion of force passing into semi-unconsciousness, gradual oblivion and lethargy, total oblivion and — not death but birth: birth into another personality ...” (*The Mahâtma Letters to A. P. Sinnett*, p. 195.) This is quite different from the way J.N. returns from her Devachan.

18. *I knew it all.* Compare this statement with H.P.B.’s: “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 to earth, the *Ego*, awaking from the state of Devachan, has a prospective vision of the life which awaits him, and realizes all the causes that have led to it. He realizes them and sees futurity, because it is between Devachan and re-birth that the *Ego* regains his full *manasic* consciousness and rebecomes for a short time the god he was, before, in compliance with Karmic law, he first descended into matter ...” (*The Key to Theosophy*, pp. 162-163.)

19. *I was born into my Sphere.* Her consciousness shifted towards a more concrete center within the Devachanic Sphere.

20. *The heavenly World.* Svargaloka, devalola, devachan, sukhavati are all name for the same post-mortem state.

21. *The home of the Self-Existent.* The Self-Existent, or Svayambhu, is the Universal Spirit. The highest aspect of Svabhavat is its “abode.”

22. *Form bred need of objective action.* Because form by itself is not permanent, but needs to be maintained by objective, *i.e.*, outward intercourse.

23. *I awoke in the outer skies.* She awoke in her astral body, the *mâyâvi rūpa*.

24. *I awoke.* Now she has entered her physical body and has returned to ordinary life again.

25. *The world of effects.* Devachan is meant.

26. *The Sphere blossoms forth into objectivity.* The Sphere is begotten during conscious and responsible life on earth. Irresponsible entities, like children before their seventh year, and congenital {mental disabilities}, will have no Devachan, but are almost immediately reborn.

27. *And in-draws into the root of subjectivity.* The Sphere dissipates its energies gradually in Devachan and perishes of exhaustion at the end in the highest *Arûpa Loka*, the root of subjectivity.

28. *Thus alone can the soul know itself.* “According to Esoteric Doctrine this evolution is not viewed as the extinguishment of individual consciousness but its infinite expansion. The entity is not obliterated, but united with the universal entity, and its consciousness becomes able not merely to recall the scenes of one of its earth-evolved Personalities, but of each of the entire series around the Kalpa, and then those of every other Personality. In short from being finite it becomes infinite consciousness. But this comes only at the end of all the births at the great day of the absolute Resurrection. Yet, as the monad moves on from birth to birth and passes its lower and Devachanic spheres after each fresh earthly existence, the mutual ties created in each birth must weaken and at last grow inert, before it can be reborn. The record of those relationships imperishably endures in the Akasa, and they can always be reviewed when, in any birth, the being evolves his latent spiritual powers to the ‘fourth stage of Dhyana’: but their

hold upon the being gradually relaxes. This is accomplished in each inter-natal Devachan ... Were this obliteration of personal ties not a fact, each being would be travelling around the Kalpa entangled in the meshes of his past relationships with his myriad fathers, mothers, sisters, brothers, wives, etc., etc., of his numberless births: a jumble, indeed!" (*The Theosophist*, Vol. IV, pp. 271-272.)

It must be realized by the student that the above covers only a very small fragment of the subject of the post-mortem life. J.N.'s narrative covers the experiences of a rather unusual personality, one already acquainted with Theosophy and in possession of certain clairvoyant powers. A more common human being would have quite different experiences, although the general laws governing the devachanic state are, of course, applicable in all cases. Finally, the reader must not forget that deaths by accident, violence or suicide produce their own peculiar effects upon the post-mortem condition. Also the post-mortem states of spiritually evil beings, of sorcerers and of soulless entities, are very different from the one described above, and would need a separate discussion.

WILLEM B. ROOS.}

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## SOCIALISM AND ITS RELATION TO THEOSOPHY.

M. L. & A. P. FIRTH

{NOTES BY JASPER NIEMAND (INDENTED AND **BOLDED**)}

(EDITOR'S NOTE. — As *The Theosophical Quarterly* desires that both sides of a question should always receive a hearing, we print the following article on Socialism as being the best which has been sent us on the subject. The notes are by Jasper Niemand.)<sup>1</sup>

Since the *Theosophical Quarterly* has opened its pages to a discussion of Socialism, as well as Theosophy, we desire to have the opportunity (I.) of setting forth the basic principles of both subjects, and, by this means, bring out a few points which have not as yet been considered. In attempting to judge the right or wrong of any science it is advisable to thoroughly understand that science before coming to conclusions. (II.)

**I. The basic Principles of Theosophy, as stated by H.P.B., its chief exponent in our era, are:**

- 1. The omnipresent, eternal and boundless Principle of Being, or Life.**
- 2. The absolute universality of the Law of Periodicity, of flux and reflux, of ebb and flow.**
- 3. The fundamental identity of all souls with the Oversoul.**

It is difficult to see what these basic Principles have to do with the makeup of the tentative theories set forth by modern socialists. The effort to base the economic theories of Socialism upon the first Manifestation of The Absolute — the dual Spirit-Matter, shows a robust conviction, but —! *Quem Deus vult perdere!*

**II. "Science" is not the word to apply to a theory, or set of theories, which, however interesting they may be to the student of modern Thought, are as**

yet wholly theoretical. In almost every nation, authors of high caliber who have given close attention to Sociology in all its departments, have disputed the conclusions of Socialists on the data taken by Socialists themselves. The essence of a “Science” is that it shall have been observed and recorded in all its workings. Socialism is still a child of the brain only.

The articles contained in the *Quarterly* thus far that were opposed to Socialism demonstrate a lack of knowledge on the part of their authors, of the Socialist philosophy. Further, they also demonstrate that their authors neglected to consider the basic principles of human progress as set forth in Theosophic teachings.

Broadly, Theosophy teaches two sub-divisions of manifestation: namely, Spirit and Matter. True, the progress of manifestation to its form of greatest concretion necessitated the development of aspects and phases of these two. That is, on the one hand, Spirit emanated from itself vehicles that more nearly approach a condition wherein the term, Substance, can be applied to them with some degree of correctness. While on the other hand, Matter is subdivided into a series of vehicles that reach up to and meet those of pure Spirit. But for the purpose of this article it is not necessary to analyze or even consider what these subdivisions are. It is sufficient for our purpose to recognize the two main divisions. Some may claim that in the final analysis even these two divisions do not really exist, but are the effects of *Mâyâ*; but to commence from such a premise necessitates either a preliminary course in metaphysics or a power of intuition that is granted only to the few. One cannot teach the Higher Sciences to those who have not had sufficient preliminary training. We must in consequence admit the presence of matter and argue from that basis. (III.)

**III. This reminds us — *que ça ne vous déplaît* — of the excellent village wheelwright: “Passon, hur doa be sayin att God hadn’t th’ form of a cartwheel in’s mind when hur wor a maakin’ th’ round world. Passon’s a rale good mon — but a dent know everythin.”**

The next principle we have to deal with is that of Purpose. Assuming our former premise to be correct, it naturally follows that we should demand a reason for this subdivision. Theosophy teaches that this reason is the gaining of conscious knowledge. (IV.)

**IV. Purpose cannot be said to be a basic Principle: it is a motive power. Apparently the authors are feeling after the Law of Periodicity, which does, indeed, apply to the subject under discussion, but not as they might suppose. It is by virtue of this Law that spiritual Principles, when in material manifestation, “cast their shadow;” i.e., their polar opposite, their “shadow side,” comes also into manifestation through the operation (under the Periodic Law) of what Jacob Boehme called the “Auge,” the Eye, or astral screen, which reflects upside down. From our point of view, such is the relation of modern Socialism to Theosophy. True Brotherhood is a Reality on the spiritual planes of Being: the identity of all souls with the Oversoul is “*fundamental*,” it is not found in differentiation, but lies back in the Unity. Its only manifestation upon material planes is in the great soul attributes, the *sum total* of which is *Dispassion*.**

From the above we deduce the fact that harmony is a requisite quality for the gaining of that end. By harmony, as used here, is meant a perfect co-relation between

all the sub-divided parts of Spirit and Matter necessary to the successful fulfillment of the purpose of this sub-division. Discord, incoördination, abnormal development in any of these parts is a hindrance to the fulfillment of that purpose for which manifestation was begun. (V.)

V. These deductions do not logically spring from the premises: this makes the thread of the argument difficult to follow. True Harmony is not a matter of the material planes. The human idea of Harmony at present seems to mean, agreement in Thought. From our point of view there may be a radical difference of mental view — the Mind, Manas, being always dual — and yet entire Harmony, or unity of soul, may subsist. True Harmony arises of itself, out of the coördination of opposites in the Unity of Being; it is wholly undisturbed by the discords — or the accords — of the material planes. Against the modern idea of Harmony, as arising from agreement, is directed the word of Jesus: “I came not to bring peace, but a sword.”<sup>2</sup> Division, and the suffering springing from division are necessary before the True can be discerned from the false, the Permanent from the impermanent, the Light from the Shadow. *Demon est Deus inversus*. What is right action at one period may be wrong action at another period: it depends upon the *immediate* purposes of the Soul. Through suffering man learns to eschew sin and to obey the Soul: thus suffering restores the harmonic action of the Soul.

Theosophists may take exception to the assertion that it is possible to in any way hinder the progress of manifestation on its journey to its ultimate goal. Their chief objection will probably lie in the belief that any arrangement which might produce a seeming discord is not so in actual truth. But that all phases of manifestation have for their purpose the one ultimate end, and though seemingly not directed to that end when viewed by reason, the above must be accepted because it is a logical consequence of the second premise. This we also allow to be true, and in making the assertion that it was possible to in any way hinder the purpose of manifestation we mean that the hindrance is possible with regard to time only. (VI.)

VI. If by “theosophists” the members of the T.S. are meant, then these are of all shades of belief. Some students of Theosophy, as taught by H.P.B., would say that it is perfectly possible to hinder the progress of individual human units towards the ultimate goal, but that this hindrance comes from within the human unit itself, and that it is impossible for any one unit, or congeries of units, to hinder any other. “Manifestation on *its* journey to *its* ultimate goal” is a personified hybrid with which we have no acquaintance.

This assertion must be admitted when we remember how many times an experience must be repeated by the majority of us before the lesson of that experience is learned. We need have an experience but once to learn the lesson that it teaches; any additional indulgence in the same experience acts as a delay to our progress.

Admitting the purpose of manifestation to be the acquisition of consciousness by the manifested (and to reduce this to more definite terms, namely, human beings), there are several things which act as agents to retard or advance the fulfillment of this purpose. The first thing it is necessary to consider is the fact that some period of a life-time must be given to the analysis of the purpose of manifestation. And a state of

society which compels the major portion of that society to devote its entire life-time to the perpetuation of its physical existence prevents those so placed from continuing to advance. (VII.)

VII. Here we take issue squarely with the authors. Analysis is of the brain mind only, and no "period of a lifetime" need be given to consideration of the purpose of Manifestation by its light. That any period is so given, is precisely what has given rise to all these automatic ideas of social amelioration. Synthesis is needed, the unifying and profound method of the intuition. It is only by the intuitive and trained INTERIOR faculties that the purposes of manifestation can be sensed at all. Being spiritual, these purposes require the use of spiritual Discrimination. How many of those whom it is proposed to benefit by the proposed solution of the economic and other problems raised by modern Socialism, are capable of thought upon these spiritual problems? Finally those who *are* capable of such thought are not in the least affected in their use of the spiritual faculties by any conditions of the material plane, as witness Epictetus dragged through the streets in chains, Socrates about to drink the hemlock, and many a martyr who has "smiled amid the torture," as said in *The Gates of Gold*. We suggest that the authors should study with intuitive care the chapter on Pain in that book.

This condition is the cause of the existence at the present time of so many false doctrines of life. While society is so arranged that in order to be one of its members it is necessary to devote so much attention to the material, it naturally follows that the religion of that society will be built upon a material basis.

Of course, it will be assumed that even admitting this condition of affairs to exist, which all students of Sociology must admit, that it is but an effect of causes engendered by those who suffer. And since that be the case the remedy must likewise be provided from the same source. This Socialism aims to do. (VIII.)

VIII. That the remedy must be provided from the same source is precisely our contention. That source is the heart of man, "deceitful above all things" of which the prophet spoke. In all the scriptures of the world, as in all systems of spiritual philosophy, all the voices of mystics, saints and seers, we find that it is only through the purification of the human heart, only through the cessation of sin, that suffering upon earth can end. But each man should purify his own heart, and needs not to concern himself with the sin of his neighbor at all. No cut and dried system of Sociology or any other brain-made system can do this for us. THE WORK IS INTERIOR TO EACH MAN. If man were to cease from sinning, suffering would disappear of its own accord and law. But to be sinless we must bear an equal mind to ALL that lives. Not to those whom we take to be victims of society only. Man is in truth the victim of himself alone. But the sinless man sees that the oppressor stands in as much need of his sympathy as the oppressed. We confess that modern Socialism appears to us to be an epitome of human nature at its present stage of Evolution, possessed of many kindly impulses, of some conditionally generous instincts, but also compounded of many conflicting emotions, partaking of extreme bias, anger and rooted injustice. It confessedly divides all mankind into two classes — the oppressor and the oppressed — and claims to be alone able to arbitrate

between these. *Reductio ad absurdum* is all that can be said of this argument. Nor has it been found that the influx of greater ease ennobled the moral nature of man.

Another phase we must consider. The greatest concretion of matter was reached by a gradual descent from its opposite, or Spirit, and the return thereto must be a gradual ascent from matter. Consequently, the present stage of manifestation, as far as human beings are concerned at least, is an ascending stage, and can only be made by a series of progressive steps. This assertion is true only when the whole of humanity is the subject of our consideration. Theosophy teaches that there are two roads leading to the goal: one, a straight, narrow path, and the other, a gradual ascent by easy stages. Only the exception reaches the summit by the first path. The major portion travels by the latter.

Another factor we should consider is that since society as it exists to-day, and the suffering accruing therefrom, is the effect of causes engendered in a physical life, the remedy that shall remove these hindering causes must likewise be engendered in this physical life. It would be unjust to demand that unrestricted souls should suffer for causes engendered in a restricted body, and vice versa. To accept this theory would be a reverting to the now almost obsolete belief in a tangible and concrete heaven and hell.

Let us briefly analyze the major points of the Socialist philosophy. The first thing it considers is that society, in order to serve the interests of each individual member thereof, must act as a unit. For society as it exists to-day, this is impossible. This is the first point Socialism takes note of. (IX.)

IX. This, in common parlance, is putting the cart before the horse. The individual member must first learn to act as a unit of the Unity, which he can only do — not by deeds in the outward — but by identifying himself with The Oversoul. In other words, he first unites himself with the Soul. Before he can do this, he must find his own soul. The first step towards this is the purification of his heart by Obedience, by submission to the Divine Will, by the acceptance of “the woes of birth,”<sup>3</sup> pointed out by *The Voice of the Silence*. “The first step in *becoming* is Resignation. Resignation is the sure, true and royal road. Our subtle motives, ever changing, elude us when we seek it. — After Resignation follow (in their own order) Satisfaction, Contentment, Knowledge.”<sup>4</sup> So speak the Letters that have helped many. We are told elsewhere that we should step from the sunlight into the shade to make more room for others, but not that we shall insist upon ejecting from the sunlight those who may still be disposed to linger there, or those whom we opine have no right to be there. This saying has also been much misunderstood. Reference is not had to prosperity, nor is the “shade” ordinary sorrow: the text alludes to the mystical “valley of the shadow” — the “Silence” — into which the neophyte must enter. The sunlight from which he steps is not of the material plane. “Follow the wheel of Life; follow the wheel of duty to race and kin, to friend and foe, and close thy mind to pleasures as to pain. Exhaust the Law of Karmic retribution.”<sup>5</sup> So ever speaks the Heart Doctrine. It is not a question of our fearing Karma: we cannot escape it: all men must exhaust it. And this Law is that which will forever stand across the path of the reformer — Socialist or other — who thinks to provide equal opportunity for all men. The equality lies back in the Unity: each man must regain this for himself.

Let us carry the point further. Upon investigation we discover that society is divided into two distinct classes: One class owning all those things which society as a whole requires to perpetuate its material existence; the other class, which constitutes by far the major portion, being solely dependent upon the owning class for its life on earth. (X.)

X. This is a loose statement. There are many more than two classes, as stated. There are innumerable shades of difference: all these are karmic; all come under the head of Cause and Effect. These classes range from that which “owns all those things which society requires to perpetuate its” (*material*) “existence;” through those who have such possessions in varying degree, down to those who have none of them. (How do these groups of people come into such possessions or want of them, if not under the Law of Karma?) But no class is bereft of that which the Soul requires to achieve Its purposes, for which purposes all these differences exist. The authors appear to argue from the basis of one life only. How if it be true that each human life be but a day in the cycle of Manifestation of the human Ego? How if the oppressor of to-day be the oppressed of to-morrow: if the slave of to-day be to-morrow’s Emperor? Is it not apparent that this is the Wheel of life, of Action and Reaction? That the Soul evolves by means of the Successive action of “the pairs of opposites?” The authors seem to associate suffering with the idea of disadvantage, of loss. In the life of the Soul, pain is the great educator. The remedy for this pain is not found in any material plane conditions. It is only as the human creature realizes that he is only the shadow of the real man — the Soul — that the remedy — Soul Knowledge — is found. This does not mean that we should not relieve suffering where we find it. It does not mean that suffering can never be reformed or planned out of existence. As to “charity:” it may be at one time our karma to be relieved by the sympathy of our fellow men, and at another time to afford such relief. So we learn another of the great lessons: Humility, that right arm of the Soul.

This forms a system of slavery and slave ownership that is more subtle for evil consequences, and presents a smaller field for true progress than has existed before in the known history of the world. Socialism recognizes that men made the laws that bind them to this arrangement of things, and knowing this, Socialists have started an educational propaganda that shall educate Society so that it can first see clearly the evil consequences of its present arrangement and know the cause to be of its own making. This knowledge in itself holds the remedy, which is a revolution of the present order of things, substituting for the two-class arrangement, one single class; in fact, to make society a unit that shall work for the interest of each individual member.

If this is opposed to Theosophic Philosophy, we have to learn wherein that opposition lies.

This preamble may seem lengthy, but since we are to consider the question from its basic principles, it is requisite that we should first state those principles before making any assertions based thereon.

Under “Notes and Comments” the assertion is made “— that none of these questions can be solved either theoretically or practically without taking into account both Reincarnation and Karma.” Both of these laws are the outcome of the purpose of manifestation, and merely indicate the method of its fulfillment along the lines of justice. If we have proven that the Socialist Philosophy is in harmony with the purpose

of manifestation, we have also proven that it is not in discord with any of its subsidiary laws. (XI.)

**XI. From our standpoint the verdict must be, “not proven.” The Purpose of Manifestation is the Evolution of Souls, which comes about, in first instance, through the Involution of Soul. “Alas, alas, that all men should possess Alaya,— and that possessing it, Alaya should so little avail them.— Alaya — yet fails to reach the heart of all.” Here again we see that the Soul is evolved — as an individual Soul — through right action, right knowledge.**

Again the assertion is made that Socialists claim the following: “The Universe is bad, and I will go out and reform it; I will cure these terrible conditions which God allowed to come about.” Any Socialist reading the above would feel assured that its author had been very much misinformed upon the Socialist Philosophy. In the first place, as Socialists, we do not believe the Universe is bad, nor that any individual can reform it. What he might say is, “The system under which Society lives is not founded upon true principles. We must revolutionize it and substitute for the unwise, wise and true principles.” (XII.)

**XII. With this we are in accord, but the Principles must be Spiritual: material reflections and make-shifts will not answer. Our attitude in this respect is that of *The Gates of Gold*. “We have the instinctive desire to relieve pain, but we work in externals in this, as in everything else. We simply alleviate it; and if we do more and more drive it from its first chosen stronghold, it reappears in some other place with reinforced vigor. If it is eventually driven off the physical plane by persistent and successful effort it reappears on the mental or emotional planes where no man can touch it. — Man comes into this world surely on the same principle that he lives in one city of the earth or another. — And all the blendings of human life which cause emotion and distress exist for its use and purposes, as well as for those of pleasure. Both have their home in man, both demand their expression of right.”<sup>7</sup> From this point of view, which is ours also, it is far better that each man shall endure the expression of his karma upon the physical planes of Manifestation, than that this karma shall be driven inward, perhaps thrown back upon the Soul itself — which is of all agonies the worst.**

Again we quote from the same place: “We can be charitable with both money and deeds; we can interest ourselves in all altruistic movements; we can take part in philanthropic work; above all, we can go out to all who suffer with a heart full of love and sympathy and desire to help, which in itself is the greatest power we have to assuage grief and lessen trouble. But one does not have to be a Socialist to love and work for his fellow men.” Charity and the giving of money makes dependents. He who would take the kingdom of heaven by storm must needs stand on his own feet. In other words, he must be dependent upon his own efforts to fulfill his life’s purpose. Socialism would eliminate once and for all the need of any member of the coöperative commonwealth being dependent upon any other unless physical disability prevented him from earning his own livelihood. If we can interest ourselves in altruistic movements without injuring Theosophic principles let us learn that the Socialist movement is purely altruistic in the true sense of the word. And he who loves his

fellow-men and at the same time realizes the value to the progress of manifestation of united effort to that end is a Socialist. (XIII.)

XIII. What, then, is true altruism? We venture to think that it is Justice. Not human justice, but the Divine: That which seeth every sparrow that falleth. In this conception we must be as just to the oppressor as to the oppressed: we shall not coerce any man: we shall not come between any man and the duties of his place in life: above all, we shall never seek to relieve the material sufferings of mankind at the cost of the Soul. We shall not assume that only in the shade is there suffering and trial; we shall know that in the sunlight of material life — which is the false refraction of the true — there are also pains, tests, responsibilities, the immanence of that educator, the Soul. Under the absolutely Universal Law of Periodicity, each human being is tested now at one pole, now at another: to-day by pain, to-morrow by joy: now by loss of all, now by possession. The *Bhagavad Gîtâ* gives us this ideal of Justice in many places, of which one is Ch. III.: “Therefore perform thou what thou hast to do, at all times unmindful of the event; for the man who doeth that which he hath to do, without attachment to the result, obtaineth the Supreme. Even if the good of mankind only is considered by thee, the performance of thy duty will be plain —.”<sup>8</sup> And then the teaching passes on to that sublime conception of perfect equality of mind and heart towards all.

Under “Socialism and the Soul,” which is another article that appeared in the October issue of the *Theosophical Quarterly*, the writer refers to the many groups of Socialists. Let it be understood that many groups of Socialists exist not because there are many differing fundamental principles of Socialism, but because there are many people who differ in their methods and tactics for the gaining of the Socialist aim. To enter into a discussion of the whys and wherefores of this would occupy too much space. But we feel it necessary to state that the writer is thinking of the subdivided groups in England and France; for in America there are only two distinct groups, and these are quickly being made one. We might remind the writer of the many groups of Theosophists that exist. (XIV.)

XIV. Again a characteristic touch. The authors say positively what a previous writer was thinking of — yet that writer is unknown to them. We understand that the writer in question had in mind the Socialistic movement in its entirety, viewing it as one. Why do the authors omit Germany, where Socialism is more aggressive — with greater proportionate power — than in any other country. Emil Reich gives them three millions of votes out of a total of between ten and eleven million votes. Denmark, Austria-Hungary, Italy, Russia, why omit these? No prominence was given to American Socialism (where the so-called “two distinct groups” are really subdivided by individual shades of opinion), because American Socialism receives its main inspiration from Teutonic sources. The German mind has carried analytical intellect to a very high degree, as in specialization of detail, grouping and so forth. But over-specialization of function robs — may easily atrophy — the coördinating powers. That which prevents the union of all these groups of reformers is the duality of the Manasic Principle.

Further on the article in referring to Socialism states, “— its aim extends from the material to the mental plane and does not pass beyond: it deals wholly with effects: it eschews causes.” Let us remind the writer that there are many Theosophists who accept only the principle upon which the Theosophical Society is founded, and deny many of the premises of Theosophy proper. The Socialist Philosophy does not eschew causes. It frankly states the cause to be man himself: not as an individual, but as a whole; and looks for the cure to emanate from the same source. That some members of the Socialist movement do not admit that man is what Theosophy claims him to be, does not change the value of the basic principle any more than the Theosophic principle is changed because some members of the Society do not believe in it. (XV.)

**XV. The question whether some theosophists do not agree upon the main Principles of Theosophy has nothing to do with the existence of these Principles. They are to be found in all the scriptures of the world. Beneath the various aspects shown by one or another trained interpreter, the coördinating principle is always discernable. It was not claimed that difference of opinion among socialists invalidated their theories, but that these theories deal with a certain plane — the material plane — of the universe, and do not rise above that. And to deal on the material plane with effects generated by the heart of man is pure waste of energy. The human heart must be changed first. How is this to be done? Would you legislate purity into that heart?**

Again, the writer admits that individual members may “— take such steps as may seem wise to us towards the alleviation of existing evils. To do this is a part of our life training.” Socialists have simply taken this advice, united their efforts, and are working for the alleviation of existing evils, and are in consequence, according to our author, performing a part of their life training. (XVI.)

**XVI. It is no part of their life training to denounce those who have under Karma the duties, the trials, the tests of a certain opulence or ease in life to undergo. Or to seek to remove, under human law, the conditions imposed by Divine Law.**

The author also claims: “Socialism posits the material equality of men as a good to be desired, sought after.” Socialism posits no such thing. Socialism recognizes the inequality of man, and attributes to that inequality the present condition of affairs, to some extent at least. Socialism does posit, however, that inequality should not be allowed to become a tyrant; and this it declares can be prevented when men understand the facts of the case. It does not seek to curb human expressions by violence, as may perhaps be understood by the above. It does seek, though, to educate man into a realization that superiority of brain or muscle are not acquisitions to be used at the expense of those whose corresponding development is less. (XVII.)

**XVII. This is hair splitting. Why seek to provide equal opportunity, if equality of condition be not regarded as a good? From the point of view of the Soul, Inequality can never become a tyrant, for that Soul itself seeks the conditions necessary to its work — under which it most desires to work — in each life. While each man should seek to show sympathy to *every* other (not only to those of whose conduct he approves), and to help to lift, so far as in him individually lies, the burdens of others, he can never do this until**

he recognizes that all men equally are under this burden — the rich as well as the poor. Each man's burden is himself. No corporate action can remove it. Only the man himself is able. Material opportunity does not affect his ability: he rises by the aid of adverse circumstances quite as much, if not more, than by the aid of easy ones. Did not Jesus point this out when he said that it was not easy for the "rich man" to enter the kingdom of heaven? A man may be "rich" in the mystical sense, without having material possessions: Jesus meant that adversity is the great strengthener of man: it is the weight we pull against that makes us morally, spiritually, as well as physically strong.

Socialism is a system wherein it will be possible to carry out this assertion: "Each man is standing precisely where he has placed himself, and from that point he must work out, evolve out, assisted by his fellow men, and in his turn assisting." In fact, Socialism simply outlines a plan, based on the principles stated in the first part of this article, wherein all men may work for this end together. (XVIII.)

XVIII. The difference of view lies in a nutshell. The socialist seeks to equalize opportunity. The theosophist seeks to equalize his own mind and heart. "make the event equal" is to trust above all things, and *for one's neighbor as well as for one's self*, the Divine Law. Whether we take the ancient ideas of social discontent and social amelioration, or whether we take the Communal Idea, or the system of Sociology by which the individual is subordinated to Society; or the revolt against present social and economic conditions; or Industrial revolution; or the development of Democracy; or take all of these as more or less included in the Socialistic Idea, we always find that the tendency is to break the thread of continuity with the past and the present conditions which are the outcome of the human heart: and these, according to the theosophist, must be worked out. They cannot be removed by education. They cannot be suddenly or quickly altered: the last industrial change took over two centuries to accomplish. Nor can we, consistently with philosophy, remove responsibilities of money, rank, place or any other responsibility, and charge, from the individual: we cannot make society responsible for the free will of a single human soul in any single respect. We claim that for the well being and the contentment of mankind a quite other system is needed. What a commentary, for example, is afforded by the national life of Japan. All writers have commented in amazement upon the simplicity of the rich, the contentment of the poor, the health and the civilization of this land. No Socialist idea has ever penetrated there. On the part of all classes there is an acceptance of the conditions of birth and life which has unified Japan in the hour of her struggle for her very existence, so that we see that Japan has a Soul!

The *Bhagavad Gîtâ* gives us the ideal to which we look. "When in every condition he receives each event, whether favorable or unfavorable, with an equal mind which neither likes nor dislikes, his wisdom is established, and having met with good or evil, neither rejoiceth at the one, nor is cast down by the latter."

Again Socialism is in full sympathy with the author: "He who will not strive, as far as in him lieth, to remove the sorrows which he sees about him, is not worthy of

the name of man: he is sub-human.” Born in pain and travail, built upon the instincts of men whose hearts the burning human tears of anguish had fallen, nor could be brushed away until the pain that had caused them was removed, the philosophy of Socialism came into being. And in consequence we have a science of economics whose basic principle reaches down to the heart of things irrespective of the different beliefs of its adherents. (XIX.)

**XIX. We venture to think that “the heart of things” would be vastly amazed by its supposed contents — an amazement only equaled by that of the mountain which brought forth a mouse.**

**The Socialist Ideal excludes wholly that of the Divine Immanence in Life. And of the working of the Law of Continuity — that which Drummond has called “The Law of Laws.” If we had a Socialistic Commonwealth to-day, and were to follow the Old-World recipe given for a distressful country not unknown to us — which was, “to tow it out to sea and let it drift”— we should in no short time expect to find it under some autocratic form of Government, due to the working of the Law of Reaction.**

Again the author says: “What is wanted, what is sorely needed, is that each in his own place shall do all the duties of that place before he turns to scrutinize the life record of his fellows.” Let it be understood that Socialism does not question individual life records, or declare any individual to be singly at fault, but instead blames all men alike for present conditions, and admits that a change can only be affected by man’s united effort, when the result is for the benefit of Society as a whole.

To quote again: “To frame just laws is good: to touch the human heart to issues so divine that spontaneously it will rise up to benefit its fellows is better still. — then let the lover of his kind set about his task.” Every Socialist will agree with that, and it can in no way be used as a reason for discrediting the Socialist movement.

We might take many more points from this article to show that while the writer discredits the work of Socialists, the philosophy at the basis of their efforts has still remained a sealed book to her. In fact to summarize: the whole article consists of advice to do what the Socialists are doing, but not to admit that you are a Socialist while doing it. Of course, we understand that to the Theosophist to whom the Real and Unreal is a daily diet, possibility of getting lost in metaphysical speculation to the detriment of their ability to gain a clear-cut conception of human progress is a probable sequence. (XX.) Broadmindedness, so requisite to the true student, does not consist of a process of elimination, but an addition thereto, and correct placing of all the phases of manifestation with the reasons for their existence attached. Probably one of the chief stumbling blocks to Theosophists in their study of the Socialist philosophy is the fact that one of its forefathers detailed at length what he was pleased to call “The Materialistic Conception of History.” To the Metaphysician, who is purely such, any materialistic conception appears very much as a red flag to an angry bull. But let us analyze this a little. We will all admit that our present environment is the product of the united acts of Society. Further, this environment has grown, by due process of Karmic law, to be so vast a thing that it has at present the power to keep the majority of its creators in a position wherein the providing for the material being is the only deed that can be accomplished in a lifetime. In other words, the Souls who exist in the majority of Society’s constituents are held in chains, by the environment they have created, to an extent which actually prohibits them from attempting anything else in a lifetime further than keeping their unity with the body. This statement the student of economic

conditions will agree with. And to the Theo-sophist let us advise a study of existing conditions before they attempt to refute it. In what does this differ from the materialistic conception of history as set forth by Karl Marx? On one side only: he neglects to make any statement that man is not only a physical being. It is not the subject of this article to investigate the reasons which lie behind this neglect. It is sufficient to point out, as we have already done, that since it is possible to create an environment so strong that it acquires the power to rule its creator, it is not unwise to devise and work for the fulfilment of a plan which shall put out of existence the monster we have created. Upon the Socialist philosophy is built a plan whose purpose it is to accomplish that end. Prof. George Herron says: "Socialism is a means and not an end. The end of economic liberty is the liberty of the yoked and prisoned human spirit."

XX. It is not correct to say that the previous writers have sought to discredit the work of Socialism. An effort has been made to show the superficial and automatic nature of the Socialistic Ideal, as compared with the Ideal of the Soul Knowledge. Nor is it correct to speak of the work of Socialism, since you cannot call a destructive energy a "work," nor expect to see it build when it has finished tearing down — or educating out — certain instincts inherent in the human heart. For all men come in the ripeness of time to this — all, all: they come into their own, and know that each is alone responsible for all that he has and does: that corporate Society cannot take the place of the Evolution of Conscience. Even where the man resolves to disobey that Law, he has had his opportunity: he has stifled the sweet voice himself: he has developed his own responsibility. A perfected Sociology is not the thought close to "the heart of things," but the involution of the august and free Soul. Man cannot govern himself to-day: how then should Society — made up of faulty men — govern him, select his philosophy and edit his responsibilities? Socialism is based upon Appearances, not upon Realities. We have tried to demonstrate that, *from the stand point of soul*, the Socialistic theory is unsound. This view does not affect the other point, that people of good and kindly instincts, people of good-will, may yet be misled by Appearances: we all may be so. We do not deny that the social structure may benefit by wise change, but also we hope that the time approaches when such changes shall be based, more or less, upon the laws of Soul. And we do deny that the true man — the Soul, is dependent upon such change. As the *Gates of Gold* has given it: "Man is a powerful consciousness who is his own creator, his own judge, and within whom lies all life in potentiality, even the ultimate goal."<sup>11</sup> — "Let us consider *why he causes himself to suffer*." (Italics ours.) "For the soul of man is of that order of life which causes shape and form, and is unaffected itself by these things."<sup>12</sup> Think of it! Unaffected by industrial conditions! Unaffected by the relations of Capital and Labor! Unaffected even, perhaps, by the bait of unrestricted franchise. Can our Socialist friends believe in such an entity, so careless of these material things? In truth, it is difficult, in this material age. And yet we have seen such things, in other lands nearer the East, as this belief in the Soul. "How can that which is external satisfy or even please the inner man, the thing which reigns within and has no eyes for matter, no hands for touch of objects, no senses to apprehend that which is without its magic walls? Our precise objection to Socialism is that its theory perpetuates the Ideal of *material* well-being, as a test of the well-being of the real man.

In concluding this article let us say that since Socialism has an end in view, and that the materialization of the end lies in the near future, while on the other hand, the Theosophical Society is aiming for something which only the conclusion of human life on earth will see the fulfilment of, these two bodies should not unite. Long after the co-operative commonwealth has been reached and the aim of Socialists accomplished, there will still be need for the Theosophical Society to continue its calm and tranquil efforts to lift higher and higher the Souls who are struggling on the road to consciousness. To do this successfully the slogan of the Socialist Party: “No fusion, no compromise,” might well be adopted as a motto for Theosophists.

Still nothing need hinder individual workers in the Theosophic field from lending a hand in the economic. We might here commence a rhapsody of phraseology, as the author of “Socialism and the Soul” does, in order to give added weight to this meager presentation of facts. (XXI.) But this article is not written for sentimentalists, but for thinkers; and if we have presented the subject in a light that some few at least have not before considered it, and if our words prove a stimulus to a more careful consideration of the subject by those thinkers our aim is accomplished.

**XXI. The remarks about rhapsody and sentimentalist are personalities, but are not unwelcome to our point, showing as they do the animus bred by Socialism, against those who do not see eye to eye with its votaries.**

We do not deny that it is possible to pattern sociological requirements nearer to the needs of the Soul in Evolution. When H.P.B. was asked, as she frequently was, what is the ideal form of government, she always replied: “A benevolent Despotism: the reign of Adept Kings.” But we are not to be understood as *advocating* that! The main factor of true education escapes formulae: it is that perfect charity which thinketh no evil: this alone conducts a man to the synthetic Ideal of Life. Co-equal with this is another factor: right dependence upon the mandate of the Soul.

The standpoints of the Socialist and the theosophical student differ radically: it would not appear that an agreement can be found. And yet there is a synthetic Ideal back of this difference even: each may admit that the other longs to aid his fellow man. We differ in method; we do not *necessarily* differ in heart. And though it is true that we aim at something “which only the conclusion of human life on earth will see the fulfilment of,” yet the Socialist, without knowing it, does the same. Never was the word *Finis* written above the gates of the earth-worlds. No finality is here. “Until the sky is rolled up like a hide,”<sup>14</sup> the effect will follow the cause. He who gives predominance to the Ideal of material well being, has instituted a cause — has raised a materialistic shape, which will not down at his bidding through the eternities.

M. L. FIRTH.

A. P. FIRTH.

## NOTES

1. {The entire article appears, even though only the ‘Notes’ were written by Jasper Niemand. (It would not make sense otherwise.) Those ‘Notes’ were moved from the bottom of the pages they occur on in the original, to follow the paragraph they occur in here.}

2. {Matthew 10:34.}

3. {*The Voice of the Silence*, H. P. Blavatsky, p. 32.}

4. {*Letters That Have Helped Me*, William Q. Judge, p. 24.}

5. {*The Voice of the Silence*, H. P. Blavatsky, p. 36.}
6. {*The Voice of the Silence*, H. P. Blavatsky, p. 24.}
7. {*Through the Gates of Gold*, Mabel Collins, pp. 69-70.}
8. {*Bhagavad Gîtâ*, Chapter 3.}
9. {*Bhagavad Gîtâ*, Chapter 2.}
10. {*Natural Law in the Spiritual World*, Henry Drummond.}
11. {*Through the Gates of Gold*, Mabel Collins, p. 61.}
12. {*Through the Gates of Gold*, Mabel Collins, p. 67.}
14. {Isaiah 34:4?}
15. {Revelation 6:14?}

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## SOCIALISM AND THE SOUL.

JASPER NIEMAND

**“AS OPINION IS STILL SO MUCH DIVIDED REGARDING THE SIGNIFICANCE AND TENDENCY OF SOCIALISM, IT WOULD NOT BE ADVISABLE TO ATTEMPT A PRELIMINARY DEFINITION OF THE WORD.”**

**“THE APPLICATION OF WORDS IS DETERMINED BY USE AND WONT, AND IT CANNOT BE SAID THAT WE HAVE ANYTHING LIKE A SETTLED USE AND WONT TO GUIDE US IN THIS MATTER, AND THE DIFFICULTY IS GREATLY AGGRAVATED BY THE FACT THAT SOCIALISM IS A HISTORICAL MOVEMENT WHICH IS NOT YET COMPLETE.”**

**“THE NAME (SOCIALISM) LAID SPECIAL EMPHASIS ON THE NECESSITY FOR SOCIAL RECONSTRUCTION AND RENOVATION, AS CONTRASTED WITH THE POLITICAL REFORMS WHICH WERE THEN (1835) SO MUCH AGITATED, AND WAS THEREFORE SOON ADOPTED AS SUITABLE AND DISTINCTIVE.”**

— *Chambers' Encyclopedia, New Edition, 1895. Art. Socialism.*

The quotations which head this article indicate the first difficulty of students of the Socialistic movement. There are almost as many definitions and shades of meaning given to this word as there are groups of socialists. No matter to what definition we apply ourselves with a view to reasonable discussion, we are met by some expression of surprise that we should take this, or that, or the other, to be Socialism as understood by our auditor of the moment. This point is exemplified in the *THEOSOPHICAL QUARTERLY* for April, 1904, in which the present discussion upon Socialism is opened. An incomplete historical movement naturally presents this difficulty, and its statement is but a recognition of the disadvantage suffered by all parties to the discussion. For much the same reason, it is not here sought to rely upon quotations from the various pioneers of Thought, nor to answer or define quotations put forward by other writers. All such may be differently interpreted, apart from their context as they are, by differing minds, and are not pertinent to those who may wish to define their own ideals without taking advantage of the rock of authority.<sup>1</sup>

Our present concern lies less with the belief of others, than with the attempt to examine for ourselves the basis of Socialism, and to see:

(a) Should Socialism be taken up by the Theosophical Society as one means of humanitarian effort?

(b) What relation does Socialism bear to a spiritual philosophy and to the Soul? To do this we must find some definition of the word Socialism which would be acceptable to the general public. This definition may be found in the article already quoted.

*"Socialism is the extension, to industry and economics, of the free self-governing principle recognized in Democracy."*

Reference is further made to "*—the continual effort to moralize the struggle, to place it under the regulation of rational, ethical and artistic ends and ideals.*"

This indicates an effort to carry up to the ethical planes a movement initiated on the material plane, rather than an ethical ideal reaching outward and downward to the material.

The encyclopedic definition of the word Socialism, incomplete as it might appear to some specialists in this department of Thought, is one which the general reader will recognize, and is one which the specialist is more likely to amplify than to amend.

It then appears that the aim of Socialism is to modify and to equalize existing social, economic and industrial conditions: that is to say, its aim extends from the material to the mental plane and does not pass beyond: it deals wholly with effects: it eschews causes. In the opening discussion in the QUARTERLY, a previous writer plainly states: "Never mind what the causes were —." From the standpoint of those who do not believe that any reform can possibly be made which does not first deal with the cause of the conditions requiring reform, this attitude of indifference to basic causes must be wholly inadequate as a groundwork for reasoned thought.

The further contention that the T.S. as such "should take," and "is bound to take" an active participation in the Socialistic movement, (or in any other movement), cannot receive the assent of those who prize — who cherish as an ideal — the free platform of the Theosophical Society. The T.S., as such, has but a single tenet: Universal Brotherhood. Universal, mark; not partial. It proclaims Brotherhood to be a spiritual and universal principle. Recognizing the presence of this spiritual principle in all departments of manifested life, the Society, as such, cannot justly discriminate between religions, between philosophies, between social, economic or industrial organizations, or between man and man. It is bound to give a fair hearing to *all* systems of Thought which are not contrary to the laws of the land wherein the Society is situate. Holder of the balance, it must hold that balance even. The Society was not instituted to be a judge, but as a platform of Equality of Thought and Speech. If it secures to all a mental atmosphere wherein all forms of Thought and aspiration may receive fair and courteous consideration, then the Society will have fulfilled the purpose of the Founders, to which every member has given assent, verbally at least. It will be a bold man indeed who will ask more of the Theosophical Society; only a sage among men could consistently live up to this ideal.

The individual member is, of course, free to assist, or to refrain from assisting any other organization or system of Thought. It is his bounden duty not to compromise the free platform of the Society, just as it is equally the duty of all members to recognize this freedom of the individual without seeking to compromise or unfairly to criticize it; the spirit of a perfect fraternity should preside over all mental differences. In this respect, the Theosophical Society might well mirror the methods of The Great Lodge where, as we understand, the widest difference of opinion may prevail in discussion of method and plan, without the least trace of friction.

Our individual acceptance of the belief in the principle of Universal Brotherhood obliges us to refrain from all destructive criticism. He who labels his own views "Right" and the views of his fellows "Wrong" has slight hold upon a community of thinking men. What may appear to us as wanting in fraternity, may not be thus deficient in the light of that spiritual principle of which, as yet, we have but vague notions, but to whose inner meaning we may attain as we come into closer touch with the light shining from our hearts. The Deep Heart knows well that all men without division or distinction partake of the Unity of Being, and that each in his own place plays a part no other can fill. Injustice, Wrong or Crime we may, in the Abstract, condemn; even here, were not persuasion and reason the better part? The application of this spiritual principle we must leave each man to study out for himself, once we have spoken our real thoughts as earnestly as is compatible with fraternal feeling for all and for the amenities of human intercourse. Many minds, mirroring each a facet of the Truth, make up a Unit-Mind which shows the Eternal Truth at a wider angle than any single mind ever can: so each is in the debt of each. We are the brothers of all mankind, and of all beings. "In the Self are the aggrieved and the aggressor; the minute and the inexhaustible; the good, the evil, and that which is the cause of both." Such is the platform of the T.S. This platform is founded upon an eternal Truth; it can never be lessened or done away with. If we, the individual members, have ever departed from this rock, let us amend that departure. A divine power was pointed out to us when this basic formation was bestowed: are we not accountable for our use of it?

Acceptance of the principle of Universal Brotherhood does not imply that individual members shall not take such steps as may seem wise to us towards the alleviation of existing evils. To do this is a part of our life training. We do not go far in the endeavor, however, without discovering our own want of wisdom; the fact that we too, each in his own place, are mighty contributors to the vast array of discord and wrong arising from erroneous Thought, comes swiftly into view. Then he is wise who refrains from all condemnation, laboring most earnestly meanwhile to aid the world rather by building up the brighter images of diviner hopes and wider thoughts; rather by himself setting the example of fidelity and love to his brothers; rather by reaching earnestly after sinlessness in respect to fundamental principles, than by loud denunciation of existing wrongs. On each man and woman lies the burden of right thought in these matters, and no one can judge truly for any but himself. Hence we shall indeed be wise who, recognizing this inadequacy of the advice of another in our own case, will refrain from insistence in regard to our own views. In this fact is bound up one of the great mysteries of Karma. To learn to act on this plane with more and more wisdom and discrimination between the Real and the Unreal, drawing down more and more Soul light upon our minds and deeds in all respects, is just what we are here for. Only, while we act as forcefully as we may find it in our hearts to do, let us remember that the Soul may have another lesson for the teaching of our brother than that which it now presents to us, and that the path of action is full of danger. He who utters no word and who does no deed which may violate the principle of that *Universal* Brotherhood existing between himself and the universe of beings; he who recognizes that his fellow men who participate in methods which he deplures, do, in their turn, deplore his own — such a man will use calmness and generosity in dealing with the many evils of our civilization — evils to which all, consciously or unconsciously as it may be — all are contributors who think on lines of error. Our own *Methods* of undertaking to right the wrong, may be as potent for human suffering as are the wrongs which we would set right. Who amongst us will declare, after taking time to think, that he knows the final right, the closing wrong of anything? It is in the *use* of forces and of conditions that the right and the wrong consist, rather than in any actual, tangible facts. "The further we go, the more evil is seen to be the absence of good,"

said a deep student of these high matters. Moderation, firmness, gentleness, fairness, patience are the greatest foes an oppressor of his kind can encounter; where these are, the good is never absent; at their charmed touch, evils wither into dust. But violence and fiery opposition engender the elements of wrath and strengthen the foes they would annihilate. Do some say to me: "What; do you then council sympathy with the oppressor and the wrong doer?" Softly, friend! Am I so sure then that I am no doer of the wrong? And am I not conscious, even amidst my sins, that I have very instant need of the divine sympathy and understanding of my weakness before I can arise and sin no more? Must not some gleam of kindly comprehension of my condition visit me before I can arise and hie me to the Father? And does my fellow man need less? Would-be reformers, what we need most is to understand whence all these evils and injustices proceed. So comprehending in the least, we shall never wish to compromise the platform of our Society, for we shall recognize that as we meet our fellow thinkers there, and in that spirit of brotherhood discuss, in that spirit go forth to our work in the world, so is our opportunity of helping that world increased.

Coming now to the consideration of Socialism itself from the standpoint most apparent to many students of Theosophy, there is one aspect which strikes us in all the phases of the Socialistic movement. Socialism views man as a mortal, treating his interests from the standpoint of mortality. But man is immortal in essence, and his true interests are bound up in his immortality. Socialism posits the material equality of men as a good to be desired, sought after. Such an equality is an impossibility which Nature never saw in any of her kingdoms, nor ever shall see. Equality is not in any of the innumerable regions of Manifestation; it lies far, far beyond, there where the dewdrop slips into the shining sea, and the ocean itself merges into the unfathomed Cause. Equality of opportunity is indeed to be had in the midst of Nature; this the Law of Karma provides. Equal opportunity is had by him who sins no more. God and man are one in essence, we are agreed. But on the path to *conscious* identity with this essence, each man differs from every other in nature, in opportunity, in character and in mind; essentially, radically; each has a duty of his own to fulfill, and as he obeys the promptings of his own Soul, so only does he fulfill it; this will continue until the man has reached the Unity. Men are NOT born equal, however it may have suited the Founders of the American republic to assume that they are. Nor are men born free. The skandhas awaiting each at the threshold of devachan attend to that — the heredity awaiting each at birth from his past. Even the materialist will admit this, calling the enslavement "Heredity." Whatever name we call it by, each man is seen to stand embodied at a given point, and from that point and no other he must work out his salvation — which includes the salvation of his kind. What will "save" one, will ruin another; the lesson needed by one is not the necessary teacher of another. The would-be reformer, could he at a touch endow all men with a material equality, would plunge all into a deeper hell: Or does he imagine that the high and august Soul is to be defeated by any panacea, or fetter, of his imposing? Is sin to be expunged from the universe because the sentimentalist — and the good man — wish to see the happiness of their kind? Not so. From the heaven a deep voice reverberates: "Go, and sin no more." Each man is standing, precisely where he has placed himself, and from that point he must work out, evolve out, assisted by his fellow men and in his turn assisting. All these endless — often deplorable — differences exist because they are the effects of causes instituted by us all. Any reform which does not take this fact into consideration is bound to fail; it ignores the Law of Laws, the Law of Spiritual Continuity. Such reform is built upon "a measure of sliding sand from under the feet of the years." To insist that spiritual identity shall or does confer material equality, is to ignore the Law and the free will of the human soul. Is the Spirit to be bound down to any hard and fast line of Evolution? The dreamer, dreaming fondly of the welfare of

mankind, may indeed descry beneath the veil of Evolution something more wholly divine, the fringe of whose eternal garment of Light he touches with tentative mind when he thinks to touch that vital fact by him incompletely seen and termed "Evolution." The weakness of Socialistic systems of Thought is that they give us no glimpse, however momentary, of that great Weaver the Soul, weaving the destiny of man from the materials he gathers for himself in the uncounted fields of existence; supplying him life after life with a garment woven of the effects the man has set in motion, garments which must be worn and thoroughly comprehended ere they can be finally laid aside.

From the human standpoint the present conditions of human life are productive of endless pain, misery, suffering. Not alone those who are deprived of justice and of bread suffer, but we all. That each is held back from his own diviner possibilities — each robbed, in his own degree and place — is a point which escapes many reformers. The whole race suffers, while we, materialists in this as in so much else, look only at the *physical* wrongs and sufferings. That the race lies groaning where the race might mount — this is unseen by those who desire material equality as the great good which is to open the doors of the kingdom to mankind. Is material contentment, is happiness, is satisfaction of desire, then, the opener of the Door? When was it ever thus? Could you at a touch provide material equality and absolutely just laws for all mankind to-day, what would next ensue, think you? Can you not see, as in a vision, the Soul, Justice Incarnate, looking down upon your human work, and with a smile of tenderest pity effacing it all? Have you thought that you assume that the Soul is unjust, in that these wrongs are permitted thus to prey upon mankind? Have you considered that you assume that you *can* rob the Soul of all its agencies of reform and teaching, and force It to your ends? Have you never, in some vision of the night seen this condition of equality encompassed in all its fantastic unreality, and seen, in fright and horror, that proud and just Soul creating other agencies as yet undreamed of by man, in order to purify the human heart? Do you fancy that you can efface force from the universe and alter its nature at your will? Under your enforced dispensation of equality, where all men alike shall partake of conditions of your selection, what is to become of the host of energies, of forces, of powers engendered by Man? Will not each seek out its own creator for all your equalizing? Could you, as by the wave of a wand, compel the wrong-doer to disgorge his prey and drag the sufferer from his bed of wretchedness, what then? Will the one learn love for you, or his victim, or for any man, through your action? Will the other, suddenly placed in conditions for which he has had no preparation or training? In the heart of the first, wrath, fury, anger: whom do these forces benefit? Whose the fault of their birth? His, automatically responding with violence to your violent action? Or yours, arbitrarily setting in motion forces which did not ensue naturally or spiritually from the situation, but were the children of your own mind, colored by your opinion? And the released sufferer? Released from one mode of pain to find another. (Or do you claim that now he has found beatitude through you, his savior?) Will he find happiness; right action; wise thought; true fraternity ensuing upon his release? Will he learn forgiveness of injury from it, think you, or to adopt your own view of punishment of the aggressor? A great boon this, of yours — to teach him to claim the right of Judgment, to usurp the divine functions. And if all these forces arise from your sudden action, if they act according to their nature, are they not to be set down to your account? You will agree with me that this were a small thing if the world were really benefited, but too great a debt to incur in contrary case. There is only one way to alter the conditions created by the forces of the human heart. You must transform, transfuse, transmute. There is no other way than this, not though you sought it for ages. Work it out! Work it out! In Love alone is the fulfilling of the Law. Thus cry the divine voices.

And then you assume that suffering is a wrong. There are those in our midst who can tell you otherwise, aye, on their knees before the altar of Life. Go ask the mother of the divine revelation of her suffering. Go ask of the patriot, the saint, the martyr laughing you to scorn, if pain is an evil. And that deepest, most awful sense of man's inhumanity to man, eating into the heart like poisoned fire — has it no holier teaching? Why does the injustice of our fellow man most hurt us, unless indeed because the deep recesses of our being know that between us Love is the Law? The things that we call evil are often the efforts of the high Soul to right the real evils; the terrible horrors which we see raging up and down our world are often but the final effects of sin working out onto the material plane where at last the Soul is rid of them, their power for harm now quite burned away, as they emerge where the sight and mind and heart of man can view them for what they are and seeing, can transform them. Not alone those who suffer pain are wronged, but the wrong doer even more; you may not see this; but is the cosmos open to your mental eye? All these are the purposes of Soul, for which Nature provides and for which she exists. It is a part of our duty to-day to come to view our civilization as it stands with a quiet heart. Only thus can we go forth to amend it.

A previous writer has seemed to take up the attitude that the Masters of Wisdom either cannot relieve these ills of Man: or, being able to do so and refraining, They must be heartless monsters. Is there not a third point of view? How if to relieve were to work in externals only? How if the cleansing of our Augean stables were to be followed, as in the biblical parable, by the entrance of seven devils. Worse than the first? Is it not conceivable that the Wise Ones know that the short cut to relief, real and abiding relief, lies through endurance and patience in bearing the effects we have set in motion? Perhaps, too, the outpour of sympathy and longing to aid, on the part of those who long and long to help, blaming no man, but yearning mightily to assist, has a greater curative value on interior planes than we now dream. For it cannot be too often repeated that the real issue, the real meaning, the real world effect and the true human result, all lie on planes we do not see. We judge on external planes only. From the flames of all this suffering what souls may not arise, new born in human vesture, able to aid the race from whom they derive that human garment? A misunderstood sentence from a previous writer — to the effect that all is to be the best, the very best, evidently refers to this sublime faith in the Soul; that It doeth all things well, and that since Masters do not alter conditions, it must be that They know this may not be, and so stand waiting upon the behest of the Soul. There is such faith in Israel, deal with it as you will. That the Law shall be fulfilled — than this there is no swifter, wider benefit to mankind. That Law alone is Justice, Love divine. And it shines upon the just and the unjust alike, giving to none the verdict pronounced by man.

The sympathy evoked by noble efforts to relieve suffering is a force divine in its power. Yet here again we may see the benumbing effects of vehemence and condemnation of any. For as we live, think, act, we engender forces, and these will have their due effect upon dynamic planes of Being. Hatred there is a deadly poison; anger a death-dealer; impatience and doubt entangle in a wide spread, long enduring net; so with all the forces which are undivine; they are executioners, all. It matters not in what cause we gave them birth, the unjust servant cannot serve the just cause truly, strive as we may to have him do so; there is no "righteous" anger, no qualifying emotion there where force meets force in the pulsing ether. That to which the human heart gives birth comes all uncolored there to the seat of judgment and by its fruits is known. He who feels anger and hatred towards injustice and wrong but gives them new life by the fury of his opposition. Seeking to put an end to strife, injustice and pain, he engenders more pain, injustice and strife; he has intensified their action. Raising the images of wrath, cruelty, indignation at evils done and wrongs endured, we

create these images more rapidly than we can destroy, stamping anew upon ductile matter the superscription of the beast. Does this course assist the human Soul? Are we thus co-workers with the Soul divine, as we send these forces forth to run their course of wrath and doom?

Is there a just man who has never feared that in condemning these evils of our era he may not be condemning the curative agencies of the Soul? Surely all who recognize sin as the true and only cause of evil have had this thought. And if they do fulfill the purposes of the Soul, would any lover of his kind extirpate them if he could? This is the flaw at the base of the Socialistic system. It condemns and attacks all "wrong" conditions, dealing with them on the visible, material plane only, utterly disregarding the question of the Soul and the behests and agencies of that Soul. It also tacitly condemns all those who in the far past have contributed to bring about the present state of things — and their name is legion. Under that name we might find enrolled those who now use the greatest bitterness of attack. For that which we hate is nearer to us than anything else, except our purest love. Hatred is a reaction of a previous partiality, unjustly exercised and doomed to pursue us as the furies pursued Orestes until we recognize it as a lesson of the divine Teacher, the Soul.

Consider with me that the Soul teaches through pain and misery the dangers of violation of the Law of Universal Brotherhood. Through the discord and suffering thus brought about, we at last catch a glimpse of our true, our harmonic nature. We then are inspired to undo the web, and thence to make our escape into the real world. By this the whole universe is the gainer, and if this were the only result of the pain we see around us, who would say that this pain was not justified to the cosmic sight, if thus helpers were created to aid the race? But this is not the only result. It is not even the greatest result. The chief result would be — and is — that man shall cease to sin against his fellow man. We are prone to imply that suffering is loss. But to him who sees behind the veils of matter, there are angels, purifying, cleansing, uplifting wherever sorrow lies. Deprive the Soul of these agents and we only remove the conflict to more interior planes of life. For the Soul is Lord over Life and will be fulfilled. The necessary lesson would then be conveyed through forms and modes of suffering more poignant still. In much the same way a disease, by misuse of Thought or other fine agencies may be driven out of the gross flesh into some more interior stronghold where decay and anguish are far more awful than any anguish the mere flesh ever knew. There is such a thing as ridding the human body of social, political, industrial, or evil methods — temporarily, at the cost of the human Soul. So again the old cry arises: Under which King dost thou serve? Art thou for Matter; or perchance for Spirit? He who will not strive, so far as in him lieth, to remove the sorrows which he sees about him, is not worthy of the name of man: he is sub-human. And he must work as it is given him to see light. If he color the thought divine by his own human coloring, by just that much he will be impotent for the good he longs to do. But every thought of mercy and of universal compassion will bear fruit a millionfold, for great is the mystery and wide the power of the multiplication of spiritual energy. What then boots it to put faith in systems and policies? To cry so loudly in the market place? What is wanted, what is so sorely needed, is that each in his own place shall do all the duties of that place before he turns to scrutinize the life record of his fellows. Our duties unfulfilled, testify against all our loud protestations of love for our fellow man. They are that cohort of foes impeding our progress. How long should we wait, if we waited to denounce wrongdoing until we had each fulfilled *all* our own nearest duties to the last jot and tittle of them? Only the sorrowing angels can reply! The householder, the citizen, the parent, the seller and the buyer; these we are. Have we fulfilled the duties of each post to the uttermost? And then that other post, that spot eternal in the heavens, the Soul within and above us; have we encompassed all those duties, knowing that on our

discharge of these we are and ever must be dependent for further gleams of light? When all this is done, and well done, then is the hour ripe for search further afield. Is the task disheartening? Then know that it is no less disheartening to thy brother; from the failure of ALL to do their entire duty, have all these sad conditions of the body social and political arisen: we are sharers all. In anger, in condemnation, in sin, in violation of divine law they had their birth. In love, in peace, in good-will of man to man they shall have their death and resurrection, but no other wise. The cure demands the use of divine agencies, and you, oh fellow mortal! you to administer them! Yet take heart; so it shall be. Remember then that the oppressor has a lesson which he is learning no less than his victim — who is the child of the Law as the oppressor too is. There is but one thing for us to do, one duty to administer. We shall live the life of brotherly love. We shall be at peace with our fellow man. Once that duty done, once the heart thus attuned, inspiration will be our daily guide. To frame just laws is good: to touch the human heart to issues so divine that spontaneously it will rise up to benefit its fellows is better still. Do you say it cannot be done? Then you say that man must perish with the brutes. But if it can be done — and the gods know that this is true — then let the lover of his kind set about the task. Never was task so glorious. In the spirit of trust and hope and sympathy in all men, of all stations and standpoints in evolution, to go to each and to ask: “How shall we most benefit our fellow man?” To be intent, urgent in the doing of our own share in it. But ever in the spirit of unity. Ever in that attitude of mind which feels that all are in sad case wherever wrong exists, and ourselves also, in that none of us do our whole duty. Also in that joyous perception that all will wish to do it, once we clearly see where it lies. In this spirit to enact laws, to govern, to buy and sell, to colonize, to live. Recognizing too that no code of laws or conduct ever framed by the wise and the just has power to remove from the human heart the will and wish to sin; that heart untouched, sin and wrong will continue. The human heart, uplifted and transformed by Love shall with joy fulfill its duty to its brethren, shall itself frame those laws which can never be above the human heart in power, but which only follow after and image it. Those who say: “Relieve conditions and hearts will alter,” put the effect before the cause. We must strive indeed to relieve conditions, working right brotherly with all to this end, but we must recognize that the human heart is at the base of them all — our own heart. The first step taken, the first duty fulfilled, the spirit of brotherhood made inalterable in us — all the rest follows upon that. But reconstruction of any conditions in any other spirit, or exclusive of the consideration due to each unit, will be but one more ghastly failure. There is a brotherhood of a heavenly order due to the sinner and the oppressor; these too have their “rights” — as we call karmic conditions. Thou, oh man, art thyself somewhere, somehow of these wrong-doers, or thou couldst not so hate their evil deeds! The divine and the sinless hate not.

Do you then say to me: “No country was ever thus governed?” May be not: but they should be. Were social and industrial conditions never thus remedied? They shall be so. Else Jesus and the Buddha and all the long array of saints, prophets and martyrs never knew the truth. I prefer their teaching to this modern gospel of force and legal steps to equalize the conditions which are the reactions of the Soul upon the human being, the *means* of his salvation. Not that these teachings as I read them forbid me to use every means I wisely can use to humanize our civilization. That civilization is but a trial ground indeed, and never will the world of men be other than that. But the conditions can be bettered, the trial lifted to a higher plane. This we must strive for; but always in the spirit of good will to all men alike, no matter what the complexion of their deeds in our sight; no matter how they denounce our plans or mock our hopes. Our simple part is to do all that we can in peace and such wisdom as we can command — wisdom with deep love in it — and then to rest upon the behests of the Soul for the

issue. That issue will not be the end foreseen by us, but it will be an end divine; of that be sure.

We shall see that we are units in the one vast scheme. That our equality consists in equal opportunity of service: that we are judged by harmony of function, not by scales of weight and size. Units of the Oversoul, each unit must move freely, self-governed from within, towards the true completion of the Divine Plan. What that Plan is, we do not know: does that impair our power of doing our own part? It should not impair it. Placing our hopes upon the Eternal, renouncing the Transitory, leaving the final verdict to the Soul, we may press on towards the Light. Our small part well done, we rest upon the Universal Heart. Not human systems, but the spirit of Universal Brotherhood shall be our quest: our Grail lies *there*, co-workers with the Soul!

JASPER NIEMAND.

## NOTE

1. NOTE. — The name of H. P. Blavatsky, having been brought into this discussion, the writer thinks it well to state that in a letter of March, 1891, now in the possession of the writer, H.P.B. speaks of a pupil who was once a socialist, saying that under her tuition, this pupil "*has left Socialism forever.*" (Italics H.P.B.'s) "That which — could not achieve with — (the pupil) in several years, he *who hated* Socialism — I did it in a few months; she broke openly with that vile brood, she notified the world of her decision, etc."

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*The Path* – July 1891, Vol. 6, p. 116.

## {SOLIDARITY AT ANY COST.}<sup>1</sup>

JASPER NIEMAND

The motto of the faithful student should be: "SOLIDARITY *at any cost.*"

For when in the impersonal he sinks the personal:

When to the union of the many he subordinates the limitations of the few:

When for the centralizing instinct of the personality, he substitutes the centrifugal intuition of the individuality:

When, with Thought fixed upon the homogeneity of all, he has forgotten the attractions of his separated mind:

When, regarding his lodge as one body and his fellow students as each necessary to the functions of that body, he cares for the right thought and right action of each unit as if it were himself:

Then he has mounted the first step of that ladder which leads to the Eternal, and has entered upon the fulfilment of the saying:

" 'Tis from the bud of Renunciation of the Self that springeth the sweet fruit of final Liberation. "<sup>2</sup>

Learning thenceforward to look upon his lodge, not as a thing physical and separate, but as an entity existing in the spiritual world only by virtue of its perfect unity, he regards thought as the essential condition from which all right action and true Being proceed, and purifying his mind he realizes that as the real battle-ground whereupon he and his comrades must succeed or fail.

JASPER NIEMAND.

## NOTES

1. {This follows the article “The Solidarity of the Theosophical Society” by Alexander Fullerton, F.T.S. It was written following the death of H. P. Blavatsky in May of that year (1891), when encouragement needed to be given to members that the Society was still intact and was not going to crumble due to her passing. Alexander Fullerton was Julia’s former Episcopalian minister, through whom he became interested in theosophy.}
2. {*The Voice of the Silence*, H. P. Blavatsky, p. 35.}

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*The Path* – February 1888, Vol.2, pp. 333-334.

## STRAY THOUGHTS. JASPER NIEMAND, F.T.S.

He who loves the Whole, attracts all the units. He who hates one unit, repels the Whole, for in every unit the Whole is contained. One creature unloved has power to exclude me from the “Kingdom of Heaven,” where I can only enter by being one with the Whole.

“Love” is not desire of possession, but a type of that universal interchange which gives and takes, takes and gives, in continual evolution and perpetuation of Harmony. It is the divine essence seeking perfect equilibrium in the human soul.

*“In his place I might do worse.”* To say this with my whole heart is truly to love my neighbor.

Resistance is better than indifference. Our opponent is nearer our center than the friend who listens courteously and forgets. Opposition is a sign of life. Do not revile it: pass it by. A mightier than we shall conquer it: his name is Death.

A “wicked” man is one whom the Law puts to more severe tests than myself. When I see one who commits great wrongs, I hear in my heart that medieval cry: “Make way for the Justice of God!” To be unjust is in itself the greatest punishment. When the Law passes judgment upon man, its justice is injustice avenging itself upon its creator.

As in politics the neutrals are the enemies of all, so those who are inactive in soul reject both “good” and evil, and fall into the gulf of oblivion.

Why do we pride ourselves upon our virtues? They are sterile, or they would have generated somewhat higher than virtue. A virtue which cannot become the mother of all virtues, is an abortive Truth.

Pain is the effort of nature to restore its lost harmonies; therefore pain is joy. Joy is the effort of nature to disturb the proportions of harmony by the exclusive appropriation of a selected note; therefore joy is pain. These together are the second lesson of life. The first is sex, itself a permitted discord whereby true harmony is better conceived.

The devout mind may sink a plummet into the soul. It cannot sound those depths. But it can awaken and arouse them, and they will go through some heavenly motions which mind may understand and record.

True Will is an instinctive motion of soul towards spirit.

No Karma is “bad” Karma. What we call evil fortune is simply nature’s effort at re-adjustment.

Falsehood has ever a larger following than Truth. But the followers of Falsehood represent numbers only, while those of Truth stand for unknown quantities.

High places are points of culmination. Princes can only be judged by the general applications of laws. The subtle alchemy of royalty transmutes the heart’s essences from volatile to deadly.

If you wish to destroy Karmic effects, destroy the fixed consciousness of “yourself.” Live in the universal life and you will only inherit the universal Karma. This is “good,” for the Karma of the manifestation is to return to the manifestor.

When we *conceive* the highest ideal of the Deity, we consciously enter its Being. When we have *realized* this ideal, the Deity consciously enters our Being. The ultimate of Being is one.

JASPER NIEMAND, F.T.S.

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*Theosophy* – July 1897, Vol. 12, p. 191.

## A TALK ABOUT H. P. BLAVATSKY.

JULIUS

“We have had many a crisis, but assuredly this was the greatest.”

“To what do you refer, Professor?”

“To the departure of H. P. Blavatsky from her physical body. It might have been supposed, in advance, that this sudden taking-off would result to our disadvantage. But the fact is, disasters work upon the Theosophical Society in inverse proportion. The greater the (apparent) disaster, the greater the resultant good. The stronger the blow, too, the stronger our reaction. All attacks, all so-called exposures and losses have merely cleared away the impediments of weak and uncertain followers. The apparent loss of our leader did not, for one instant even, paralyze the activities of the working staff. Everywhere there is a sudden outburst of energy and new life. X. spoke of it to-day.”

“What had he to say of it?”

“We were talking about Madame Blavatsky, and he said that, so far as he understood, she (the Adept) expended an immense amount of energy — *vis viva*, you know — in holding together a body whose every molecule tended to disruption. He believes that H. P. Blavatsky will be for some time occupied in training a new instrument, and one not so young as to be useless at the present cyclic crisis. He does not pretend to speak with authority, but certain sayings of hers and perhaps what I might call *post-mortem* facts — bear him out. Certainly she left everything in order. All

things were planned out and evidence was abundantly had to the effect that she knew her departure was near. Moreover, X. said that, looking upon her as an Adept, whose chief work was done outside of the objective body, it was reasonable to suppose that she is now enabled to use, upon higher (or inner) planes of being, the power previously expended in the maintenance of that body.”

“Did he think that the present theosophic increase should be attributed to that fact?”

“Only in part. You see, he believes her attention to be largely engaged with the new instrument. But, from his point of view, her coadjutors and associates would naturally lend a helping hand in her absence, especially if the Theosophical Society, as a body, called down their help.”

“What do you mean by calling down help?”

“I mean that the united impulse of a large body of truth seekers — more especially if they work for Humanity — attracts the help needed for its spiritual efforts. Imagine it as a great stream of energy going out into space and returning freighted with all that it had attracted to itself — all similars — on its passage. That in itself would be a source of power. Again, the increase is largely due to what H. P. Blavatsky foresaw. Theosophists are now able to stand alone, are all the gainers by being left to do so. (Take the words ‘*alone*’ and ‘*left*’ in a relative sense, please.) In the same way an infant is benefited when left to learn to walk, even at the cost of its tumbles; it is the course of normal, healthy growth in every department of Nature.” — *The Path*, September, 1891, “Tea Table Talk,” by “Julius” (Mrs. J.W.L. Keightley).

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*The Theosophic Isis* – September 1896, Vol. 1, pp. 257-258.

## TALKS WITH MYSELF.

JULIA W. L. KEIGHTLEY

{1 of 3}

*All things are Symbols; each is, at core, a truth. Not an event but has a spiritual significance. Not a moment but is informed by the Voice of the Soul.*

*The actual occurrences, which are hereafter given as examples of this silent teaching, may help my other selves as they helped me, by drawing attention to the spiritual heart of things.*

### I.

#### THE DIVINE REPROACH

In a Church at Lubeck {Germany} is an inscription, of which the following is a translation:—

“You call me the Master, — and you do not ask of me.

“You call me the Light, — and you do not see me.

“You call me the Path, — and you do not follow me.

“You call me the Life, — and you do not desire me.

“You call me the Sage, — and you do not imitate me.

“You call me the Good, — and you do not love me.

“You call me the Rich, — and you ask nothing of me.

“You call me the Eternal, — and you do not seek me.  
“You call me the Merciful, — and you do not confide yourselves to me.  
“You call me the Lord, — and you do not serve me.  
“You call me the All-Powerful, — and you do not know me.  
“You call me the Just, — and you do not fear me.  
“If I condemn you, accuse yourselves only.”

I read the Inscription. Said Myself to Me—

“It is the Divine Reproach.

“These thoughts are addressed to man in many tongues and throughout all ages by the Good Law. If thou hearest them with the heart, thou knowest them to be a Divine Reproach.

“In the silence the inner voice makes itself heard. Herald of the Soul, it asks: ‘If I be for thee, who shall be against thee; and if I condemn thee, whither shalt thou flee?’

“To hear, and not to do, is to have heard with the ear only. To understand and not to obey, is to have sinned against the Holy One. He who has not heard, and who has not understood, of him no account is demanded. But he who knows and follows not, to him is addressed the Divine Reproach which is the judgment of the Righteous Law.

“Ye who are that Law embodied, Will ye incur the Divine Reproach?”

JULIA W. L. KEIGHTLEY

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*The Theosophic Isis* – October 1896, Vol. 1, pp. 281-283.

## TALKS WITH MYSELF.

JULIA W. L. KEIGHTLEY

{2 of 3}

*All things are Symbols; each is, at core, a truth. Not an event but has a spiritual significance. Not a moment but is informed by the Voice of the Soul.*

### II.

#### THE STORM CURTAIN.

In the house of a friend, a peculiar curtain attracted my attention. Often as I had stopped there, I had not seen this curtain before. We sat in an entrance hall of noble proportions, whose exterior wall formed the Northern end of the building, jutting out over a shallow lawn that ended in a bluff. The hall was a most harmonious oval in form; the curtain of which I speak hung from the cornice of its outer end, reaching from that high point to the ground, upon which it trailed a foot or more. The front entrance was thus quite concealed by this drapery of a dark blue color, very soft and thick in texture and embroidered along the borders with Egyptian hieroglyphs done in gold threads. Its great size, its even, pleasing sweep no less than its complete envelopment of the entrance, conveyed a most agreeable impression. It held my attention and gave me a soothing mental sensation, as though a gentle oblivion flowed from its folds. The meaning of one of the hieroglyphs read:

*“This also shall pass by.”*

Contemplating it, I felt that here was something new, yet familiar — strangely familiar to some hidden part of me that I could not fathom, which yet claimed kinship with this mysterious curtain, this sight that relayed the tension of nerve and brain. My first impulse to speak of it was checked by this mild satisfaction; I preferred rather to make contented observation of those interior impressions to which the curtain gave rise, as though it were the symbol of some living Truth. There was some urgency to speak, but I resisted it.

Abruptly, then, my hostess spoke. (How humiliating are those moments when another obeys the instinct whose monition we have disregarded!) “I see,” said she, “that you notice my curtain, and though I make it a rule of awaiting questions about it, I feel really impelled to hope aloud that you like it.”

“That curtain,” I replied, “has such an individuality that one feels some discourtesy in discussing it to its face.”

She laughed. “It certainly has a distinctive mission. It is a Storm-Curtain.... I see you are little wiser. Exposed as we are to the sweep of storms upon this bluff, the rain, the hail and snow, the all-pervading winds are driven through the crevices of the entrance doors, solid oak and closely fitted though they be; the very keyhole is an avenue of attack; nothing avails to keep out these chill afflictions when the north wind drives them home. So I have made this curtain. In fair weather it lies rolled up and unnoticed under yonder cornice, but in uproarious weather it secures the warmth and quiet of this hall. Listen!” Stepping to the heavy curtain she drew the heavy folds aside. The simple action, as if by magic, admitted all the clamorous voices of the night. A cold blast drove fine particles of snow, like needle points, eddying through the joints of the doors: laughing at my involuntary shiver, the lady let the draperies fall again into place, and again the firelight flickered undisturbed across the quiet hall.

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Said Myself to me:

“Of a truth, it *is* a symbol. Man, the Thinker and the Soul, fast rooted in Spirit, is projected into the Material. His mind hath contact with both; it is the universal avenue of communication with the interior and exterior alike; it is the threshold of a diviner Sanctuary. Guard well the hall of the mind.”

“How then shall I guard it,” I asked myself.

The busy voice whispered into the brain:—

“When outer tempests rave, when outer darkness spreads, make fast the door of the mind, suffer not the entrance of material delusion. Against these insidious presences, let fall a curtaining peacefulness before thine inner shrine. Aye let it fall, this protective silence, this veil of harmonious acquiescence in the Law. Every man possesses and may control it: few discern and use it. In the heaven of the mind it rests, its nearness all unknown until some dread convulsion of nature rends the heart. Then help becomes an instant need. In that moment of necessity the mental curtain may be by the Thinker perceived. Can he but see, but grasp the use and meaning. Lo! He draws that curtain and shuts his mind to all the warfare of the senses and the brain.

“A deep stillness is thy true Being. Of that Silence I am the silent voice.

“In the hall of the mind seek then that calm protection. It is the Ever-Present, failing never. It exists in all alike, that power to dismiss the tempest, to enfold the mind with the restfulness of the heart of Trust.

“Ah! When the storm rack lowers, when tempests toss thy world, say then that these shall pass; shall return and come again, again to go with Time, the constant servant and revealer. When friends seem changed to foes, say then that this shall pass, that other lives shall bring thy foes to friends, thy friends to foes, while yet Thyself, the one, the constant friend, abideth ever. When trust of years is shaken, that also shall

pass by. When thou, by Love betrayed, hast in thy turn betrayed Thyself, weep not, but rising, call to all the winds that this shall pass, is past, and shall not be the future. When all belief is undermined, when doubts and fears shall rive the pinnacles of hope — fall, fall kindly curtain; in deep compassion shut the jarring world away. Enfold the hall of the fires with those sweet silences, the guides, the conductors to the inner shrine of the Rapt, the Lonely, the Assured Peace.”

JULIA W. L. KEIGHTLEY

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*The Theosophic Isis* – November 1896, Vol. 1, pp. 316-319.

## TALKS WITH MYSELF.

JULIA W. L. KEIGHTLEY

{3 of 3}

*All things are Symbols; each is, at core, a truth. Not an event but has a spiritual significance. Not a moment but is informed by the Voice of the Soul.*

### III.

#### A CHILD AMONG SHADOWS.

Upon the sands I saw a small child at play. He was building a fort to resist the incoming tide, and at this plan worked ardently enough, were it not for some annoyance whose source I could not see, but which interrupted the work. The child would stop, looking about it, would now lay down its wooden spade, or now with the tool upraised would pursue with much vehemence some object I could not see, and would then pursue its sand building, but warily and on the alert for fresh intrusion. Irritation so great and so spasmodic in so small a creature challenged my interest; I went nearer, and with a singular result. The day was one of high wind and brilliant sunshine. Fleecy clouds hung low, scudding swiftly over the sky and casting as they passed their shadows, swift as themselves, upon the sands. These dark shades, chasing one another across the light sand surface, threw themselves, shade after shade, upon the child and his fort. They rushed on him like material presences, to be as such resented. Shrieking with anger at their suddenness, he would charge these unexpected intruders, would give chase as they charged down upon him, stamping upon and striking at them as he and they raced side by side. One after another the shadows ran at him; he grew bewildered, raged and fought, ran to and fro, could keep count no longer, and then, with swift change of mood, cast himself into their midst and fell to dancing. Even as he passed thus from wrath to joy, from battle to dance, a cloud swallowed up the sun, the shadows vanished, the dancing child was left to dance alone. Vexed for a moment, he turned, pouting, to resume his fort building; the stealthy sea had stolen in and rippled gaily where his fort had stood. Then he turned a face of upbraiding towards sea and sky, cast himself upon the sand, and wept. A nursemaid hurried up to console the small creature, but it would have none of her, save with kicks and screams. I went to her assistance, and said to the child:

“Do you not see those were only shadows?”

He said: “That’s what everybody says; they are so stupid. I don’t care what the fings are; I want them to go away.”

“But they are not real.”

He replied: "Yes, they is. I *see* them."

"And what if you do," said I. "They do you no harm."

"They does, they does; they int'rupts my play. I can't play with them fings about."

"But," said I again, "they are shadows of the clouds; the sun makes them. You love the sun, you know. Look up and see how pretty the sun and clouds are up there."

He turned his curly pate upward upon my knee, stared, gave a big sigh, and remarked:

"It's pretty up there, but I'm playing down *here*, with them nasty black fings runnin' over my fort and chasin' me, and then the sea it came in just to spite me——" and the small but unexhausted creature fell to kicking and screaming again, as shadow after shadow once more scurried over his little prostrate form.

"You foolish, naughty child——" I began, sternly; his screams drowned the sound of my voice.

\* \* \*

Another Voice said quietly, somewhere, "Why not take your own advice?"

I stood, astonished and silent. Again I heard the low admonishment.

"Thou poor, poor child! Hast *thou* never fought with shadows? Hast never danced with shades or embraced a dream? Thy grief, thy joys, thine interrupted work, thy plans laid low, hast thou never for these arraigned the whole of Nature; never willed, for these, to turn aside her course? Oh, child, child, child!

"What, then, were these checks, these trials? Shadows all; shadows cast by the events of Life as the true sun shone upon them. And were those shadows never cast, so hadst thou never known the actualities from which they sprang; the truths whose passing images they were; the truths which cast their shades upon thine earthly consciousness, bidding it look upward, upward to behold the true source of shadows, and to see, behind the clouds of material Nature, the true Sun in its shining. Viewed from below, those shades were dark indeed. Knowest thou not that the Bright One has dark messengers?"

"Yea; dark were the shadows, and of surpassing swiftness. The upward gaze alone describes the truth. Hadst thou looked to see whence they came and what their source, then hadst thou seen the glories of the Law; then, then that Sun, the heavens' azure hope, and in their midst the necessary features of great Nature. Are not her clouds the refreshment of earth? By them bedewed, is not her hardness broken up into fit receptacles for the most tender shoot, the most precarious blossom? Wide is the power of blessing possessed by a single attribute of Nature under the shining of the inner, spiritual Sun. Whilst thou art still in Nature, seek to understand her; so shalt thou find her clouds draw down a benediction upon the parched and arid soil beneath; that soil, thy slowly hardening heart.

"But thou, child, lookest down, not upward. Thou hast bemoaned, threatened, loved these shadows, contending and adoring turn about. When day was done, and interrupted work was swallowed up by tides of Time, hast thou not blamed the courses of thy stars; blamed Nature, the shadows cast by what? By thine own clouds filling all thine earth and sky. Who cast those shades? Thyself! What are yon clouds? Thyself! Who can dispel them? THE SELF!

"Turn, then, thy gaze behind the veil of Nature. 'The soul attracts a moist spirit when it continually endeavors to associate with Nature.... When, however, the soul earnestly endeavors to depart from Nature, it becomes a dry splendor, without a shadow and without a cloud.'

"Fighters of shadows! It is yourselves you contend against, fleeting images of that Self, unlike beyond the darkness. Let pass these films of Nature, and, smiling on their

mirage, look steadfastly above, behind the veil. And I — when thus you contended —  
*was I harsh with thee, child?*”

Its music ceased.

I went where the child lay, and raised him in my arms.

“Kiss me,” I said. “Love me, for I have been naughty too, and I feel oh! so badly.”

“Was you naughty to God,” he solemnly asked. “Sometimes it hurts in here.”

He laid one little hand upon his breast, and patted me with the other.

“Never mind,” Said he: “God soon forgets.”

He kissed me, and we went home reconciled.

JULIA W. L. KEIGHTLEY

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*The Path* – December 1886, Vol. 1, pp. 284-286.

## TEA TABLE TALK.

JULIUS

### THOUGHT TRANSFERENCE AND DREAMS.

Have you ever noticed the swiftness of thought transference in cases where the thinker is not consciously projecting his thought to another mind? The writer had lately a notable instance of this. I was seated at the breakfast table, thinking over an order from THE PATH which had come the night before. It was an order for “1000 words on dreams, etc.” and not being such stuff as dreams are made of, I pondered intently albeit silently:— “Where the deuce am I to get any authentic dreams?”

*“Mr. Julius, do you like dreams?”*

So spoke a clear young voice at my elbow. It was the voice of Sue. I am not qualified to judge whether Sue is a child or a girl. She is, however, an embodiment of that young America who rules these United States from Atlantic coast to Pacific wave, and although a bachelor, I respect her accordingly. Sue represents my possible fate.

*“Dreams!”* I stammered. “What do you know about dreams?”

“Me? Why I have ’em. Lots! But only the horrid kind, you know.”

I venture to ask, most respectfully, what she calls “the horrid kind.”

“The kind you can’t remember, so’s to tell ’em and scare the girls. All mixed up, you see.” Here Sue snaps down the lid of the maple syrup cruet with an air which indicates that the subject is closed. But I venture on. I fear Sue a trifle less than I do my Editor and his demand for contracted copy.

“What made you think of dreams just now, Sue, if you please?”

“Oh! I don’t know. They just came spang into my head. Perhaps you were thinking about them.”

“Why, my child! You do not mean to say that you believe in thought transference!”

“What’s that? Some nonsense! What I mean is that when I’m thinkin’ ’bout somethin,’ an’ I don’t want the other girls to talk about it, I put it out of my head, quick,— (another hot cake, please,) so they won’t get it into their heads too. They always do, unless. Understand?”

I did indeed. "Verily out of the mouths of babes and sucklings proceed the words of wisdom."

This to myself of course. What I said aloud was merely, "I should like to hear a real good dream this minute, a true one."

Sue gives her head that capable toss. "Why didn't you ask me? You people always think children don't know anything. Guess you've changed your mind since you were a child. Anyhow, Mrs. D. was tellin' it t' Sister an' some ladies, and it gives your blood a lovely curdle."

Here Sue settled herself in her chair and gave herself up with gusto to the joy of curdling my blood. Making careful inquiry afterward, I found true, in all its details, the dream which I now give to my readers.

Mrs. D. was at her country place. She dreamed one night that she rose, and walking to her window looked out upon the familiar scene just then lit by the moon. To her surprise she noticed persons walking two by two across the lawn towards her; then more people, many of whom she knew. As she watched this procession, there came finally a hearse driven by a boy. He stopped the ghastly vehicle under her window, and raising a scarred face on which the moonbeams played, he called out; "*Are you ready?*" Mrs. D. shrieked and awoke, to find herself in bed and the sport of a dream, but telling it afterwards to her family she remarked; "If ever I were to see that boy, I should know him by the awful scars on his face."

Some time afterward this lady was standing in a hotel corridor, waiting for the lift. As it rose slowly into view, she was attracted by the head of the boy running it: "Where have I seen that head?" was her thought, and so puzzling, she delayed to step into the waiting lift. Just as she moved forward and entered, the boy turned his face towards her saying: "*Are you ready?*" and she saw again those great scars, and across her inner vision moved that slow funereal scene. Sickened, startled, she felt an impulse of escape, and profited by the stoppage of the lift at the next floor to get off, instead of continuing to a higher floor, as she had proposed. She paused a few moments to recover herself, and to reason with herself as well, when suddenly a horrible crash was heard; then a *dead silence*; afterward the murmur of excited voices. The machinery had broken, the lift had fallen to the ground floor, and every person in it had been killed. As I thought over this strange story, the decided young voice streamed on: "Do you know, Mr. Julius, they were discussing it at dinner, and I heard some quite stylish people say they believed it was God Himself warning her. Fancy! They weren't church people of course."

Humanity is divided by Sue into two classes. Class 1. Members of The Protestant Episcopal Church. Class 2. Heathen. She finds this very convenient. So, I doubt not, do many older persons.

"And what do you think it was, my child?"

"Me? Oh, well! I just think it was her soul, somehow, Mr. Julius! Why do you stare at me like that? I do believe you know something about it! Nobody will ever tell me. Put down your coffee cup, its spilling all over your beard, and tell me straight off all you know about our souls."

But here the Skye terrier comes bouncing in, and offers himself for dissection instead. Nevertheless, I know a few people, (and I fancy THE PATH knows scores more) who expect you to tell between the roast and the *relevé*, all that is known about the soul. Go instead to the children, question their fresh instincts, their curious methods, their habitual impulses and freaks, above all, their *esprit de corps*, and what you learn about occultism from these still plastic minds will surprise you. It has me!

JULIUS.

## TEA TABLE TALK.

JULIUS

### THE TENDENCY OF THE PRESENT CIVILIZATION. AN ANCIENT HINDU STORY.

Pretty much every subject comes up for discussion at our afternoon tea-table. Hence I was not surprised lately, walking in upon our five-o'clock callers, to find an argument on crime going the rounds with the bread and butter.

"What is the worst thing you have seen in the papers lately?" This question imparted the flavor of caviar to the mild refreshment of the ladies. The Club Bachelor held a certain divorce case to be —; the mother drowned the rest in the peremptory rattle of her tea-cups and instanced cruelty to the child slave of an Italian padrone. Sue let off a pyrotechnic series of wrath-compelling wrongs to animals, whom she considers "miles above horrid humans." The widow pilloried that brutal subject of recent press dispatches "who murdered his fifth wife at her tea-table. Fancy! What an invasion of the Sanctuary." Pretty Polly was also heard battling *vi et armis* with the Medical Student over a breach of promise case, and all were moderately heated over these comparative claims to condemnation when the professor entered. Tumultuously appealed to, he replied in his serious way that if he must discriminate between evils, he should give precedence to the matter of the Chicago Anarchists. First, because of the blood-shed and riot; second, because of recent manifestations of incipient public sympathy with the criminals. "For," said he, "considering the infectious nature of the evil, a crime which strikes at principles as well as at humanity is a thousand-fold crime."

A murmur of approbation showed that as usual, he had conveyed the ultimate sense of the tea-table,— minus a paltry minority. For the widow fixing her eyes on me where I had edged between Polly and the Student, remarked that Mr. Julius looked "as if he sympathized with inciters of riots rather than with their victims."

The prompt horror visible on Polly's face nettled me into this reply. "Madam, your discrimination merits my homage, I am not totally devoid of all sympathy with the inciters of riots," (gutturals of dismay from every throat,) "for those inciters," here I bowed in a semi-circle, "are yourselves."

The silent indignation of my peers was brought presently home to my recreant soul by the mother's gentle — "Really, Mr. Julius, you will excuse me if I regret what you have just said."

"Excuse *me*, you who are Charity itself," and read my clumsy speech in the light of a declaration made by a Hindu theosophist — Mr. Mohini: "Whence springs the great diversity of conditions, the contemplation of which breeds Socialism? Is it not the direct outgrowth of the passion of acquisitiveness? The more a Western man gets, the more he wants, and while your world holds to this principle you can never be free from the danger and fear of socialism. The Brotherhood of Man which Jesus Christ believed in has become unthinkable to you, with your millionaires at one end of the scale and your tramps at the other."<sup>1</sup>

"Do I understand you to conclude that Society, being responsible for crime, should permit criminals to go unpunished?"

“By no means, Professor, but if you will excuse another quotation,— ‘Give moral restraint to moral maladies, and not impious chastisements. Do not travel in a bloody circle in punishing murder by murder, for so you sanction assassination in one sense and you perpetuate a war of cannibals.’ ... Remember the condemned man who said: ‘In assassinating I risked my head. You gain; I pay; we are quits.’ And in his heart he added: ‘we are equals.’ ”

“Who said that?” queried the widow.

“Eliphas Levi, at your service.”

“Thanks. I’ve no use for *French morals!*” Under cover of this dart she retired. What I love most in woman is her way of retreating from the field of defeat with all the honors of war!

“Seems to me,” said Sue, emerging from a monopoly of tea bun, “that things are just perfectly awful anyhow.”

“My Dear! What can you know about it?” remonstrated the mother.

Sue silently pointed a sticky and accusing finger towards those philanthropic journals which cheerfully fulfil their mission of household enlightenment *ad nauseam*.

“Things are as they always were,” said the Professor smoothing his philosophic beard.

The old Lady ruffled up in her shady corner. “By no means. When I was young —”

The mother looked deprecatingly at me. “Mr. Julius, have you never wondered why Life should be so dark? And yet there was once a Golden Age!”

“The occultists say that every age has its own characteristics. This is Kali Yuga, the dark age. In the Satwa Yuga, cycle of causes or truth, the highest of the three conditions or states, known as Satwa Guna, prevailed.<sup>2</sup> Consequently in that age, men lived longer, happier and more spiritual lives. In Treta, the second age, prevailed Raja Guna the second condition, and the life period and happiness of men deceased. In the Dwarapa (third age) there was less of Raja Guna. In the present Kali Yuga, there is more of Tamo Guna, and this is the worst of the cycles.

“The characteristics of these grand cycles and the different minor cycles are elaborately described in the sacred literature of the Hindus. If it would not weary you I could tell a story which gives some idea of the nature of cyclic influence and how coming events cast their shadows before.”

Popular opinion, led by Sue, clamored for the story.

“This story is taken from a secret Sanskrit book, called the *Diary of the Pandavas*. It gives a diurnal account of the 18 years forest life of five exiled princely brothers immediately previous to our dark age. This book contains 18 x 360 stories describing the cumulative tendency of sin, and it is said was used in the last yugas as the first book of morals for boys;<sup>3</sup> every story has its moral; the series reveals the genealogy of evil, or of the descent of spirit into matter.

“The volume is secretly preserved for the training of occultists, and the entire order in which the stories are arranged is only revealed during initiations. An initiate who has passed three initiations and is preparing for the fourth, is only shown that series treating of such especial elements of his evil nature as he is then preparing to convert into higher energies. In this story, the five brothers are ideal kings. The eldest is regarded as an embodiment of Dharma, (the Law itself,) an incarnation of the God of Justice, yet so strong was the influence of the coming dark cycle, that one Adharma, (transgression of law, injustice) occurred daily within the palace. Late one evening the Maharaja, (elder brother) had retired and was chatting with his wife. The four younger brothers were as usual respectively guarding the four palace gates. Bhima, (the terrible) *wisest* of the younger brothers was invariably at the chief gate during the first three

hours. To him comes a poor injured Brahmin who asks to see the Maharaja immediately and knocks the “Bell of Complaint.” The Maharaja sends a servant to say that he is in bed and will hear the complaint next morning. The Brahmin saw that the shadow of Kali Yuga had come and smiling, turned away.<sup>4</sup> But Bhima would not let him go without knowing whether justice had been done him. The Brahmin refused to reply; he would not sit in judgment nor reveal the king’s faults. Bhima knew from the petitioner’s silence that no attention had been paid to his case, and ordered that a trumpet be sounded and a proclamation be thus issued: “Strange that our just brother the Monarch has relied upon to-morrow and sacrificed duty to pleasure.” The king heard the cry of the trumpeter and coming hastily on foot, he overtook the Brahmin, fell at his feet, heard and redressed his complaint, then walked sullenly back. Kali’s influence was thus doubly seen. First in the Monarch’s conduct and secondly, in that the younger brother should presume to judge and to teach the elder. If even in the palace of the five most law abiding persons, Kali played so powerful a part, we may imagine her influence in other circles of life, amongst the ignorant, or amongst us later mortals now when her momentum has full swing.”

There was a brief silence. Then a shooting fire ray revealed a divine gem in the Mother’s eye and her soft voice said lowly; “After all, it seems that we *are* our brother’s keeper.” And no one gainsayed her.

JULIUS.

## NOTES

1. See *N.Y. Tribune*, Nov. 28, 1886.

2. See *Bhagavad Gîtâ*, Ch. 14.

3. The numbers here used are significant. In *Bhagavad Gîtâ* are 18 chapters, and Krishna as there revealed has a special meaning under the number 18. The five Pandavas are the same as those who are concerned in the *Gîtâ* story. If the product of 18 x 360 be added, the sum is 18. The correspondence in all the Hindu stories will repay study.—[ED.]

4. The injured Brahmin was a sage who assuming that disguise desired to make a test.—[ED.]

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## TEA TABLE TALK.

JULIUS

Recently the tea-table was chatting about the Widow’s escape from the Romish fold. She was nearly converted by the urbane Monsignor Capel, but escaped at the critical moment, she said, “by reason of a sudden preoccupation.” This turned out to be the death of her worthy husband. The Widow is a pretty and amiable creature, approved even by the ladies who say “she is a good little soul and mourns most expensively.” Hence she never appears at the tea-table without an escort, and the most frequent of these is one Didymus, lawyer by profession, good humored, sceptic by nature, whose careless, semi-flippant manner makes it difficult to know him, though he and I frequent the same clubs and make our bows in the same drawing rooms. On the day in question the lady said that she brought him often because she “wanted him converted to Theosophy.”

"But, my dear Madam," said I, "you know we don't believe in converts. Theosophy is simply an extension of previous beliefs and like Victor Hugo it says, 'in the name of Religion, I protest against religions.' People have to grow into it. When they are ready for it a crisis of some kind, now moral, now physical, seems to occur just before they accept the Light from the East as a man receives back something he has lost. It seems as if those elemental creatures, who attend man, foresaw his determination and strove to frighten him away from the initial moment of choice. Great momentum, even of misapplied energies, often indicates the nearness of radical change."

"Yes," broke in Didymus quietly, "I believe that of the Elemental and the astral world. I've been there myself, don't you know!"

Imagine the feelings of Balaam upon a noted occasion! Unlike the excellent but misunderstood animal of scripture, Didymus was urged to continue.

"No," said he, "I can't profess to explain my experiences, but I'll tell them by way of illustrating Mr. Julius' remark, as I find most people do go through a climax of some kind before they round the turning point of the Age." The tea-table settled itself comfortably and Didymus proceeded.

"I was in a good deal of trouble last winter, trouble of various kinds, and needless to specify, and I had foolishly taken to a pretty lively life. I don't mind saying that one of the chief causes of my trouble was the fact that I couldn't believe in anything that made life worth living; all my ideals were pretty well played out. One Sunday I awoke with an overwhelming sense of terrible calamity, I recalled the events of the previous day, but all was in due order from the matutinal cocktail to the vesper toddy, so I finally concluded that my depression was a hint that I had been living too hard and I resolved to stop it. This resolve, by the way, I carried out from that hour, nor have I ever touched liquor since. I passed the day otherwise as usual with various friends and dined out with a glorious appetite. Returning to my hotel, I was engaged in making notes of one of Herbert Spencer's works, when my attention was attracted by voices in the adjoining room, and I was astounded to find that they were detailing with startling accuracy, certain of my affairs which I not unnaturally supposed were hidden from the world at large. Conquering my blank amazement I sprang into the corridor, when the voices as suddenly ceased and I found my neighbor's door ajar and the room entirely empty. This rather took me down, and I concluded to turn in, and was just falling asleep, when I seemed to see two fellows in evening dress whom I somehow knew to be jugglers. They advanced, bowed, and thereupon began a series of the most fascinating and laughable tricks I ever saw. I looked on with interest for what appeared to me a long time but at last the rapidity and variety of the illusions produced a feeling of intense weariness, and I said, 'Gentlemen, thanks for your interesting performance, but you will pardon my remarking that it is late, and I am very tired.' They bowed, said nothing, and continued their performance which became even more ludicrous. I repeated my request; again the bows and tricks of increasing absurdity. Worn out I exclaimed angrily, 'I consider this a beastly imposition, you know, and if you persist I shall be obliged —' but I never finished the sentence, for the two distorted their faces into masks of indescribable comicality and were off while I laughed — and awoke. As I did so, I was amazed to see a broad patch of vivid scarlet light slide down the wall from ceiling to floor and before I could give a second thought to this phenomenon, a big white cat sprang from the foot of my bed and vanished in the darkness.

"This aroused me thoroughly, for though I had never experienced the like before, I said to myself 'Old Boy, you must have a touch of D.T.'<sup>1</sup> though why the devil you should have with your seasoned head, I can't say.' I got up and lit my gas; it was after midnight but I concluded to go out and get some medicine. The halls were quite dark

save for a light in the front vestibule and I felt my way down by the balustrade. Turning the corner of the staircase I became aware of a shape — I cannot call it a form — which was distinguishable from the surrounding darkness only by being more intensely black. It seemed about seven feet high, the body was indistinct but in the sharply defined head two fiery eyes glowed with a malice and menace that were truly appalling. The shape stood directly before me and barred my way. I felt an icy chill down my back, and I'd wager that my hair stood up, but summoning all my courage I said,— 'Well; what do you want?' The silent shape bowed mockingly and the eyes became more malignant and threatening. My temper, which is really hasty," (cries of "Oh! no!" from the ladies,) "got the better of my fears, and advancing in furious anger I cried; 'Stand aside and let me pass.' The shape vanished and I reached the front door without further incident.

"The cold night somewhat calmed me, but as I crossed Madison Square I imagined that someone was following me. I turned sharply about; the square was deserted. I resumed my walk; again the swift footsteps ever coming closer: again I turned; nothing! By this time I began to be alarmed. For visible foes a man cares little, but those ghastly footsteps,— they curdled my very blood, by Jove! I walked on and reaching Broadway, I was struck with the tumult of voices that filled the air though there were but few people about. The street cars seemed crowded with noisy men, laughing, swearing, telling more or less questionable stories, and from every cab and wagon came similar sounds: it was like the rumpus on the Stock Exchange on a field day. The invisible footsteps, at first drowned in the noise recommenced, and constantly turning, I found myself ever duped. By this time I began to think the whole thing an illusion, but presently I saw a man just ahead of me look out from a doorway. As I approached, he apparently drew back, but getting opposite the door I found it closed by barred iron shutters: this occurred over and over. Then as I would approach anyone, pedestrian or driver, he would shout at me, mockingly, jovially, profanely or inconsequently, yet I could see that his lips were closed and that he was only mechanically aware of my presence.

"I now began to feel that there were two of me, so to speak. One recognized that this was all a delusion; the other self was alarmed and unstrung. I walked quietly but rapidly, attracting no attention. Looking at myself in a chance mirror I saw that in outward appearance I was the same as ever. Reaching the drug store by the Herald Office, I sat down completely unstrung, but my voice was steady as I asked for some Bromide of Potash, and the attendant gave me a dose in a glass of soda water at my request without remark. Having no excuse for remaining I reluctantly turned homeward, hoping that fatigue and the drug would dissipate my delusions. In vain! I no longer heard the dogging steps or saw the peeping men, but the voices were louder and more confusing in a perfect chorus of commonplace talk, intensified in volume. Arrived home, I took another dose of Bromide and threw myself on the bed. Instantly it seemed to sink under me and then rose violently. I rose, lit the gas and my cigar, but the voices began again in the next room. Though tired out, I sought the street again. By this time the sense of being 'double' was intensified, and I recognized with anger that my higher self was under the control of a lower portion which it ridiculed and reprobated. I walked up Broadway this time, and as I passed the hotels from doors and windows came invitations to drink, to dine, to play billiards and less innocent suggestions. A man and woman came towards me, and I was amazed at the breadth, or depth of their conversation, ranging over topics not whispered in general, much less proclaimed on the highway, yet as I met them I saw that their lips moved not; with heads bent slightly against the keen air of the winter morning they sped silently on their way. Jeers and mockeries saluted me from the cab stands, yet the cabbies dozed on their boxes. Hour after hour I walked thus, ready to drop with hunger and fatigue but

unable to stop. At last in the cold grey of the morning I returned home, took a tub and a meal, and went to my Doctor, having heard the irrational tumult of voices all the while. The Doctor was vastly amused at some points of my narration; he thought my cat might be D.T. but could make nothing out of all the rest except a threatening of insanity, and giving me some beastly powders, advised me to live quietly, and keep out of doors as much as possible. I attended to my routine business, all the time hearing the voices, except when someone addressed me. Getting restless as the day wore on I walked down along the East River piers, went on board vessels, into holds and engine rooms, climbed over cargo and chatted with stevedores. No one saw anything unusual about me; friends asked me to wine and dine, yet still the hateful voices mingled with the real ones till I hardly knew them apart and feared I should commit some noticeable indiscretion. The day passed in misery; as I got to my bed at last, a red setter appeared by my side. An inmate owned a dog of this species, and at first I thought this was he, but my door was locked and as I turned to him he vanished, which upset my nerves again. Again I sought my Doctor's aid, and taking a second worse prescription, passed another hideous night in desperate wandering, ever with the voices at my ear. It was useless to try to sleep or even to lie down; my bed heaved like a ship in a tempest. The next day I passed at my office again or with any acquaintances I could muster, talking as much as possible in the hope of a brief respite from the maddening sounds. At last the medicines did their work; the next day found me clear headed, the sights and sounds of the astral plane had vanished; I don't want to experience them again, but I believe in them, you bet! Later I found out what they really were when my life had wholly changed, and I had joined the Theosophical Society."

The ladies turned on him with one voice. "*You!* A Theosophist! and you never told us!"

"Well," said he humbly, "I tried hard, but — you never gave me a chance."

Pretty Polly says that under cover of the laughter the Widow whispered to Didymus that she had thought he was trying to tell her something else. But I don't believe it, for Didymus is still a bachelor; some say he is a chela.

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In answer to queries, I would say that all occurrences related in this department are strictly true, as is the above experience of an F.T.S. communicated since the published invitation to correspondents in our last number. All such will be hospitably received by the Tea-Table. I may add further that "Julius" is now the name of a department merely; though it has at times sheltered groups of personalities of both sexes, there has always been one fixed quantity directing these, and that's he who now signs

JULIUS.

## NOTE

1. {*Delerium tremens.*}

## TEA TABLE TALK.

JULIUS

The Tea Table has had a sensation!

Do you remember the case of “Chalanka?” He was the “Fallen Idol,” in Anstey’s book of that name,<sup>1</sup> and played the very deuce with people and bric-a-brac alike. There’s a deal of truth in that clever little satire, and the author shows up the elementals quite correctly without in the least suspecting it.

The Chalanka of the Tea Table arrived very demurely one winter afternoon, per Adams Express,<sup>2</sup> in a promising box which bore the mark of a great china firm and contained as well, securely moored in its harbor of cotton wool, a tea-pot which the Tea Table pronounced “Adorable” were it not smashed. Nothing else was near this brittle loveliness save and except Chalanka. To all appearances he was a pencil sketch of the head of a young Brahmin of high caste, folded in the typical turban. The drawing is powerful and the subtle sidelong glance of the eyes to the extreme left has one peculiarity, viz: if you come round from behind the picture on the extreme right, the eyes meet you equally, and so from any position. I cannot escape that dark and searching gaze. Still, one would say there was nothing dynamic about a sketch, and yet the tea-pot arrived literally crushed to pieces within its perfect casing, and the indignant ladies, with the acumen of their sex, soon spotted Chalanka and held him responsible. Presently I noticed that everyone had a more or less sidelong glance in return for his, towards where he glowered from an *étagère* on which we had put him, and in the course of the social hour I collected these remarks upon him.

*The Professor*, sauntering up.— “H-m. Who have we here? The fellow has a beautiful face and — the devil’s in it!”

*Sue*. “Goodness! who’s that? Makes me feel like when I step down in the dark.”

*The Mother*. “That man’s face is not human.”

*The Widow*. “I have it! I wondered what Chalanka made me think of. Don’t you know that thing in the Bible about ‘the serpent that listeneth not to the voice of the charmer, charm he never so wisely?’ ” (The Widow was wiser than she knew.)

*The Student*. “You ladies always go in for poetry. Now he looks to me as if he said,— ‘Get me if you can, my boy; if you don’t, *I’ll get you!* ’ ” Great sensation and nervous shivers from the ladies, followed by instant demands for the lamp. The maid who brings it being observed to fix a fascinated gaze on Chalanka, is asked what she thinks of him. After a little urgency she replies. “That gentlemen’s so sad, ain’t he? I do’n’ know, he’s unnatr’al like. Seems like there’s somethin’ he can’t get over.” Flings her apron over her head suddenly, and breaks from the room. Apologizes later and says “nerves is in her family” but always thereafter calls Chalanka “that gentleman,” as for instance; “I couldn’t bring meself to dust that gentleman.” Or, “I knocked that gentleman down but he ain’t hurt.”

Now the curious fact about the above remarks is this: A fellow F.T.S. felt impelled to draw one night. As he did so, a mist gathered near him, and gradually this Brahmin stood plainly before him, just as the sketch shows him, with his magnetic gaze which affects everyone who sees him. Many callers come into the room where the 5 by 8 drawing stands inconspicuously, surrounded by all the Heaven-only-knows-what, of modern decoration, but the Tea Table has yet to see the person who does not comment upon Chalanka with a baffled sense of mystery. The artist, a student well up

in such matters and a man of unimpeachable veracity, knew his strange visitor for an elemental who assumed that shape to attract attention, the artist knowing many Hindus and thinking often of them.

What do you suppose it is that tells the story of this silent, watchful face, even to the incurious? Does some odic fluid inhere in it, or does the clue rest with the akasic vibrations from it? In consequence of its arrival, conversation has turned to coincidences, and from this I have collected the following items of interest:

A. "I dreamed the other night that I had a talk with a fellow student; next day he told me he dreamed same night — that I came and said: 'I'm tired of your nonsense; you must get serious.' That was just what I dreamed I had said to him myself. So when Father died; four times my Brother and I dreamed on the same night that we saw Father and talked with him on the same subject."

C. "Three times I dreamed of getting a letter in a blue envelope, each time I received one such next day. Dreamed one night of reading *Sun* paragraph that a new gun shield had come out to shield artillery men. Next morning's *Sun* had the exact paragraph. I had never previously thought of gun shields. Another night I dreamed I was in a town all on fire. Next morning's *Sun* had an account of the burning of Little Rock, Ark."

W. had some second sight in his family. One night when twelve years old, in Roumania, as he lay down in his bed, on looking towards the foot of the bed saw in the bright gaslight the head and shoulders of a beautiful child. He was very much frightened: his brother, who was with him saw nothing. A few years later W. emigrated to the U.S., married later in life, and his first child, a boy, grew up to be the exact image of the vision which had gone out of his mind until the developed features of the child reproduced it. The same lad when 11, desired a dictionary, but could not find it after much search. The same night he dreamed that he got up and took it from a certain other shelf: looked the next morning and there it was.

Several curious instances of thought sent ahead have also been sent in to the Tea Table, where persons seemed to see someone they knew and in a few moments met a member of that family.

Someone suggested that the sketch might represent a black magician, (Dugpa) and the mother asks me what such a man really was. I had just been reading a Hindu MSS. on this subject, and I was able to explain, vide its able pages, as follows: As the Yogi is a person busied in converting his lower nature into higher, so the Dugpa endeavors to sink all his higher elements and changes them gradually into lower ones. He might remain in our earth life until the last spark of ethical nature or kindly emotion had been transmitted into love of evil for its own sake. He would then presumably go to any of the lower states from the eighth to the thirteenth. We know well, as Sinnett has put it for us, that "nature sets no trap for any of her creatures," and so it happens that having been long immersed in the lower spheres, our Dugpa might once more ascend into the realms of light and begin to develop his higher nature. Many will ask whence the impulse is derived, if the ethical nature was completely destroyed. From the great law-giver; from Karma! In such a case, if there remained but a small balance of good Karma in his favor, even though it were at the very moment of his descent, he could necessarily rise again, (sooner or later,) until he had exhausted it, for the *lex parsimonae* of nature gives every possible chance for the recovery of lost ground. These opportunities are said to occur whenever one or more items of the balance of good Karma have ripened, and often when the momentum of the lower nature was for the time exhausted, and he could no longer descend. In this view it will be seen that we only receive from time to time a part of our deserts. The whole bulk of our Karma does not fall at once, but is distributed throughout the series of lives. When a man goes

into the extreme of occultism unadvisedly however, the resistance he encounters is apt to draw down the whole weight of Karma at once. If the balance is in his favor then great is the power for his benefit, otherwise he is crushed and fails. He has then an additional opportunity of choice along with his race, when the race period of choice occurs, as it will in the next round, we are told. In the fourth chapter of the Koran {Qur'ân} occurs a confirmation of the occult teaching as regards this distribution of deserts. "Covet not that which God hath bestowed on some of you preferably to others. Unto the men shall be given *a portion* of what they shall have gained, and unto the women shall be given *a portion* of what they shall have gained."

"Well, Sir," said the professor, "I should like to know the exact rationale of this Karmic process. Why does a student professing chelaship draw down the bulk of his Karma?"

"There are many who want to know quite as much as you do," I replied. "All they have to do is to study the operations of cyclic law for themselves. And mind, if you dig for ore, you bring down other things in the debris, while if a miner hands you a lump, you're not much more of a miner than you were at the start. You will find these laws represent perfect, equilibrated Justice."

"Humph! I'm rather like the man in a recent novel, who said: 'who am I that should yearn to deal out strict Justice? I never got it, thank God!'"

The fact is, Justice is a gun too heavily loaded for the use of man; it's backward kick is more than I like to think of.

JULIUS.

## NOTES

1. {*A Fallen Idol*, Thomas Anstey Guthrie.}
2. {Adams Express Co. — from the mid-19th century until World War I, that was how private citizens and businesses shipped items large and small.}

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*The Path* – April 1887, Vol. 2, pp. 29-32.

## TEA TABLE TALK.

JULIUS

In view of its continuous interest in minor occult subjects, the Tea Table has become within the past few months an energetic center of thought in this respect. Many experiences, queries and speculations flow into its circle, and I propose to give out from time to time such as may be useful in clearing up the doubts of others. Standing in this little vortex of contemporaneous thought I have noted and verified the discovery that there is a tide in ideas. What one asks, others are soon asking; when I sum up the total of the month's fractional tendencies in my department, I find the same idea prevalent in the outside world of literature, of gossip, and of action. The following incidents are valuable as illustrative of the fact that the general public is beginning to explain its hitherto inexplicable experiences by the clues of Theosophy, and that the movement steadily gains ground with the thinking portion of the community.

1. A gentleman who for many years has investigated Spiritistic phenomena under some of its most remarkable aspects, tells this incident. "Living in Boston, I have for several years had occasion to make frequent visits to New York. In each city I had a

friend of strong mediumistic powers, which were never exercised except in private, and for the gratification of their friends. They both frequently favored me with sittings and while in a state of trance were both separately possessed by an old friend of mine who had been dead for some time and whom neither had ever known. He would sit and converse with me, using their bodies as naturally as if they were his own. In New York, my friend would in that state (*i.e.*, in the medium's body,) go out with me and lunch at a restaurant, talking and joking quite as he used to when alive, and in a manner wholly different from that of the medium, eating also a very hearty meal, although the medium was an exceptionally abstemious man. After spending two or three hours together, we would return to the house of the medium, who would come to himself, oblivious of where he had been, unaware that he had eaten anything, and simply feeling as if he had been in a deep sleep. But I also held interviews with my deceased friend in Boston through the medium there, and the strangest fact about the whole thing was, that whenever in New York I endeavored to remind him of anything that had happened in the course of a Boston interview, he remembered nothing whatever of the occurrence, or even that he had ever had any communication with me in Boston. Similarly, in talking with him in Boston, whenever our New York intercourse was alluded to, he would be equally ignorant concerning that. Otherwise his identity seemed undoubted, for in both cases he manifested all the personal traits by which I had known him in life, and minute reminiscences of our old intercourse were recalled which could not have been known to either of my mediumistic friends. But the fact that neither the New York nor the Boston manifestations of him knew anything at all about each other, so to speak, finally led me to suspect that what I was communicating with was not the true personality of my friend, but what Theosophy teaches to be the "false ego," or the Kâma Loka residuum of his earthly experiences, incapable of accumulating or imparting further knowledge, and temporarily galvanized into life, while the higher principles were turned away from earth life towards the Devachanic state."

In regard to the above the idea further suggests itself to me that the mediums may have gotten into the astral current of the departed personality, to which the thought of his friend might at first (even unconsciously) direct them. In the *Life of Madame Blavatsky*,<sup>1</sup> we find her sister telling us how it was at times the custom of that lady to receive communications of more than ordinary power, by putting herself *en rapport* with the currents of strong personalities still existing after death in the Astral Light. This was before Madame Blavatsky had forever abandoned all mediumistic exercises. A medium thoroughly absorbed in a strong astral current, such as follows in the wake of departed personalities, and whose subsidence is in inverse ratio with their activity when in life, could readily accompany his magnetizer anywhere, and continue to act in accordance with its influence.

2. Another correspondent says: "Some years ago I met with an experience which goes to prove the fact stated in *Esoteric Buddhism*, page 167, that 'an abnormal death will lead to abnormal consequences.' A brother of mine was killed in our war of 1861. We knew nothing whatever about it, beyond the fact that he was killed on a certain day. About eight years after, I was conversing with a spiritualistic medium when (speaking after the manner of spiritualists) my brother 'controlled' her; I asked if he would give me any particulars concerning his death and he answered; 'Now what I am going to tell you will impress you very strangely, but I am not dead at all.' Very much startled I inquired what he meant, but as usual in those 'manifestations' no answer was given. He was gone; I never heard from him again. Afterward I often questioned what it meant, and now in the Wisdom-Religion, I find the answer."

In connection with this incident it is to be remembered that we are told that the victims of sudden death, bound for their due life period within the earth sphere, are frequently unaware that they are "dead."

3. Still another person says: "Living much among the Welsh I have been regaled from childhood with astonishing ghost stories, which I regarded as absurd superstitions. Theosophy and the Astral Light explain them. One such story staggered my incredulity at the time, for two of my sisters were the witnesses. When living in Cincinnati they saw one night the figure of an aged man in old-fashioned clothes, knee breeches and buckles — their description of him agreeing precisely. On inquiry we found that a carpenter answering to their description had lived in that house years before and had been suddenly killed by a fall from the scaffolding of a church nearby.

"Still another sister is remarkably sensitive to odic currents. Though not an invalid, she is very nervous, 'notional' — and has an abnormally heightened sense of smell. Until I studied Theosophy I could never understand her notions. One night when in a small western town where she had only been a short time, she had a strange nervous spell. She was not ill, nor had she any trouble on her mind, yet she sobbed and moaned, declaring repeatedly, with great emphasis that she *knew* someone in the town was in terrible trouble. In the morning we learned that a girl whose very existence was unknown to her, had committed suicide under particularly harrowing circumstances."

Apropos of the life period, I believe that 100 years is the period assigned to each life time in our cycle. According to Indian astrology, this 100 year period is distributed in a certain proportion between the reign of the 9 Grihas (or astrological planets). Saturn's reign extends over about seven and one-half years of our life time and these form its most miserable part. They might come at any stage of our life, or even when we were in the womb, according to the "house" in which, and the "ascendant star" under which we were born. It is said that these trials press less hard upon us if during their continuance we are charitable and unselfish. Saturn is said to be thereby pacified. If a person dies at the age of 60, astrologers regard the remaining 40 years (or rather their due Karmic results) as having been included in the nine months passed in the womb. When a child dies, say at the age of two years, 98 years are considered to have been included, as to results, in the period of gestation. Stories are told to illustrate the way in which the blackest period asserts its Saturnian influence upon us, and while astrologers attribute this period to fatality, the occultist either considers it a Dweller of the Threshold or a series of trials for testing the higher nature and enabling us to utilize apparent calamities as a means of doing good to ourselves and to others. An astrologer once told a king that he could undergo this black period in condensed form, within 7 1/2 months, or 7 1/2 days in a particular way, or even 7 1/2 ghari. (One ghari equals 24 minutes.) In the latter case he would have to plunge himself for three hours in the gutters running in the palace garden. The monarch, in skeptical anger, ordered the astrologer imprisoned. But he had thought within his heart that if the astrologer had spoken truly, he had rather undergo those trials in the shortest period. The Law took him at his unspoken word. The hour came, although he forgot it. He was looking at the distant horizon before, his palace when he saw a great cloud of dust arise and heard amid an uproar, cries that a neighboring Prince had invaded the country with a conquering army, putting all who resisted to the sword, and was marching on the capital to secure the King himself. The King forgot valor, prudence and the astrologer's word. He plunged into the sewers of his own garden for refuge, and held his breath in suffering for full three hours. At nightfall he got out and inquired of his own coachman, "Brother, what is the news?" The man replied to the seeming stranger that the only news was the mysterious disappearance of the King. Then only did the monarch recall the prediction of his astrologer, and hastening to the palace, had him released.

We find here the awesome fact well set forth that the Law takes no heed of motives, ignorance or situations, and that thought is action on its own plane, a motor which sets all the great forces in motion. Nor do we know what unseen tendencies in

ourselves may sprout up in sudden circumstances. We should treat our idle thoughts as the farmers do Canada thistles — there's a five-dollar fine for every one allowed to go to seed!

JULIUS.

## NOTE

1. {*Incidents in the Life of Madame Blavatsky*, A. P. Sinnett.}

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*The Path* — May 1887, Vol. 2, pp. 61-64.

## TEA TABLE TALK.

JULIUS

The Tea Table witnessed a strange discussion last week, between Didymus and Quickly. I have not hitherto alluded to the latter, who is a man of remarkable will power, to which his psychic development and training have not a little contributed. He sat chatting with the ladies on this occasion, when Didymus, walking in, remarked to him:— “Ah! old man, I've just come from your office.”

“You mean at noon, when you left me to go to the Stewart sale with Miss Polly.”

“Oh! but I changed my mind,” said she.

“Of course! Why mention it?” said I, and got that rare thing from a woman, a natural (as well as expressive) look.

“So,” continued Didymus to Quickly,<sup>1</sup> “I went back to your den. It was just 3:20 by Old Trinity as I entered.”

“Well! I've been there since 2 o'clock,” said Quickly.

“You weren't though, for I stood at your door looking straight in, and I'll swear you were not there.”

“My dear boy, I sat down to my desk at 3 P.M. noting that I had just 3/4 of an hour to spare, and never rose till 3:40 when I came up here.”

“But I say, how could I be mistaken? I passed your clerks in the outer office and went right to your den. It's small, rather bare, no nooks, no closets, bright sunlight streaming in. There was your chair standing empty. I looked all over the place; a cat couldn't have hidden there.”

Quickly was silent. His color changed slightly. The two men eyed each other; then Quickly diverted the conversation. With all due modesty, I may say I have the quickness of a Gordon setter on an occult trail, and as the laws of the Tea Table provide that all such experiences, once broached, must be held as common property among this little band of earnest seekers, I called the meeting to order and Quickly to account.

“Well,” — said he, slowly, “Didymus bade me farewell for the day at noon, as he was going to the sale. At 3:10 P.M. I was reading some very private letters,— in fact — they related to high themes in occultism. As I read, I suddenly thought of Didymus, and the strange idea flashed through my head that he might perhaps return and see the letters in my hands. In my then frame of mind,— for I am a queer chap that way sometimes,— I had a positive throb of horror lest he might come in and see them, and I mentally went over a little farce of dropping them out of sight.”

“You needn't have done that, old man,” said Didymus.

"I know it," rejoined the other with his shrewd nod, "but the whole thing passed through me as I tell you. The letters related to matters which went to the very roots of my life, and it seemed as if I couldn't stand their being seen just at first."

A sympathetic movement ran like a wave through the group and showed that Quickly was understood by all.

"I was in a direct line from my door," resumed he. "It was 10 feet off, and the light very bright. At 3:25 I finished reading them, and had seen no one. I wrote a letter, finished it at 3:40 and came straight up here. I can swear I never left my room from 3 to 3:40 P.M."

"And if the lives of those dearest to me depended on it, I would have sworn that you were not there. I stood in front of your chair at 3:20 for several moments; your clerks saw me come and go."

Of course this strange occurrence was discussed at more length, but the facts remained the same. Can we explain them? I think so. We know that Adepts possess the power of becoming invisible at will, and that one of the methods employed consists in mesmerizing the lookers on, so that they do not perceive him who so wills it. All that is required is the institution of a certain vibration through a strong *self-conscious* will. This Quickly has not. But reading those letters relating to the higher self had so raised his vibrations and intensified his psychic perception, that when the inner self raised a note of alarm at the approach of Didymus, and the idea of discovery was conveyed to the normal consciousness of Quickly, the will to remain unseen was so intense that unknown to his mind, his soul emitted or employed that vibration necessary to set up such an akasic disturbance as would perturb the sight of a looker on. This sight depended upon the transmission of certain vibrations to the optic nerve, and these were wanting. Many such incidents happen to those whose psychic senses are gradually unfolding, and when well attested, as in this case, are useful hints to fellow students.

The widow remarked with a sigh that it would be dreadful if such powers were general among men. Hereupon the Professor innocently asked why.

"My dear Sir! To be able to make themselves invisible? Fancy how they would impose upon their poor wives then!"

I quickly put in the trite:—"Set a thief,——" but it was no use. Madame had the laugh on us there. I turned it however by suggesting that Theosophy might improve all that.

"What? By keeping us shut up like eastern women?"

"Things are better there than you ladies can believe. Among the orthodox Brahmins of India for instance, the marriage and betrothal bonds are very strong. There is said to be an actual transfer of Karma between husband and wife. He takes upon himself half the effects of all her bad Karma, incurred from the day of her betrothal until her death or excommunication, that is, until the tie between them is duly severed. Betrothal is very sacred among Hindus, and they hold this Karmic transfer to be a reality, because the contract is a solemn and purely religious ceremony, at which all the Gods, Rishis and the Law Itself are invoked as witnesses of the agreement. From the fourth year of age children are brought up in this belief, and for months before the betrothal as for years thereafter, they are constantly reminded of this principle of transfer, and that it has been one of the chief reasons for marriage. If the girl does a wrong thing or thinks a wrong thought, she naturally remembers her contract and in most cases, through piety, unselfishness or instinctive affection, she repents or refrains. Similarly, any good thought entertained by the youth, as well as the merit of pilgrimages and religious observances, being divided with his wife, invariably brings her to his mind, and so strengthens the occult bond by faith."

The ladies liked this idea, and the Professor added that it was “a self-respecting sort of institution, whereby man and woman stood by their own, which was really quite up to Anglo-Saxon moral principles!” A chorus arose of “If you can’t stand by your own, by whom can you stand?”

Ah! my friends, that’s true enough, but like most truths, somewhat neglected. We Anglo-Saxons are not so staunch as we believe ourselves to be often because we do not study or grasp the detailed workings of occult Law. There are many theosophists, for instance, who announce their adherence to a doctrine, or a truth, and who are at the same time pleased to state that they “take no stock” in the Founders of the Society, or in certain Adepts, because they do thus and so, or are this and that. I have no more quarrel with these members than with a barometer. It registers the heaviness of the surrounding atmosphere and at times jumps with celerity from change to change; from its nature it can do no other. But man can change his nature at will, and I claim that if they would give their impartial attention to the principles of Law, (Karmic, cyclic or moral,) they would perceive that they state impossibilities. Let us put personality out of the question, for how are we to escape the bonds of individuality if we hug and expound it, and make it a basis for our actions and judgment of others? A given human quantity, call it X, undertakes to bring certain truths before the entire western world. The task is attended with difficulty, with labor, with opposition from all established orders: in the train of these things come ridicule, anger, opprobrium. Multiply these impediments a million fold. Which of us cares to face even the jeers of two continents? We need not add in such comparative trifles as expenditure of life-force, feeling, time, money, without return or reward, although these are paramount considerations with the average man. X — the group so-called — has been moved to this herculean endeavor by humanitarian impulse, but you need not grant this much to the argument. Were all done from other motives the result would be the same, viz: the subsequent participants become one with the movers. The persons who accept any of the doctrine, eat of the fruit of X’s labor and nourish their minds or lives with some part of X’s vitality. “A life for a life,” is written in this bond, and an inflexible chain is thus forged. Inversely X is obliged to share a part of the bad Karma of such society or persons as have been benefitted by their labor. It is under the operation of past good Karma that X has earned the right to aid humanity. Can a man drink of a stream and claim independence of its source? Can he live in a valley watered by it without pocketing the value of its diamonds when he sells his land or crops? The vast current of theosophy has rolled in upon us from the Orient, guided by a few courageous hands. The whole West feels its forceful flow in varied degrees, from theosophists who accept all, to M.D.s and L.L.D.s who find themselves fortifying and widening their systems to compete with it. The ethereal medium quivers with its energy; its thoughts rush in upon the minds of men in unexpected ways and places.

We live along the current like men who allow it to turn mill wheels, grind grain, water cattle and expedite commerce,— in a word — we get salvation, life force and many minor interests from it, and still have repudiation and impatience for the source. We do not go free; I thank God we do not. Karma attends! Karma, the great Law-giver, holds the scales. Each person who has received the teaching, or in whose life the heaven works, even unseen, insomuch as he accepts that life or that teaching, is rivetted to X by a tie as indissoluble as the justice of God — which is not that of man — can make it. Struggle as he will, X has fathered a part of him. We cannot separate any of the persons of this group; we do not escape the debt by any denial of it, but are like thieves taken with the plunder in our pockets: it must be paid now, by a recognition of it, or later under the scourges of that Power which saith,— “I will repay.” That a man is unconscious of the debt matters nothing to the Law; he has taken, he must give; perhaps it was his duty to have known. Others vainly say,— “I did not ask that

benefit.” They did, or it could not have reached them: some part of them asked. The law of attraction is that of supply and demand; it regulates the universe in detail and in entirety.

It is not necessary to admire the persons grouped under the sign X. It *is* necessary not to condemn or lapidate them. If they have done less noble deeds in private capacities, be sure their full weight is borne by them alone, unless we rush in with our strictures, when we at once share them. If I fix my thought on the fault of another, an electric stream flows between that diseased moral part and myself, and draws elementals along it to torment me into a similar plague. Although in impartiality I make this appeal to your self-interest, I am obliged to place my own loyalty above doubt by recording my faith in the noble integrity of Adepts and Founders. Faith is a boon that not every man is blessed with, but it is fraternal confidence in you all which leads me to hope that we may cease — as a society and as individuals — to bite the hands that supplied us. May we confine our thoughts to universals, our loves and hates to principles, not men. May we consider only that which stands within all facts and beings,— Spirit. In that holy name let us differ in peace and goodwill; let us stand staunchly by our own against the world!

JULIUS.

## NOTE

1. {The name “Quickly” is a blind for William Q. Judge.}

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*The Path* – June 1887, Vol. 2, pp. 90-93.

## TEA TABLE TALK.

JULIUS

Recently the newspapers were full of a curious case of “dual existence,” which occurred in Norristown, Pa. A gentleman had come to that town some three months previous to the event under discussion and entered into business there. He was a staid, quiet, responsible man and soon won the respect and regard of his fellow townsmen. He had taken board with a family in the place, and one night in March, three months after his arrival, he awoke them in a state of terrible agitation, demanding to know where he was, and how he came to be under that roof with perfect strangers. His friends endeavored to calm him, and called him by the name under which they knew him, but this only increased his alarm. He said he knew none of them, nor yet the house or town, that he was one Mr. Ansel Bourne, of Providence, named his relatives, and insisted that his nephew, Andrew Harris, should be sent for at once. This was done, and the recognition between the gentlemen was instantaneous. A hundred advertisements for the missing Mr. Bourne had been inserted in the papers, but he had escaped recognition by reason of some tonsorial changes in his beard. From the moment he left home until he “woke up” in Norristown, his whole life was an entire blank to him, and yet investigation showed it to have passed so blamelessly as to place him above suspicion. After recovering his normal consciousness he was much unnerved and broken down for some days.

Singularly enough, there had appeared in the *Forum*<sup>1</sup> of that month, an article by Dr. Hammond on similar cases of dual consciousness. These are known to occur, but it is quite rare to find one of such an extended period, and so complete as the case above cited, where a man planned and carried out a conservative and novel business,

under another name and character, so to say. Dr. Hammond states that these cases are attributed to the separate actions of the lobes of the brain. It would be difficult to prove however that any such consciousness as the new one exhibited in its completeness by Mr. Bourne, could have entered in the left lobe of his brain, where it had never been experienced by him in his present life. It may indeed be possible where such subjects constantly exhibit this reversion of state, and pass from habits of moral living to those of violence or ferocity. But in the case of Mr. Bourne, for the time being a new personality, with new business habits, opinions, customs and a name, sought a home and an occupation congenial to itself, in the body of a man who was happy and contented, as well as respected, in previous surroundings of his own, to which he returned and was welcomed when the strange experience was past.

For such states, a far more plausible theory than that of the modern physiologist, is offered by occultism. When our astral man leaves the body, whether consciously or unconsciously, it may become the home of an elementary with a strong desire for a return to earth life, especially if our principles are loosely put together, and if we have incautiously left the body of our own will.

Latterly a friend related a strange experience to the Tea Table. He had been brought up among the Welsh, and was a firm disbeliever in the “supernaturalism” so rife among that people, until occultism explained to him so many of the strange occurrences and sights he had hitherto defied. From childhood he had been used to see “strange things moving about like fishes in the sea,” to hear strange sounds and see distant places or objects, though his sturdy attitude of negation, and his attributing them to optical or nervous defects, had of late years somewhat lessened the number of these phenomena. One day recently, he had been reading of some psychometric experiments, and fell to thinking of some place to which he desired to go. Closing his eyes, he thought strongly of this place, determined to see, if possible, a person who was there. All at once an indescribable lightness seemed to pervade his whole person. He thought — “I can go there!” and rising, was half across the room in a moment, when turning his head, he beheld himself seated in the chair he had left. At this a nameless horror seized him, a dreadful fear; he rushed back into his body,— how, he knew not — overcome with terror at his own involuntary act.

This fact of his undue alarm and its possible cause excited some discussion around the Tea Table. Finally it was agreed to write to an eminent occultist on the subject. His reply will interest all students of this important branch of occultism.

“Why did he have a horror when he nearly succeeded in getting away from his body; in being for a moment free? That is an important question. Its solution may be found in many ways. I will mention one. If the place, or person, he wished to go to was one to which he ought not then to have gone, or if his motive in desiring to go there was not pure, then a horror might result that drove him back. Motive is highly important, and must be examined and tested countless times. The meaning of the word *motive* must not here be limited to what is called bad or improper motive. I will just as willingly examine into bad as into good motives, and no matter how lurid the light on them, I will still examine them impartially. If one has a bad motive, then the results are his own Karma, and not that of any other, except those who willingly take it on themselves.

“In the above case, indifference of motive is just as much to be guarded against as any other sort. For in leaving the body without motive, we leave it under the impressions of Tamoguna (Darkness) and when set free we are very likely to be caught in a whirl which is far from pleasant. Horror may then result. I do not say it always will result. But great forces are not to be set in motion with impunity. We must be able to put down and control an equal opposition, and good motive alone affords us this

balance of power by setting the Law on our side. The highest possible motive must be laid at the bottom, or else we will meet trouble which only power can overcome.

“Yet again, if even with a bad motive he had attempted to go to a place where a similar motive existed, then no horror would have come. For it is not necessarily a horror-producing thing to leave the body. Only lately I know of a friend who went out of his body a distance of 10,000 miles and had no horror. In that case he desired to see a friend on a common purpose which had in view the amelioration of this dark age; and again, who left his body and saw the surrounding sweeps of wood and vale, and had no horror in either case. Similarity of motive creates an electric or magnetic current along which we may possibly proceed in safety provided it is not crossed by a still stronger current.

“This inquirer lays much stress upon the fact that he was ‘rushing back’ to his body of his own accord. That does not prove that he was not pushed back. When the saturated solution in a glass is disturbed, *itself, by its own volition*, crystallizes, but it had first to have the predisposing cause in the shape of the blow on the glass. So although he ‘rushed back,’ it was because of the push he received from something he cannot describe nor understand.

“An illustration will show the dangers. Take the case of one who determines to leave the body merely to go to another who is admired by him, or whom he desires to see. This other, however, is protected by high motives and great purity. The first is mixed in motive in waking life, which as soon as the disengaged state comes on is changed into a mere will or curiosity to see the second, combined perhaps with more or less selfish purpose, or perhaps a sensuous feeling or worldly intent. The elementals and other guardians of the second protect that soul, and hurl vague horrors at the first, who, if he is not a skilled black magician is —

*a.* Either merely pushed back into the body, or:

*b.* Is assailed with fears that prevent him from finding or entering his body, and that may be occupied by an elementary, good, bad or indifferent, and his friends say he waked up suddenly insane.

“Motive is then the main point for this and every inquirer to study. If he is sure of his motives, and that they are neither indifferent, curious, selfish, nor imprudent, and he trusts in the Unity of the Supreme Soul, he cannot be in much danger.”

It will be obvious that a powerful elementary might depose a personality of weak or mediumistic tendencies at a moment when the Karma of such a person permitted it, under the unconscious withdrawal of the astral man or his lethargy during sleep, and be in turn at some future moment compelled to give up its stolen habitation by the expiration of the Karmic debt of the real and exiled man, who could then return. If we will only study the strange events constantly transpiring around us, and even those called normal, in so far as to ask ourselves why they should be so more than any others, we may learn much of the constitution of life and of Man, who shapes it.

JULIUS.

## NOTE

1. {*The Theosophical Forum.*}

## TEA TABLE TALK.

JULIUS

June, the witch, with her roses and daisies, and the freed Dryads calling from forests and mountain streams, set the Tea Table to languishing, when presto! its thoughts wandered far afield; its familiar spirits fled! These rare companions scattered, what can their deserted historian do between the city's brazen walls, other than con the reminders sent floating back along their friendly wake?

Even Quickly, the grim, the saturnine, has been beguiled by summer. He writes: "I am doing fairly well with the trout, thanks, old man; but I've had a queerish, nervous shock. Serves me right, too. Jolting along in one of those beastly Wagner cars, I saw great hollows in the banks, where landslides had taken place. I got to thinking of them intently; wished hard to examine them; found *myself* out on the bank at such a place. Suddenly the "limited" came along in the contrary direction from the train my astral self had left. It roared down on me: I got startled and confused. Although it could not strike me, it yet struck me full and square;— *I felt the headlight hurled against my head!* Jupiter! It sent me plunging back into my body (on my own train) with a nervous tremor and jar from which I haven't yet recovered. See the dangers of leaving the body for puerile purposes, before you are fully poised and self-centered. True, I was out before I was aware, but an occultist should always be aware of all things. I knew well that no catapult could injure or even disperse those fine molecules, or do aught more than pass through them. Yet so strong are the illusions of matter, that I lost my presence of mind in the uproar. Even mystics commit folly! Let me tell you, Julius; it's been a lesson to me."

It does not seem that this lesson of my comrade's requires any further comment from me.

The widow — bless her capricious heart! has also bethought her of the Tea Table. In a hand of the latest fashion, she writes a few lines airy as thistle-down, or as *omelette soufflée*.

"I've had an experience. Fancy! *me!!* But I have. I was talking to the dear old Professor," (*faute de mieux madame?*) "and I saw a man standing off to one side of us. His arms were folded, head bent; he was looking at me intently: awfully interesting looking man; slender, pale, grave, with those deep dark eyes don't you know? I shot a look up at him, that might ask why he stared so at poor me; (no compliments, S.V.P.) would you believe it? He wasn't there! Not there at all! It made me feel awfully funny, I can tell you; sick, you know. But I got out my salts, and the dear old Professor rambled on so delightfully, (should you say now, that he was over 60?) that I forgot all about it, when presently, there was the man again, and when I looked up again he wasn't. Don't you call that horrid? the worst of it was that some twenty minutes later when I'd quite forgotten him, there he stood again. I wasn't going to look up and be taken in once more, even by the shadow of a man. But I just had to, and there he was, really there in the flesh this time, folded arms, eyes, look and all, just as I had seen his image half an hour before, and this time he was actually introduced to me while I longed to pinch him to see if he was real. But I guess he is; awfully fascinating too. Write me at once whether I saw him beforehand in the astral light, or whether it was he in his astral body. No; don't write; *wire*."

In the astral light, belle dame, though if he hadn't turned up *in propria persona* to be properly introduced, I might have thought he was a chela, sent to look you over. Chelas have been so sent in the astral body, as several of our theosophists know. Sometimes the chela's body (astral) is used for this purpose; sometimes the chela is but partly conscious of his mission: like a faithful mirror he reflects back what he has seen.

Do you ask why teachers should not come, or look across themselves? Does a General run about hither and thither? or does he "say to one man — 'Go,' and he goeth; and to another,— 'Come!' and he cometh?" Do we use a derrick when a crow bar will answer? Nature has her law of economy, nor are these higher forces to be squandered. Yet let nothing that you may hear or see, excite surprise. That you are able to see or hear anything on the planes above the material, is due to "synchronous vibration."

"The Real is substance (that which substands) in its condition of spirit. The phenomenal is Substance in its condition of densification. *It is made manifest through motion.* There is no arbitrary line of separation between them; only a transitional difference." Now the moment that an outer sensation (outer as contrasted with the other) of wonder or of fear, shoots through you, the inner vibration is modified, your motion is out of accord with that by which the Real is for the moment made manifest, you see and hear no more, and the precious opportunity is lost. Be calm and observe all: afterwards test all. There are two things to be remembered, two watchwords to sink deep into the fibers of the heart. 1. Nothing can harm the pure soul. 2. "Perfect love casteth out fear."<sup>1</sup> If you love the whole, what place remains for fear? you have then fulfilled the injunction of Krishna and your soul "participates in the souls of all creatures." If you hate or fear aught, you are separated in somewhat from the Universal soul; you cannot advance one step beyond that limitation.

The mother is not without her tribute to occultism. "You will be interested, dear Julius, in knowing that of late I have puzzled much over some occult points — as the method of the soul's entrance into the body. At once I bethought me that I had been reading a book and left off just where it began to explain that point. I went to my travelling book-case to get that book and after looking them all over, it came to me that I had no such book after all. The strange part is that this happens whenever I am studying out some such problem, and each time I am deluded so that I do not recall the previous deceptions, until after I have searched well for that book."

Dear lady! In other climes and in a brighter age she doubtless had such books; many of us had. All can recover their golden contents if we purely desire, earnestly strive. Eliphas Levi said that he had books "in Dreamland" which were well known to him and which he often read there. He even drew from them illustrations which are reproduced in his works without explanatory text, much to the bewilderment of students. A lady wrote to the PATH some weeks back, that she distinctly remembered an article which she had read in it with great interest, but on seeking the article to show to a friend, she was confounded to find nothing of the kind in the magazine. She gave the subject, which was one upon which no article has been published. All our friends have individual experiences, some like these, some differing. They are recollections, and as we are all trying to get back our past, these glimpses must encourage us. As to the entrance of the soul into the body, the mother should see in the *Upanishads* some teaching upon that point: reflect also upon these lines in the *Bhagavad Gîtâ*. "All things which have life are generated from the bread which they eat. Bread is generated from rain; rain from divine worship, and divine worship from good works."

A friend across the sea sends us the following: "A rather interesting quotation from Herodotus, may be suitable for your Tea Table, in juxtaposition with an extract

from Baron von Reichenbach's *Researches in Animal Magnetism*. Herodotus writes: *Euterpe*<sup>2</sup> chap. 44.

“From my great desire to obtain information on this subject, I made a voyage to Tyre, in Phoenicia, where is a temple of Hercules held in great veneration. Among the various offerings which enriched and adorned it, I saw two pillars; the one was of the purest gold, *the other of emerald, which in the night diffused an extraordinary splendor*. This temple, as they affirmed, has been standing ever since the first building of the city, a period of 2,300 years.’

“Reichenbach writes, p. 57. ‘A large rock crystal, 8 inches thick, was placed in a room and the darkness was rendered complete; the *sensitive* at once discovered the place where the crystal stood, and gave in all the experiments the same account of its light. She described the light as somewhat of the form of a tulip, extending upwards about 5 inches. The color she described as blue, passing above into a perfect white, while a few scattered threads or stripes of red light, ascended into the white. The flame was in motion, undulating and scintillating, and cast around it an illumination extending over a circle of more than 6 1/2 feet in diameter.’”

Thanks, Brother, for bridging the distance with this fresh and ever needed reminder that we shall look to the diurnal for the correspondences of the Eternal, manifest in the small as in the great.

JULIUS.

## NOTES

1. {1 John 4:18.}
2. {*Euterpe*, the second book of the *Histories*, Herodotus.}

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*The Path* – August 1887, Vol. 2, pp. 156-159.

## TEA TABLE TALK.

JULIUS

There is always more or less discussion of Reincarnation. The student knows it as the corner stone of occultism; he is therefore not surprised to find in it the first and most formidable barrier to the Western mind. Its acceptance is the entering wedge of the whole philosophy. We may say of it what a witty Frenchwoman said of the fabled saint who had walked every step of twenty miles with his severed head under his arm. “Faith! It was only the first step that cost him anything!”

This first step, to be thoroughly made, must be in a measure instinctive. The mind must find the truth within itself, and see in it a lucid explanation of its own manifold tendencies and experiences: it must recognize a great past from which it draws varied recollections. Sue relates a tale of a small Boston playmate who felt this after the dim instinctive manner of a child. He was a five year old of the quaint species known as “old-fashioned” and his mother reminded him of the senior rights of an eight year old brother. He replied. “But I’m older. You forget, mamma, that I was five years old when I was born.”

The Tea Table has a valued friend whose teachings and remarks are always pertinent to its discussions. Z..... tells us: “The Leaders of the world are always trying to help us. May we pass the clouds and see them ever. We must be patient. All obstructions are of our own making. All our power is in the storage of the past. That

store we all must have; who feels it near is he who has in this life directed his thoughts to the proper channel. That others do not feel it is because they have lived but blindly. That we do not feel and see it more is because we have not yet directed all our mental energies to it. This great root of Karmic energy can be drawn upon by directing the fire of our minds in the right direction.”

The truly instinctive glimpse is well portrayed in a charming anecdote told me lately of a young child quite removed from all occult interests or surroundings, yet having parents of unusual culture. He was at play and counted his game thus: “Ten, twenty, and so you go to one hundred. Then you get through and begin all over. Mamma! That’s the way people do. They go on and on till they come to the end, and then they begin over again. I hope I’ll have you for a Mamma again, the next time I begin.”

Most cavilers and inquiries begin by saying: “Is it possible for you to prove Reincarnation?” The proofs are weighty and scientific, but for my part I answer boldly: “No; nor do I want to prove it to you. Find it for yourself. No argument can make you assimilate the doctrine. You cannot line a thing from the outside. I can of course stick foreign ideas in a brain, as I would raisins in a pudding, but they will never mix, no matter to what heat I subject them, and I have higher business in life.”

I do not believe in argument. It only serves to fix and define human limitations. Even with a pure intent, we may harm the man whom we overpersuade to accept our idea intellectually. He works with it for a time; a crisis comes in which it fails him because he does not find it in his nature: then he throws it out and is doubly set against the truth because he thinks he has tried it. Our good influence is also impaired with his faith. This is why it is better to confine ourselves to answering direct queries: the questioner is sure to have some root of the matter in his make-up of the moment. As the *Bhagavad Gîtâ* says; “The wise man seeketh that which is homogeneous to his own nature.”<sup>1</sup> He looks within himself for proofs and traces of truths, and follows those shown him by this guidance. And again: “Another’s faith beareth fear.”<sup>1</sup> Consider that these actualities are not mere intellectual counters, but are that by which we really live. “Man does not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God.”<sup>2</sup> These truths are the words, the *Logoi* of the Higher Self, by whose energy it quickens and creates our real life, as the Eternal by his *Logoi* creates the worlds.

The most beneficial way to reach the center of another is to mentally address yourself to his subconscious mind with firm, steady thought. There it is received, and filters down into the active part of his mind: he then welcomes it complacently as his very own, and absorbs it and lives from it without any of the friction or opposition of individualities. If your thought be untrue, selfish or of mixed motive, then it will have far more difficulty in reaching him; will not indeed, unless he be strangely unprotected.

Pretty Polly gives me a good example of the working of the sub-conscious mind. It is tinged with the sentiment of her age, but *qu’oi donc?* we were all young once, though at the time we didn’t know it. Polly had asked the student, in his absence, to whistle a favorite tune of hers at 10:15 P.M. of a certain Tuesday. She says: “When the evening came I was thinking very intently about one of thy studies and forgot everything else. Suddenly I got the idea that my eight day clock, wound and set on Sundays only, was incorrect. This bothered me so that I looked at it, still reciting my lesson, and seeing it was 10:08 I called to my Father for the railroad time. He gave it as 10:11. (Note that there is four minutes difference in time, between our place and New York, where the student then was.) I set my clock and two watches, all the time reciting. At 11 P.M. closing my books for the night, I thought with sudden compunction that I had entirely

forgotten the student, the tune, the appointed hour. Then I saw that part of me had remembered and taken note of the time.”

Were we not so preoccupied with the surface business of life, we would oftener get the gist of such admonitions. Didymus writes: “Here are two little incidents in my daily experience illustrative of the need of trusting one’s intuition. The other morning, coming out of a store with my mind full of the matter which had taken me there, I saw a street car coming on my accustomed line. I walked to the curb, when I felt something say: ‘Don’t take this car, wait for the next.’ I stopped involuntarily, then reasoned that this was nonsense, and why should I wait, and so stepped aboard. Immersed in my newspaper, I paid no further attention to the car’s course until it stopped, when I found that it was one of a class that switched off from the main line, and I had lost half a mile by disobeying my orders.

“The other incident was a dream. I thought I was in a Library, looking for some book which I couldn’t find. Finally I asked the attendant: he said, ‘why, it’s on that shelf.’ I replied that I could not find it there, when he walked over to the spot with me, and took down the desired volume right before my eyes. Next morning I was in the office of the Clerk of the court, preparing some injunction papers. I asked the clerk for a certain paper on file, and he asked me if the date agreed with the Court papers for 1884, suggesting that I compare it with the books on a certain rack. I looked as directed, then told him I could not see 1884. He came over saying, ‘Here it is’ and pointed to a book lying apart on a shelf, right before my eyes too, when my dream flashed across my mind.”

Quickly one night dreamed that he went out into an adjoining street and saw that several houses had been altered with new stoops and cherry doors. Next day he went there, but found no alteration. A month after, they were all altered as he dreamed, with new stoops and cherry doors. There was a blue door he used to see in the astral light, when awake, about which the Tea Table chaffed him. Now he writes exultant: “The blue door I told you I saw turns out to be a piece of second-sight. The door across the street that I see every morning and evening, has been so altered. I believe I saw the picture just when the owner had determined to paint it over in a few months to come. His thought and determination made a strong picture which I got and thus saw the thing occur. Most men make up their minds nearly every day in general what they will do weeks ahead and thus the ether is full of such pictures at all times. Those pictures of things so well founded that they must soon eventuate, are seen by us.”

What of all these trifles? This: the inner man grows and learns to look about him as the child first gazes on the world. “While his eyes and hands and feet are thus fulfilling their tasks, new eyes and hands and feet are being born within him. For his passionate and unceasing desire is to go that way on which the subtle organs only can guide him.” So these “trifles light as air” are encouragement (much needed by all) and proof of holy writ” to those who rightly read them. I quote them that you may be reminded to note and be strengthened by those of your own experience. Otherwise many lessons are lost. Our material immersion often costs us dear. We are typified by King Vala in a Sanskrit drama. He invited all his tributary chiefs to honor his birthday, gambled with them, and lost in the excitement of the game, he staked his whole empire and forfeited it. He honestly left his Kingdom and while travelling in the forest at night with his wife Damayanti, covered her when asleep with half his clothes and taking the other half, disappeared. She awoke in grief and questioned every bird as to the whereabouts of her Lord. He had become a cook and charioteer for his own father-in-law, a neighboring prince, and only after seven and a half years of indescribable trials were over, did he regain wife and Kingdom. So man, with blind eagerness plays the gross, earthly game, loses his own Kingdom, is even parted from the spiritual partner to which he is truly wedded, and she, the soul, asks vainly of each flying intuition where

her Lord, the entire man who shall bring her to realize the Power in the flesh, has gone. He is forced to serve in the very house of that marriage wherein he and his soul should rule as one. It is not for want of warning, of suggestions and revelations. Look for these. Yet rely not upon them, but rather on that “unceasing and passionate desire” for the Light of the world which is within you.

JULIUS.

## NOTES

1. {*Bhagavad Gîtâ*, Chapter 3.}
2. {Matthew 4:4.}

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*The Path* – September 1887, Vol. 2, pp. 188-192.

## TEA TABLE TALK.

JULIUS

Since last writing, other anecdotes of children have been sent us. One friend writes: “In our city is a child of five years, well known to me. Since she could speak she has constantly told her mother that she was some forty years old, and is always telling what she used to do before she came to her present mother.”

Still another: “An only daughter of a friend of mine at two years of age was constantly saying in her play; ‘My other little sister in heaven does this, or does that.’” Also I heard lately of a young girl who was born a very sad and peculiar child. She frequently refers to the fact that it is all very probable that her present parents and relatives *are* her father, mother and aunts, but adds; “I have another mother somewhere, but I don’t know where she is now.”

Speaking of pictures of future events in the astral light, when with the Tea Table recently, Quickly gave an excellent reply to some rather nervous queries from the ladies regarding such “omens” as visions of death scenes or funerals passing by. Said he: “They are, of course, compounded; there are other elements in them than those of thought. But the causes must already exist, for if I died now, my relatives have a fair, general idea of the kind of funeral I should have,” (shudders from the ladies,) “and so the whole scene might easily be pictured and suddenly seen by a person in a tense nervous condition. Then again, in most cases, a train of similar causes will always produce similar effects or pictures. The soul, having an enormous power of induction, can begin with a known cause; its effect becomes another cause. Unthinking men acting blindly, will always be moved in known and easily premised ways: thus all the elements can be calculated in an instant and a long distant event be seen. It appears in some cases to be an extension of the power of cause calculation possessed by many. There are various methods in life which show that all this can be done. See the doctrine of least squares<sup>1</sup>, and others.”

Curious event lately. A friend received a postal card from a lady customer in Wisconsin, calling attention to the fact that her order for goods had not been filled. He read it carefully, and as he supposed, took it to the shipping office for attention. Next morning in his mail was what he took for a duplicate card from the same lady. He read it and thought, “she has written twice so as to make sure.” But in the office he found no previous one, and the clerk said he had brought in none the day before. It was a case of seeing the card one day ahead, and, as he says, it was rather confusing, as I am ready to swear I had one the day before. Still on examining the real one, it was too

perfectly like the first to be in fact a duplicate. She would hardly be likely to make such a fac-simile.”

An earnest student of the Bible reminds me of the following in support of Reincarnation. Daniel and John are both told that they shall come again to the world in its latter days. Jesus tells John he shall tarry in this life or within its sphere, until he (Jesus) comes. Jesus also recognizes the law of Karma in the scene with the blind man. “Did this man sin, or his parents, that he was born blind?”<sup>2</sup> There is a recognition of evolutionary law in these other words of the Gospel. “Jesus said: even of these stones God is able to raise up children unto Abraham.”<sup>3</sup> So the one primeval substance (Mulaprakriti) by degrees develops and advances through inorganic and organic stages, up to the dawn of self-consciousness in men or to the diviner man, to God. It is the old story of Pyrrha and Deucalion<sup>4</sup> producing men out of stones and populating the world under the direction of Themis (wisdom). Solomon says: “Being good, I came into a body undefiled.”<sup>5</sup> A very pregnant fact is that stated by able Kabbalists, that in Genesis the word *nephesh* — soul — is only so translated when applied to man; the translators have taken it upon themselves to alter it to “living creatures” and otherwise, the moment it is applied, as it is, to beasts. The early church, determined to force doctrines, of its own, has much to answer for in the “*authenticated*” translation of scriptures. There is the parable of leaven (spirit) taken by the woman, (divine *sophia* or wisdom; the female principle) and hidden in three measures of meal (the body, astral fluidic body and the soul) until the whole is leavened, which a well-known author points out as another theosophical teaching from the words of Jesus. It is easy to multiply such instances, for as has been shown over and over, all the leading points of Christian belief, as well as most of the teachings of Jesus have been attributed to Buddha, Osiris, Zoroaster, Mithras, and many others. In the Asoka rock sculptures, (Hindustan, 500 B.C.E. or more) are found representations declared by English and other travelers to show the birth in the manger, the mother and child, the inspired Christ teaching the people and so on. History gives us the crucifixion of Mithras, Horus and Crishna in the arms of a virgin mother; the ascension of Heracles. St. Augustine sums up the fact that all creeds are at their base, one and the same, in the following words: “For the thing itself which is now called the Christian religion really was known to the ancients, nor was wanting at any time from the beginning of the human race, until the time that Christ came in the flesh, from whence the true religion which had previously existed, began to be called ‘Christian,’ and this in our day is the Christian religion, not as having been wanting in former times, but as having in later times received this name.” (Op. Vol. I, Page 12.) And St. Paul: “The gospel which ye have heard and which was preached *to every creature under heaven*, whereof I, Paul, am made minister.”<sup>6</sup> This is said to have been written (Col. I. 3.) at a time when outside of Jerusalem, a small Romish congregation comprised almost all the gospel converts of the historical apostles.

Inquirers have asked us here and there, if we do not think the “Christian religion” as taught by its Founder, and in its esoteric sense, better suited to our nation and to the people. That sex which is all tenderness (or *almost* all!) furnishes other members who assure us that in this form of religion there is more to touch the heart. I answer: more to touch *your* heart, perhaps, but for *the heart* you cannot speak. Hearts are as we make them, and each heart is all too little known to its possessor. The heart rejoices in strong emotions, in striking the note of life over and over under a keen desire to feel in matter. The thinker asks himself how far he is wise in deliberately consigning himself to a form of belief *because* it makes him feel; *because* it stimulates emotion; *because* it appeals to ignorance in the mass, the people being very ignorant of true things. That is very much like the method pursued in some fashionable schools with drawing, music and the like, where the children are not taught from first principles, but how to make a

little show quickly, under the plea that if they show any talent, they may learn on scientific principles later. Result — either the pupil cannot be dragged from the rut of habit, or has to unlearn everything before learning aright. A tendency towards any religion in its true, inner form is a noble one, sure to bear fair fruit. It is a fact that we can only really live that which we feel. But how if we can feel what we will, if we have the capability for grander conceptions; if we have an inner eye framed to look straight at the sun and to eschew reflections? Some friends around the Tea Table bring a charge of coldness against the Eastern teachings. It is not a just charge; it is they who are cold to its splendor. They warm to know things, and to such expositions of the Divine in matter as come within their conceptions and national modes of thought. They do not ask whether these concepts are thorough ones; They “feel them,” that is enough. Such students have taken the first step; a near and a safe step. The great danger is that they will remain there; that they will not grow beyond that form. The great power of religions over the human heart arises from their appeal to its prime weakness — the attachment to know forms. The selfish desire to maintain the present personality, the inner worship of the “I,” the lower self, has awakened and fixed that weakness. Form is the medium in which the soul advances through matter until it has learned the larger method and rises by “ascension of state.” To gain the adherence of man, religions limit him to an especial form of thought, and while in great measure protecting and elevating him, they become fetters if he does not grow up to them and cast their leading strings aside in favor of the direct teaching of Deity to all souls. “We are wiser than we know. If we will not interfere with our thought, but will act entirely, or see how the thing stands in God, we know the particular thing and every thing and every man.”<sup>7</sup> Oliver Cromwell once said: “A man never rises so high as when he knows not whether he is going.” One versed in holy mysteries said recently when consulted about an aspirant for chelaship: “having the right *motive* he is all right. His *views* are of no use to him. ... He had better be ready to alter them as he passes on,” and then went on to say that those views being with all of us the result of mere worldly experience or the teachings of others, it was first necessary to realize that we knew nothing, and had been taught only falsehoods.

Every truth, and the one truth, may be differently given by different minds. If I wish to win over a Teuton, a Frenchman, a Briton, I do not — and I am a man of the world and know my world — I do not use the same style of address to each. One wrote me not so long ago: “Julius; beware of words, they are traps. Look to the truth beneath that form.”

One class of students is represented by a woman from whose locked note book I take the following: “I have been deceived by the world and by my own heart too long. I must have the *exact truth*, if it kill me!” Companions like these may take the gates by storm, and advance, as they say in the old manuscripts, “drums beating, colors flying, matches light at both ends, bullet in the mouth.” It was truly said by Mahomet: “Paradise is under the shadow of swords.” And hear Emerson again: “The terror of reform is the discovery that we must cast away our virtues, or what we have always esteemed as such, into the same pit that has consumed our grosser vices.”<sup>8</sup>

Those words from that locked book are a clue to much. “*The exact Truth.*” No appeal to my emotions, to that heart which has so often betrayed me, but a sure basis on which I may stand firm. When we need truth utterly, with the hungry reach of the soul, we stand where we are sick and weary of those religions which told us of the soul, of truth and hope, in thrilling tones, and bidding us bow at the shrine of a creed, told us no more. We turn to the Wisdom-Religion which alone came to us with proofs of these actualities and their powers in nature. If we made one step outside the regions of emotion, not a religion, not a science met us with a helping hand but this one. The superiority of the Orient consists in this: she has reduced truth to a science by which

man may apprehend, not her proportions, but her illimitable reach; a science whereby the Way may be shortened for man. Lest this far reaching system appear to set a boundary or a trap for his free thought even in the remote distance, she hastens to add that the soul is boundless and that it is all. She has taken those loving words, which moved man briefly and left him free to forget them, and showed him why love and faith were vital to him, and made them part of his being by fixed laws. If the terms of truth seem frigid to us, it must be because we are too well used to the temporary heat of emotional fires which require constant stoking, so that we know nothing of the vivifying beat of the living light on the fainting soul. Perhaps we are dazzled at the vast prospect and scurry back into our accustomed forms as prairie dogs into their holes at the sudden up shooting of the Sun. Or are we willfully blind to the love at the heart of it, deaf to the declaration: "The magnetism of pure love is the originator of every created thing?" We might paraphrase scripture by exclaiming: Greater love hath no God than this, that He pour out His life to make gods! What other religion has revealed a Deity so transcendent, humanity so divine? What other has put the Ultimate before us in conceivable terms? What other occupied for centuries in framing a science, a way to assist men, has broken the silence of ages, the seals of the mysteries, or thrown open the solemn portals to those who dare rightly aspire? What other, casting aside the safeguard of parable, has plainly declared the meaning of all parable, or revealed the full Light where later systems obscurely hinted at partial rays? What do we know of the esoteric teaching of any religion or mysticism save what the Orient has recently taught us? What other comes forward with teachers, gives out truth with perfect disinterestedness, and inspires writers of both sexes, of all ages and nations to declare systematized, scientific, active love to a mechanical age? What are tender words, and fair appeals to our ethical sense of beauty, or even the almighty power of gush, compared to that love which is shown by daily care for the interests of mankind? What if mere words sound foreign and cold; the facts attest that only love transcendent can beget such devotion, and that without the firm assurance of "exact truth" based upon a system of love out-blazing all systems, could these teachings have endured throughout all time.

Let each one believe what he can, until he resolves that he *will* find and cling to truth in its fullness, but let no one deny to the Wisdom-Religion the supreme glory of having worked for Humanity with the steadfast devotion of ages, until the hour arose for the second command: "Let there be Light." This light it has given us; let us be just in return.

"Justice being preserved, will preserve; being destroyed, will destroy. Take heed lest justice, being overthrown, overthrow thee and us all." (Manu.)<sup>10</sup>

Well, friends, I don't know what more I can say. In my part of the country there's plenty of crossroads running in all directions, but when farmers mean to go quick and sure, they just strike out for the pike.

JULIUS.

## NOTES

1. {The "Principle of Least Squares" states that the most probable values of a system of unknown quantities upon which observations have been made, are obtained by making the sum of the squares of the errors a minimum.}
2. {John 9:2.}
3. {Matthew 3:9.}
4. {They are described in the flood myth in *Metamorphoses*, Ovid.}
5. {Song of Solomon 8:20.}
6. {Colossians 1:23.}

7. {"The Over-Soul," Ralph Waldo} Emerson.
8. {*Essays, First Series*, Ralph Waldo Emerson, Chapter 10.}
9. *Isis*, Vol. 1, page 210.
10. {*The Laws of Manu*, VIII. 15.}

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*The Path* – October 1887, Vol. 2, pp. 217-220.

## TEA TABLE TALK.

JULIUS

The following curious experience is one among the many coming under our notice, and is a fair specimen of the numerous psychic states — all of them most unsatisfactory and unreliable — which arise to puzzle the advancing student of occultism.

DEAR JULIUS:—

Some strange things are happening. They flit like swallows through my sky, with just that accentuated dip and dart, so that I may be sure they *were* there. To find words — form for the formless — this is not easy, but I try. I may be sitting down, whether listening to music, working, reading, idling in the dusk: or I am lying down, in night or daytime, alone or in company. Suddenly I fall into a subjective state, and events take place, clear and complete. I am then living these events, yet not I, not this body, but the *Thinker* in me is there engaged as witness to some transaction in some other physical body. The event drops down before me like an opened scroll and is as suddenly rolled up again as if the soul started out of a dream. I am left with a peculiar bewilderment, as if dropped from the clouds and *plantée là*. Whether the psychic event be long or short, the real time occupied by it cannot be more than a brief flash, for when such occur in company I find that I have excited no remark. Naturally this very fact startles me, for I have been so long and so far away! Here is one such event.

I am in the library: my family converses about me. All at once, there is a tent. A general sits at a table with maps before him, over which he bends. An officer, booted and spurred, stands before him. "*I*" *am in this officer as the Thinker in his brain, yet an independent witness of the scene*. I hear the conversation, which when the scene has passed I perfectly remember, but do not understand, owing to military terms. The officer understands it, and "*I*" seem also to do so at the moment, but when it has gone only the words remain, and are to me (the normal "*me*") meaningless, relating to the tactics of war. The general questions; the officer replies. The general is a Prince or Sovereign as well. I do not see his face, as it bends over the maps, nor am I anxious to do so, for I am his officer, I know him very well. Nor do I see the officer, but *I feel him*; his body is molded about me and I feel the shape of his limbs, all peculiar in their graceful modeling: they are rather short, arms less so in proportion than the legs. The chest very broad and firm. He has dark clustering curls of hair; as I listen it tickles the ear and distracts my attention. He doesn't seem to mind, but I wish he would rub that ear and put an end to the tickling. I call his hair dark because I feel a heavy dark shadow about his head.

The officer and I have been acting: he relates what he has done. Platoons, squadrons have been moved, military movements are technically described; accoutrements, rations, all the detail of military life *en grand*. As he speaks, I see it all in

his brain, and as he tells of one battle in which he commanded, and how he rode over the field afterward, and describes the victory and the loss, I see the harrowing scene (especially one hideous group) so clearly that for days after it floats before my eyes. We were much moved and saddened by it, and I am also aware that the General must by no means learn this. Suddenly it strikes me — “Why! I don’t understand this talk; it’s about trigonometry,” — and all’s gone, and there am I, in the midst of my conversing family, open-mouthed and a puzzle in my eyes. At such times though intensely absorbed in the scene, I am always quite awake.

Again. In a dwelling of a kind I have never seen, the walls covered with rich draperies, partly open and showing the night sky. I am in company with a number of philosophers clad in flowing robes, discussing “theorems,” whatever they are. (Meant to look it up but haven’t time now.) I “come to,” with all the terms in my mind and yet oddly enough, I have not understood their language, but have seen the panorama of their talk in the brain of the philosopher I inhabit. There are many such scenes, but in all I figure as the Thinker, acting out a part of great interest in entire good faith, until “I” become conscious of some strangeness and contrast it with myself, when presto! it is gone and I am ridiculous. It is as real to me as anything I do, until the finale, which occurs when this present personality obtrudes. Now this question arises; am I remembering the events of my past life in other bodies — “getting back the past” — or not? V.

No, I do not think that the writer is getting back that vast past. For in that development of memory the soul is concerned, and its recollections would confine themselves to the results of past states, to the essence of experience and the like. The soul is engaged in evolution and the causes of evolution, to which the outcome of a life contributes, and not its scenes *per se*. It is knowledge we get back; not a few among billions of passing events, but their aggregate. In the case of a very high adept this would of course be different; such beings can see back over their whole course. An ordinary man might get back the idea of some single event of overwhelming importance in his past if that event related to his higher life, to his spiritual activities. He would then remember its effect, but scarcely such details as above given, for the soul takes no notes of matter and surrounding objects to it purely mechanical. The inquirer, suddenly passive, saw scenes in the Astral Light, and identified herself with them, and this light was in her brain. It is not well to cultivate such a habit, depending as it does upon perfect passivity, when elementals can show what scene they please: it is even best to look out for such moments and break them up. To see consciously, by an effort of will, is a very different matter. Even so, not much is gained by the unlearned seer. What I perceive as a flashing orb, may be to A, a sound; to B, a perfume; to C, a color; and so on. They correlate and are manifest to each psychic present according to his higher or lower vibration. Sound is probably the highest and taste the lowest. He who has mastered vibration alone understands; he is an Adept.

Another inquirer writes: “I want to tell you of a little experience I had last week. I would call it a dream, but it is unlike any dream I ever had. It was in the night of course, and I thought that I — the real I — was standing by the bedside, looking down at my sleeping form. The whole room was light, yet it did not seem like sunlight; it came from no particular point, it cast no shadows; it seemed to be diffused from, or to pervade, all things equally: it was not colored, like sunlight or gaslight; it seemed white, or silvery. Everything was clearly visible; the furniture, the mosquito bar, the brushes on the toilet-table. The form on the bed I recognized distinctly. It was lying as usual, on the right side, the right arm curved under the pillow, my favorite attitude. I seemed to see it even more clearly, more distinctly than the ordinary reflection in the mirror, for whereas there one only has the reflection of a plane surface, here I saw it as a solid,

just as I do other people and could also observe the breathing. This did not last more than, perhaps, thirty seconds, but long enough for me to see the body distinctly, to observe and comment upon the fact that the face had an expression of weariness, to note the light as before remarked and some objects in the room. Then all faded away, and afterwards. — tho' how long, of course I don't know — I awoke and it was day. Was this a dream, or did I remember that much of the excursion of my "Astral," and was the light I saw the Astral Light? C."

This inquirer was answered. "I believe that what you saw was the remembrance of what really happened. Your astral self got out — as it always does — and looked back at the body. It is more than quite likely that all that you saw occurred when you were returning to the body, and that is why it was short. We remember distinctly only that which is nearest to us. I think you went out when you fell asleep and then on coming back to wakefulness you kept a recollection of the last few seconds. You do not really forget what you saw and thought while away. It sinks into your upper, or subconscious, or super-conscious mind, from which it will all percolate into the thoughts of your waking state. To remember what happens during sleep, is to be a conscious seer. So we only get these useless glimpses of our returning to the body.

"We go away in deep dreamless sleep to other spheres and states, where we get ideas and so forth, and the way back is through many different states, all having their denizens and obstructions. Besides that, there are two ways to ascend and descend: the direct and indirect. So, much is lost and mixed up on those two roads. Now I talk of actualities and not sentimentally.

"We must be patient, because it takes time to find out how to walk, and much time is spent in getting hold of clues. A great deal depends on purity of thought and motive, and breadth of view."

In fact, when we know *how* to walk, the thing is done: Knowledge and the act come together. Observe the method of the mother. She restrains the child while it is too young and feeble to sustain its own weight: where this is neglected the child goes misshapen through life. She does not confuse it with explanation and example. She waits upon its natural instincts and gently fosters these in their due time. She guides it around the obstacles it must learn to avoid; she does not remove them all, even at the expense of a few tumbles. Oh, my friends? think of the memory of our mothers, and tell me, would you have teacher, guide or brother to be less tender and less wise than they, with the newly born into real life?

JULIUS.

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*The Path* – November 1887, Vol. 2, pp. 254-256.

## TEA TABLE TALK.

JULIUS

Glancing through the various magazines of last month I was reminded once more, with the ever renewed commingling of sadness and hope, of the blindness of man to the occult truths pressing upon him from all sides, so near is the eternal. That man, who is each one of us, sees now, and now is opaque to all these influences: did he but follow out the corollaries of his thought, and loving its Truth, bind heart and brain together in action and farther search, how immensely we should all gain; how our wealth would pile up; it is my firm faith that mankind needs every man, needs his life,

his quota of truth, needs the core of him. Such a need on the part of our fellows must cheer us on.

We continually hold in hand clues to the immortal; we doubt, we neglect the instinct and ourselves; we lie fallow overlong. Susanna Wesley wrote to a son: "Whatever weakens your reason, impairs the tenderness of your conscience, obscures your sense of God, or takes off the relish of spiritual things; in short, whatever increases the strength and authority of your body over your mind, that thing is sin to you, however innocent it may be in itself."<sup>1</sup> Here is a thoroughly theosophical statement, yet she would probably have denied theosophy, and the logical inference of her statement, which seems to be that man must find within his enlarged self, the ideal, the final Court of Appeal. No finer instance can be found of the wondrous justice of the law of compensation, than the fact that finished worldly natures sometimes deduce the real and higher teachings of life from their experience, and see further into the depths of Being than do certain spiritual natures. These teachings are assuredly spiritual, and if those who reach them by way of intensely material life, at times bear better witness to their fullness, they undoubtedly image that Perfection which contains the material essence within Its own. It is this triune completion which raises perfected man higher than the radiant, untempted angel, and reminds anew not to neglect, but to develop and lift this part of our natures to that strict impartiality and immovability which in the typical man of the world acts as the reflector of a diviner justice, and rewards him with the immunities of an unrestrained outlook. Sharers of all things, we must have partaken of all before we can attain. A case in point may be seen in Lawrence Oliphant's "Life of Adventure." He takes us everywhere; through revolutionary episodes, courts, mutinies, diplomacy, sport, politics, insurrections, ballrooms, convents and even to Adam's Peak, Ceylon, (where lives the much talked of Rev. Sumangala) of which he gives a most interesting account. Having delivered this voluminous experience, he compresses into an *Envoi* the "Moral of it all," which is, that the world appears to him as a gigantic lunatic asylum, and his "thirst to find something that was not a sham or a contradiction in terms, increased. And the question occurred to me whether there might not be latent forces in nature, by the application of which this profound moral malady might be reached. To the existence of such forces we have the testimony of the ages. It was by the invocation of these that Christ founded the religion of which the popular theology has become a travesty, and it appeared to me that it could only be by a reinvocation of these same forces ... that a restoration of that religion to its pristine purity could be hoped for." He is evidently the man of his thought; he determines to shed this gay coating of unreality, and to enter that chrysalis region "miscalled mystic," wherein he believes these forces, and the hope of his race, to lie. This result is the more interesting because it is the "moss from a rolling stone," of which he speaks; the outcome of a life of adventure, undertaken for pleasure and profit, which meet the messengers of Truth. The whole book, so well worth reading, intensifies this moral; he appears a brilliant synthesis of the possibilities of our time: he epitomizes and accentuates the turning point of the race, and compels an instant recognition of the gallant, soldierly manner in which he takes leave of the reader to follow up his convictions. We perceive that after exploring the actual, we are met with a divine paradox; we must consume the Real to find the True — which is the Ideal.

This paragraph in a magazine struck me. "Men are more like than unlike one another: let us make them know one another better, that they may be all humbled and strengthened with a sense of their fraternity. Neither arts, nor letters, nor sciences, except as they somehow, clearly or obscurely, tend to make the race better and kinder, are to be regarded as serious interests."<sup>2</sup> The admission is timely. How many of us, assenting to it with our intellects, will go away and live on a contrary basis? Scientists may probe matter and declare what they will; it is the heart (not alone the mere physical

heart) and not the brain, directs the life. Why else do we ignore such perceptions in practice when, if they be true, it is so much to our interest to carry them out? It is because we do not feel them; the heart is attached to personality: it is not convinced of an identity of interest. When heart and brain agree, we can feel as brothers, and contribute our ideas to one another, as we turn streams into a dam, heedless what becomes of them, so they mingle to a general utility. Life deepens and broadens the instant we keep well abreast with our most instinctive moments!

Another writer has apparently failed to do this. Speaking of bird life, he remarks: "What I am about to describe I suppose to be nothing more than an accidental and unaccountable idiosyncrasy of the particular bird in question. Such freaks of temperament are more or less familiar to all bird naturalists, and may be taken as extreme developments of that individuality which seems to be the birthright of every living creature, no matter how humble."<sup>3</sup> It is a "birthright" yet its development is "accidental!" It is one of the external merits of Theosophy that it teaches one to speak and to think with exactitude. What a pity that this fact of marked individuality in lower species of life, does not point out the possession of a soul germ, a step in the evolution of conscious free will to this close natural observer!

In the same magazine, another contributor muses aloud: "I often wish that everyone made use of a sort of mind cure which some persons have found invaluable. Nature has a wondrous power of ministry to a mind diseased, and through avenues of sense can reach, and touch, and heal the soul. ... There are seasons of real and very special trouble, when nature may give a sore and wounded spirit a comfort all her own. ... Sometimes it is difficult to keep from believing that the earth has voices, 'mystic, wonderful,' whose weird message continually tries to get itself delivered to our ear."

Why set yourself this "difficult" task, friend? Nature is always plucking us by the sleeve, giving us here a nudge and there a thrust: many an olive branch she holds out to us. Perpetually she tries to break through those cobwebs we spin around us! fetters so aerial yet so elastic that her efforts rebound. The free nature asserts itself against a chain, but cobwebs are a terrible, because an impalpable, unsuspected confinement. It is the little common-place things that most often shut us away from the surging splendor of real life. Little tenacities, petty arguments, small aims, paltry conventions, narrow ideas, trifling but sugared deceptions; a whole host of rubbish that no one really cares for beyond habit; the "little foxes that spoil the vines;"<sup>4</sup> terrible frittering of energies.

The individual suffers from an immense sadness at these things, but nature never wearies. Have you never tried to sink down to her heart; to enter her thought? Never leaned against a tree and felt something like a current drawing you inward; close, and closer still? That is our loquacious nurse telling of the identity of the world soul in both: the ancients would say a prisoned Dryad called on you for freedom. This too is true: the captive soul ever calls. Symbology represents the eternal, evolving current of life by a tree. Then the far stars, why do they too draw us? The circling waves that lull us; do they know that we have somewhat to learn in the land of dreams. When the human current of a crowded thoroughfare sets against you, have you never felt a fierce joy in dividing and breasting its tide; never felt the magnetic waves leaping so along your sides and speculated on their uses and powers? Whence comes it that amid the rush of the huge, mad city, we find a pure silence, like the small stillness in the whirlwind's center. Is it not because the Now is the Eternal? I have nearly tried and won "the great adventure" in long rides through the spicy solitudes of resinous forests, so at one with my horse at every nerve, and with the west wind at every pore, so blent with nature, that I seemed to drop out of sight with the sun. Or prone among flowering grasses, half hidden in a gorgeous autumnal showering, not knowing which poured forth in song; the bird in the hedge, or the bird in my heart. Or in the August

heats, watching between drowsy lids, the harvest falling blade by blade and falling ripely with it — into what? sleep, or change? Not so long ago I walked in an orchard where every impulse set springward; where an evasive green mist, like a hope of summer, escaped the eye, to clothe the pungent earth a few paces further on. The bluebird sang over submerged marshes: young cattle tried their strength; the droning hum of awakening life swelled softly on. I thought how near the Kingdoms really stood to one another after all, since a thought could unite them, picturing to myself that if the animal were endowed for an instant with a perception of the thought in the man before it; if a master power were there to set up one cyclonic vibration, overpassing time, how from the beast might leap the man, as from the man, the god! So the typical man of the fields and the complete man of the world have a point in common; each is in union with the highest consciousness of his circle and gets his strength from that assimilation. It is only a larger limitation on either part, however, but could they find one common heartbeat, what riches they might exchange. A man longs for the real fellowship of his kind, so set aloof in fancied sequestration; then not getting that, he falls to dreaming on a sunny stone wall, and entering into the feeling of nature, almost becomes one with the all.

To walk, deep wrapped, along a heavenly height,  
 O'erseeing all that man but undersees,  
 To loiter down deep valleys of delight,  
 And feel the beating of the hearts of trees;  
 And think the thoughts the lilies think in white,  
 By greenwood pools.<sup>5</sup>

Under the influence of these natural forces we see that man too has a boundless nature, that it pauses here and there; puts forth blossoms; makes now a mountain, now a butterfly; there sets desolation and there a harvest; discovers, rends, obliterates, reforms, and passes lustily along to its goal. True companionship enables him to compare, use, purify and unify all experience. We may not realize universal Brotherhood, but realizing its practical value, we can try to come nearer it in our own lives. The way to find a good friend is to be one. I have endeavored to show that we have often more fellow thinkers than the present obscurity makes visible. We are in a transition period; in a half-light near the close of a cycle. A great multitude is really starting out to travel our road, and by watching for any incipient feelers they may throw out, we may do a great deal of good. It will probably be by way of encouragement, rather than by criticism; as comrades rather than as instructors, and to avoid collision, "keep to the *Right* as the *Law* directs."

JULIUS.

## NOTES

1. Susanna Wesley. Famous Women Series. {"Letter to John Wesley," June 8, 1725.}
2. *Harpers*, for Sep{tember, 1887.} Easy Chair.
3. *Atlantic Monthly* for Sep{tember, 1887}, Woodland Intimates. As found: "A Woodland Intimate," Bradford Torrey. "What I am to describe..."}.
4. {Song of Solomon, 2:15.}
5. {"To Baynard Taylor," Sidney Lanier.}

## TEA TABLE TALK.

JULIUS

Not so long ago a friend wrote me from a distance: "The atmosphere of this place is not favorable to occultism." He meant that the pleasures of material life abounded there and set up a bewildering confusion. The idea was a mistake, however, and one into which we all fall at the outset: it is natural then, but we outgrow it. This outward life, husk as it is, is still the sheath of the inward. It is a result in which the cause inheres: they are really one, but the outward dies and sloughs off. Occultism is not all learned in the meditation of the study, nor in the confines of asceticism. One way to knowledge lies through external life, its "happenings," it's so called coincidences or chances. A writer apparently so remote from the occult as Draper is, still observes: "what we call chances are the workings of obscure laws; even of chances there is a law." As we watch daily occurrences, *free from personal desire, with our will awaiting the behest of the Perfect Law*, we see order in their groupings, see that they correlate, see a persistence in some which declares the existence of a governing energy, and marks them out as steps to be taken or lessons to be learned. These resemblances are not fortuitous; they concern our real nature. The laws from which they proceed are dictated by no power, human or divine: they are inherent necessities of Being, and to know them we study the nature of real Being, not only as it stands in the purity of the first cause, but as manifested in its results. The people about us, their ways, the difference between their ideals and their actions; the unconscious effect of their words and lives and the discord or harmony between these; the oscillation of mankind between heart and intellect and the realization of the sublime place of pause between them; all this is prolific of true knowledge. What is the difference between politics, arts, religions, conventions, governments, frontiers and continents, but the difference between my mind and yours? The mind of man has made them all; they are subservient to it; they mirror its varying attachments and ideals. They are all germinally contained in any one mind, and the supernal power of Om can evolve all from it.

Every atmosphere favors occultism; for it must be in everything, this universal Truth we seek. God present in all things in the omnipresent Truth, must exist in ourselves. This primary instrument of search is always by us. In the locked book of an earnest student I was once allowed to read a dream which made this fact very vivid, and I am permitted to give it here, because it is of great practical wisdom to answer the queries of one student by the experience of another when possible: it brings them closer and makes the facts more real to the individual mind.

This is a dream of the night. It was in that chill dark hour before the dawning, and a Great Spirit stood by my side. Veiled was his face lest it blind me, but his voice surged through me as the west wind through the pines, or the long roll of ocean on the coast.

"Seekest thou still the mysterious Law?" he questioned. And bowing my soul before him I answered. "Yea, Master; I live for the Eternal only, but I find nor guide nor teacher, and barren is the way."

Then a warmth as of sympathy informed those divine accents, and He said: "Listen! In the day that is breaking a golden clue will be sent thee. Between sunrise and sunset thine opportunity will greet thee. Seek it, and know the Law." So spake He and merged into the sunrise and the world bathed in rosy light. Then I hailed that day as

glorious, and rose, and bathed myself in clear waters, and robed myself as for a King's coming and sat down to await the promised vision that should guide me to the Immortal. Noon came, and brought it not, and the day was half spent. Then a doubt lurked at my side and mocked me, and I feared that among common daily things and homely surroundings, the Wonder would never come to me, and I arose and went out among men, in the huge warring tumult of things. But the human stream ran high and I scarce kept my feet, so that I struggled with them for life and its issues; my robes were torn and my serenity overthrown. While I battled a shadow fell upon me, and behold, it was the twilight hour! Gone was the day! Lost was my Hope! Then darkness swallowed me up, and I was utterly forgotten therein, and dusky shapes preyed upon me till my soul cried aloud from the deeps. A far voice answered that cry and said: "Hast thou learned the mystery?" Weeping I made answer: "Master! It came not."

"Thou blind disciple!" said the Master, "Life is the mystery; each day is in itself a clue and all days are one, and in each clue is the whole. While thou sittest awaiting the Wonder, it waits with thee, for thou art the Wonder. Thy Being is the opportunity thou seekest, and it enshrines the Law by which it is. Understand it and thou needest not me; thou shalt learn of a greater than I, for Life is greater than any, it is all!"

The benignant voice thrilled down the departing shades and I saluted the new day, for the days and the nights are the rays of the Eternal.

This is a dream, yet not a dream. Understand, thou faithful heart and do homage to each sovereign day!"

One thing that shows me the enormous reach and persistence of occultism is seeing how its symbols have come down to this gross and unthinking age — for in a spiritual sense, the mass of men do little or no thinking. I do not by "spiritual sense," mean a religious or doctrinal or even an ethical sense, some religions are spirit materialized. To think spiritually is to feel and to know the action of ethereal forces; it is to quaff the water of life from the causal fountain.

See then how these signs and symbols crowd our walls, our advertisements, carpet our floors, and invade our churches, planting the flag of opposition, the symbol of symbols, in the gilded cross upon their steeples. The freight trains rolling by have the circle and the triangle, the cross with or without the rose, the magic cube upon them in varied combinations. Our playing cards ape the creative gods and tell their story. The maids in the kitchen interpret their dreams and their tea cups by occult rules. The farmer consults the moon and plants and sows by them. The aged toll gate woman in her folk's tales and her superstitions as she gossips with me, does it homage unawares.

Our forks, our goblets, our swords are occult signs. So too are our tastes and fancies. Why does the young girl wear this color and reject that? The flowers, her evanescent sisters, have the same reason. Why does one chord crash in upon the nerves and another set our hearts to thrilling like a bird's throat in June? Everywhere the leaven works. In all things the occult looks out with invisible cap on, smiling at our blindness. I am in all things — says the Universal Spirit in *Bhagavad Gîtâ*. When we are not learning this in one way, we are in another. Our being brought by ways of life to this place or that is but a change of lesson, a passage into a different class room. The most trivial event has its occult bearing; it is our business in life to seek it out.

*Nothing is trifling; all is a clue; no time is lost unless I will it so; every hour, every change is a new opportunity.*

Even as I write, I have an instance of the truth of our natural instincts.

A mother and her boy are near me, the latter a splendid, fearless, starry eyed child, still in his little kilt skirts and the baby down not worn off his four year old cheeks. He has moods of reflection: this is one of them; he is planted in front of his

mother like a ruthless inquisitor: his baby accents I will not attempt to spell, but his grammar is a thing of beauty unadorned.

"Muvver, Say, Muvver. When you go to Devil, am you go by railroad cars?"

"Mercy! Where did you ever hear such things?"

"When I die, am I gone down big hole?"

"Yes."

And go to God, doo n't we?"

"Oh yes, Dear."

"Does God be down the hole too?"

"No, God is in heaven."

"Did oo telled me a story when oo said God be-ed all round everywhere?"

"You don't understand." (Aside to me: "I don't myself!") "Run away and play now."

"What me go down old dark hole for when God ain't not there?"

"It is n't *you* that is down the dark hole."

"*I ain't me?*" (Gives his curls a puzzled toss and shows signs of gathering temper. Bun's temper is no small thing, so his mother capitulates and takes him on her lap.) "Don't you know that little thing inside of you that tells you when you've been a bad boy?"

"Yes: *nasty* wittle sing."

"Well, that's you. Your body goes down the hole, and that little thing goes straight up to God."

"How do it get out of me? Does I throw it up?"

Seeing signs of collapse in his Mother I interpolate: "It flies up like a bird out of a nest. You're the nest; your thinker inside of you is the bird."

For this information I receive a beaming smile. The inquisitor then gives his victim another turn of the thumb screws.

"Why did little bruvver died? Did oo *want* him down dark hole?"

There is a pause; one of those little moments which make a coward of a man. Then a voice with a tremble in it answers: "My Darling; God gave your little brother to me and then he wanted him back, so he took him."

"What do God want us all for, anyway? Has him tooken Mollie?" (A very diminutive playmate, off on a visit. This is satisfactorially explained.) "I 'spose God ain't ready for her; her's too little for him to grab her. If oo goes to Devil by railroad cars, I'd ravver go to Devil."

"Hush! You're too little to understand now, my Son, but you will some day."

"No. Don't believe we get to God by bein' put in dark hole; ain't *never* goin' to believe it: *NEVER*."

Bless his little heart, I don't believe he ever will think it! Why don't we teach these little ones that God is life, and that life, not death, is our opportunity to find him? Why not point out to them the joys, as well as the pains of the "nasty little thing" called conscience within them? The simple, beautiful Truth is at our hand. We may find much of it in the Christmas peal of bells, aye, in sermons whose preacher knows not the real, living meaning behind his words, or in December's voices of peace and good will, which overflowing stone walls and creeds, and hearts, and sorrows, and silent places where darkness broods and breeds, and discords deep as hell, and human pride as high as heaven, blend in that omnipotent harmony which is the whole. He who beholds the glory of the occult sees the glory of God, knows the worlds to be one, and himself one with them, in Eternal Unity. He realizes true love of all his fellow men to be the love of God and finds the ineffable "Peace which passeth all understanding."<sup>1</sup>

May the New Year bring you, Brothers, to that Peace, and may you cross beyond the sea of darkness to the fearless shore.<sup>2</sup>

JULIUS.

## NOTES

1. {Philippians, 4:7.}

2. *Upanishads*. {Combination of *Katha* and *Svetasvatara Upanishads*?}

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*The Path* – January 1888, Vol.2, pp. 314-317.

## TEA TABLE TALK.

JULIUS

An inquiry was lately made by a theosophist striving to live the life: “Can I help these ignorant elementals with mental instruction? I tried it, but not successfully.” As many will be interested in the reply, we give it here.

“In all cases where it (trouble or mental distress) is caused by elementals, you *cannot*. Elementals are not ignorant. They know just as much and just as little as you do. They merely mirror to you either your own mind, or that mental strata caused by the age, the race and the nation you may be in. Their action is invariably automatic and unconscious. They care not for what is called by you, ‘mental instruction.’ They hear you not.

“Do you know how they hear or what language they understand? Not human speech, nor ordinary human thought clothed in mental speech. That is a dead letter to them altogether. They can only be communicated with through correlations of colors and sounds. But while you address yourself to them those thoughts assume life from elementals rushing in and attaching themselves to those thoughts.

“Do not then try to speak to them too much, because did you make them know they might demand of you some boon or privilege, or become attached to you, since in order to make them understand they must *know* you — and a photographic plate forgets not.

“Fear them not, nor recoil in horror or repulsion. The time of trial must be fulfilled. Job had to wait his period until all his troubles and diseases passed away. *Before* that time he could do naught.

“But we are not to idly sit and repine; we are to bear these trials, meanwhile drawing in new and good elementals so as to have, in western phrase, a capital on which to draw when the time of trial has fully passed away .... Lastly: know this law, written on the walls of the temple of learning:

“Having received, freely give: having once in thought devoted your life to the great stream of energy in which elementals and souls alike are carried — and which causes the pulse beat of our hearts — you can never claim it back again. *Seek then that mental devotion which strains to give*. For in the Law it is written that we must give away all, or we lose it; as you need mental help, so do others who are wandering in darkness seeking for light.”

This divine Law, uttered by no man, by no Being however great, but Itself a part of the Divine Nature, is the Law of Love. It bids us give all that we have, and “to him who hath” this Love, more “shall be given.”

“*Sacred Learning* having approached a Brahmin, said to him: ‘I am thy precious gem; preserve me with care; deliver me not to a scorner; so preserved I shall be

supremely strong. But communicate me, as to a vigilant depository of thy gem, to that student whom thou shalt know to be pure, to have subdued his passions, to perform the duties of his order?" "

One who had won the right and the sacred duty of teacher, once said: "That law is immutably fixed which declares that he who has received spiritual benefit, no matter how little, must not willingly die, unless, he has communicated that which he has received to at least one other person. And therein it is also stated that by *communicating* is meant, not merely verbal delivery, but patient care until that other person fully understands. Having once turned thy mind to the light of that True Sun, thou hath cast thyself upon that great stream of divine energy which flows to and from that Sun; and nevermore canst thou claim back for thyself that life; live then, so that the duty may be well performed."

Sometimes persons catch a picture of a thought in the astral light, in advance of its utterance, for this light exists in the brain as well as elsewhere: often this picture becomes curiously mixed up in a dream. Among examples frequently sent the Tea Table, these are selected. X was at a meeting where some papers were to be read and discussed. H rose to read and said to X; "which shall I read first; the paper on insects, or the paper on a neophyte's trials?" C who was a listener, interrupted carelessly with: "The Neophyte's trials," and X chimed in with a,— "Yes, do! Then you'll have the medal." H looked astonished, gazed at X ejaculated "Humph!" and then began to read, when the first sentence proved to be about a medal.

On another occasion, Quickly was presiding officer of a literary club, when Jones rose to read a paper whose contents and subject were unknown to all. As he rose, he said! "Mr. Chairman, have I the privilege of going on now with my paper?" Quickly answered in the affirmative, and then turning to the members who were not quite orderly, he said in playful misquotation: " 'Friends, Romans, Countrymen! lend Jones your ears.' " Jones began, and his first paragraph contained the quotation from Antony's speech over Caesar.

A friend tells the Tea Table of a still more interesting case. The chief actor in it "is a man in the prime of life, of a naturally strong and healthy constitution, and was never in the least degree superstitious or apparently psychically sensitive." I doubt if he ever heard of Theosophy; certainly he has never read anything of theosophic literature or the like. He is in religious matters a member of one of the Protestant denominations, an active worker in Church and Sunday School, and by nature of broad views in all matters. One night this gentleman dreamed that it had been decreed by a power he could not resist that his daughter, whom he devotedly loves, must be given up; that she must die. The thought was terrible to him, and he appealed to the power (or rather the powers as he thought, though having in the dream no clear conception of what these powers were) to spare her life. They were inexorable. At last he asked that he might be allowed to give his own life to save hers. This offer was accepted, and he prepared for the last scene, which seemed to him to be of the character of a public execution. At the last moment he heard a voice saying that he had been tried, and the powers were satisfied that his offer to give his life for that of his child, was a generous one, so that his willingness would be accepted in place of the actual sacrifice and both should live. But the matter being a serious one, the voice declared it could not pass by so lightly, to be soon forgotten, and hence a portion of his strength must be taken away: he must lose his right arm. As he told the story afterward he said: "As long as I live I shall never forget the feeling with which I stretched out my right arm on the block; the feeling of proud, almost joyful satisfaction, that I could by this sacrifice save the life of my dear child?" When he awoke, the whole dream was so distinct in his mind that he told it all in detail to his wife: then rising and dressing, he went out immediately to give some directions about his business before breakfast. He had not

gone more than two or three blocks when his feet slipped on the wet sidewalk; he threw his right arm quickly behind to break the fall, felt a severe jar and sharp pain, and when he rose, he found the arm was powerless. His family physician pronounced the injury to be a fracture of the shoulder blade, but on hearing the circumstances, said it was impossible to break the shoulder blade save by a direct blow, but an expert surgeon who was summoned confirmed the first opinion, though he too had never heard of such an indirect fracture. For six weeks the arm was held absolutely motionless and powerless. You see here are all the elements of authenticity, the dream being told to another person before there was any indication of its fulfillment; the close correspondence of the injury to the nature of the sacrifice demanded in the dream; and finally, the disablement being caused in a way which an eminent surgeon pronounces almost unprecedented in surgical experience.

The above narrative also shows how we are liable to get our most dominant thoughts of waking life, mixed up with that which we see or hear in dreams, and indicates how these, as well as the visions of clairvoyants and seers, are affected by the personality and its brain reminiscences. Only an Adept can be sure of seeing into the “Astral Light” unhampered by his personality, because he alone knows how to control the vibrations of the brain and to — so to say — paralyze it for the time being. An extract from Madame Blavatsky’s *Secret Doctrine*, shows how much is bound up in this question of vibration, and many scientific hints are given as to cosmic principles, which if applied to the constitution of man, will amply repay the thoughtful student.

Paracelsus says that dreams and visions indicative of future events are caused by the “*Evestrum*,” which comes into existence and grows with the body, remaining with it so long as a particle of the matter which composes it exists. He means the sidereal body, of which this “*Evestrum*” appears to be one of the powers, just as “*Srarames*” is another invisible power or attribute of the inner man, “which begins to be able to manifest itself at a time when the senses of the inner perception become developed. The *Evestrum* influences the sense of sight; *Srarames* the sense of hearing; the *Evestrum* causes dreams foreshadowing future events; *Srarames* communicates with man by causing voices to speak, music to sound, and so on.<sup>1</sup> In the *Theosophist* are several allusions to the sounds heard by the occult student, as well as in Patanjali. Sound is the peculiar property of the Ether and its advent naturally marks the vitalizing and awakening of the inner man. But in these instances as in dreams, we must be careful merely to note what we see or hear, without drawing rash conclusions or “forming associations” as Patanjali puts it. Nothing hinders growth like the intense desire to grow, which is another form of desire for self. I wish I could illuminate the following lines which I was so fortunate as to receive, (fortunate, because they are true and blessed lines,) and hang them where their radiance might meet the eye of all my comrades and friends.

“I want you to stop as much as possible any wish to progress. The intense desire to know and to become, and to reach the light, is different from the thought:— I am not progressing; I know nothing. — The latter is looking for results. The right position to take is the wish *to Be*. For then we know. *The wish to know is almost solely intellectual, and the desire to Be, is of the heart.* For instance, when you succeed in seeing a distant friend, that is not knowledge: that is the fact of *Being* in the condition or vibration that *is* that friend at the time. The translation of it into a mental reckoning or explanation, is what is called knowledge. To see an elemental on the astral plane, is for the time *to be*, in some part of our nature, in that state or condition. Of course there are vast fields of Being we cannot hope to reach yet. But while we strive to become divine and set our final hopes no lower than that supreme condition, we can wholly and entirely learn *to be* that plane which is presented to us now.”

The whole value of these words is summed up in their final teaching. Fulfil all the duties, answer all the honest calls of the life you are now living; be true to all men and to the light you now have; then more will be given, and then only. This is the first step of “living the life.”

JULIUS.

## NOTE

1. See Hartmann's Trans. {*The Life of Paracelsus*}, p. 73.

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*The Path* – February 1888, Vol. 2, pp. 346-351.

## TEA TABLE TALK.

JULIUS

There is a curious old story to be found in one of the Brahmanic sacred books. It apparently refers to the trials of higher chelaship, and runs somewhat as follows.

“A young man of a very high and respectable family had an only sister. She became a widow; and then they both renounced the world, went to a Yogee in a distant place, and offered themselves as his pupils. The Yogee said that they were not yet ripe for chelaship; that they had yet much bad Karma to exhaust, but that if they would return to their native town and live for a time (say ten months) in a particular manner, then he would accept them. They agreed, and accordingly set up a shed (*pandal*) in *their own native town*, where they were well known for high birth and good character. The shed was in a prominent place on the high road. It had no rooms at all, but only a small enclosure which barely afforded shelter from the sun. There they lived alone together, regardless of conventionalities, always cheerful and even merry. The world began to slander them as badly as possible, saying that the brother and sister were living as husband and wife. But the two pupils never defended themselves, though persecuted most miserably. Everyone spat upon them as immoral wretches and threw stones on them. Still these two did not stir from their place, but bore all patiently. They became the victims of even the poorest, who had before been assisted by them, and of the meanest and most wicked people of the country. The ten months passed. The pupils found that the world had no real charm at all. They had thus exhausted the necessary quantity of bad Karma and stood the trial. They were accordingly accepted by the Yogee.”

This little tale serves as an allegory. It shows us how necessary it is, when first we desire to enter the path, to exhaust our bad Karma by patiently living it out, there where we find ourselves placed at the time. It demonstrates that we cannot proceed by a violent leap away from all the rest of this present life, but that we must work out from it in due sequence, and that even should we attempt to make such an abrupt bound, we are sure to be sent back. Whether by the chosen Teacher or by the Law matters but little: we are sent back, and our sudden action has added to previous Karma acquired by deeds wholly relating to self. We are also shown, on the page of this ancient book, that our effort to cast off the unreal life for the real places us in a very different position in the eyes of those about us, with whom we hitherto stood well. They regard us with suspicion; our carelessness of worldly opinion, our acceptance of solitude and poverty of spirit for the sake of the Truth and the search for the Truth, implies a reproach — though we intend none — to the lovers of the mere outward life, and they cast a slur upon us, whether in silence or openly. So we enter upon a career of

trouble and isolation from the outset. It sometimes happens that through favorable circumstances, we are received by the world on the same outward footing, but inwardly a chill has fallen between us and it, even with dear friends. It is felt that we no longer belong to the same party, that we have announced an independent judgment, and a critical attitude at least towards all those fictions and tyrannies which the world has agreed to keep up, in the service of convenience, convention, custom, and false ideals. And while we should be careful to do no violence to our ties and duties, (whether of family or of station), to keep the civic and moral laws and to some extent even the social rules of the civilization in which we live, still when all this is done, the question frequently arises:— “what can I do to prove my faith?”

It is a question often addressed to us and passed from one theosophist to another: it is a most difficult question to answer, because the reply cannot be made to fit all circumstances. But if we take large and high ground, perhaps we can find an answer applicable to every case, in some part at least. If we say that in the denial and uprooting of self the first active step upon the path is taken, then we have opened up a subject of immense possibilities. For it is not asceticism, nor mortification of the flesh, nor rude rough ways of life that we mean, but we refer to the inner attitude.

Most of us look upon the rainfall, or the failure of the crops, or an accident detrimental to our interests, in the light of their effect upon us. Yet these things have a greater bearing: they may conduce to universal ends. Here the first solution of our problem meets us; we must try to live in the life of the whole; try with reason when we can, and with faith where reason or perception fail us, to realize that all things from the fall of the leaf to the dreaded earthquake are conducted by universal law; that this law is one of harmony; that all is well with the universe as it steadily advances along the evolutionary track, and that all must therefore be well with each one of us, as parts of this progressive whole. Our higher interests, our *real* interests, are served by all these joys and trials alike, and if we make sufficient effort, we can remain above them in thought; the inner attitude can be one of lofty and patient calm. The power of any and every circumstance to annoy or unbalance us on either hand is a given quantity: we ourselves are the variants, and our vibrations to and fro, scatter, disturb, and disseminate the molecules of the inner man quite as much as they ruffle and cloud that still surface of the soul whose high office it is to mirror the Spirit. Let us then strive to raise ourselves up, and to lift others up to that far, blazing star above the tempest, the star of Truth.

Very often we hamper ourselves by preconceived ideas to which we cling. These totally blind us to Truth. Since we do not presently know all things, we must be somewhere in error, and very likely we are most so at just that point where our hearts are most fixed. For attachment and hatred bind us equally to some idol of our own making. Many students who are trying to “live the life” ask why so many very good and pious men have not become occultists, have not even caught a glimpse of the real goal. It is principally because they have erred by “violence of direction,” and have tried to live by the exercise of certain selected qualities alone. They have set a god on high whose worship has atrophied reason and narrowed faith. For mark that if you suggest to them that there may be a higher god than this, or a religion equally true, they are incredulous or indignant. They live upon and within forms; they have stunted the perceptive faculties of the soul and paralyzed its instructive desire for *Truth at all costs and all hazards*. This desire must lie at the root of the soul, for it was the desire to create and experience in matter which sent it forth from the Spirit to seek the manifestation of Truth in this life, and which now urges its return towards the Great Center of resplendent verities. Truth, whether manifest below or above, is the same, but the manifestation is different. We shut ourselves out from Truth when we repel any manifestation, or confine our belief to any one of her modes of working in matter. In

the ultimate alone is she One. Blindness to these facts makes us take some such view as that of an esteemed contemporary, who explained a doubt of the teachings of Theosophy because some “theosophical” acquaintance believed that his aged and invalid mother was obsessed by an elemental! The Widow tittered when she read this, and remarked that she now doubted the moons of Jupiter *because* she knew “an astronomer who had dyspeptic fits and was as cross as — as —”

“As the devil in a gale of wind;” suggested Didymus.

The Widow, who is nothing if not conventional, gave a small shriek at this. I noticed that she required much soothing — from Didymus, not from me; somehow I can’t soothe “worth a cent.” The plumes of the fair satirist sufficiently preened, she remarked:

“You men needn’t talk. Haven’t we heard that some Hindu pundit is so incensed that Eastern doctrines should be taught to the profane West; that he is going to tear the *Secret Doctrine* to tatters, *by showing that it don’t agree with his view of Brahmanic teachings*, ‘more power to it’ if it don’t?”

“I like the cheek of those Indian ducks;” murmured Didymus.

A chorus of “Absurd!” “Fancy!” “Don’t be slangy!” arose. I put it down firmly.

“Ladies and Gentlemen; I do not defend either attitude. To the looker-on, they are simply delicious — as studies of human nature. They are pure hysteria. They are twinges of emotional insanity. Hysteria for hysteria, give me the female form of it. It is more likely, on the whole, to be all right at heart. In every true woman there is something nobly virile; every true man has a finer touch of his mother in him. But I beg you to observe that we must eschew the personal view, if we are to find out true facts. The idol-worshipper; the form-worshipper; the pedant; the emotional enthusiast who makes a god of the mere human heart; the religionist *pur et simple*, all these are confined to one view, and self is at the bottom of their creed. Even the atheist deifies self. Our instant need is to ascertain some modicum of Truth untinged by the personal view, and to go to work on that. Our friends may be all right at heart but, Lord! what twaddle their tongues do emit when they insist on our measuring Truth with their yardstick. Let us listen most to the Universal Voice: it speaks, not of or in us, but through us.

Show me a self-styled “conservative” man, and I will show you a man who lives among shadows, and in himself vainly strives to animate a shade. His friends have long gone away from the place where he still beholds their imaginary characters standing, lit (to his eyes) into seeming life by the dim light of the past. With these spectres he holds converse, and his friends try to answer him through the lifeless intermediaries; they try to meet him for a moment on the forgotten basis of the past, and are sometimes pleased to tickle their own self-esteem with the image of an impossible consistency. Just so the scholar, overweighted by his learning, thinks that the great, living, busy world is concerned with his denunciations of false quantities or scholastic dogma. To it these weighty facts are puppets moved by his self-importance; it is mainly concerned with Life, not with creeds, and it soars onward, leaving him impotent and a little foolish, in the dust with his weapon of straw. If he is wise, he will not confront it with past issues. So conservatism is impossible so far as Life is concerned. Even Death is not consistent, but changes, dissolves, and rends with furious energy. “Consistency” is a man-made product; I find no analogy in nature. When I lie down to sleep, am I the same man who rose that morning? When I rise, where is he who lay there and dreamed? Just as physical science tells us that organic tissue is momentarily dying, changing, receiving, and transmitting, so the mind also changes at the contact of every new thought, the heart with each new emotion. Man is an ever new or renewed being, begotten of the old, and the “conservative” is left between the horns of this dilemma:

either he has changed without being aware of it, (until some moral cataclysm reveals the standing of the real, inner man), or he is a dead man; dead in all spiritual sense while the physical machine has not yet run down. It behooves us to open our minds to the possibilities of Truth, for the cause of most ills is in the mind. It is the predetermination of our attitude that makes it serious and injurious. "I am a believer in predestination," "I am weak and defeated." "I cannot believe so and so." There are the mental chimeras which work havoc with our lives. Above them all the Serene Self looks down, calm and unimpaired. May we take refuge there! May we realize that there alone is our true existence! May we embrace no lower ideal!

In these grim and frost bitten days I love to remember how the wandering Tea-Table had a little butterfly farm in a sunny bay window late last autumn. There amid the falling leaves, the patter and gurgle of rain on low eaves, or the solemn drip from the black pines on to the graves of June roses — there we watched some gauze-imprisoned worms, brave fellows in black velvet and gold vesture, working out the eternal miracle of Death-in-Life for the instruction of occultists in embryo. Even brighter skies, the pipe of winds and autumn banners flaring from the hills, could not tempt us out while the wonder was still in hand. The captives fed grossly on milkweed for a while, journeyed, hobnobbed, regarded the world, reached a period of fevered activity in which they knew nor pause nor rest, then found a secluded spot and concluded to remain there. Fierce was their anger at any fellow who drew near or disturbed them, savage on its own scale as the wrath of the lion, while they deposited their worldly store in the shape of a little white gluten, sparkling like saccharine crystals and exuded from the proboscis, upon the gauze roof. I invite all occultists to consider these analogies: the gluten, quintessence of the worm, formed a link between two worlds. When sufficient had been deposited to form a tiny spike-like projection, the worm ceased to work it with the head and moved slowly over it until it could insert the spike into a minute opening in the end of the body or tail. Giving due time to the gluten to harden and become fixed there, (whatever impregnating office it might fill we know not), after several essays the worms finally let themselves gradually down until they hung suspended in air from the spike of gluten, now hard as a gravel granule and firmly rooted in the tail. Vibration after vibration ran through every coil now in double series, one series from head to tail, another from tail to head: occultists will recognize this universal movement. The vibrations increased in rapidity during a period of twenty-four hours, when at last a violent effort is visible and with body movement and quick head strokes combined the worm cracks open at the back, feverishly and rapidly "shuffles off this mortal coil" of black and gold, which falls to the ground, leaving a light green worm momentarily visible. Only momentarily; this renewed creature doubles itself up, joins head to tail, working the neck around the spike of gluten; the head falls off, the doubled up body is all fused together by the same vibratory movement, and in two minutes or less there hangs from the gauze an exquisite smooth green satin casket, which an exudation presently studs with gilt nails around its dome-shaped top, closing it, I know not how. The effort of these two minutes is really something terrible to witness, yet the work is accomplished with supreme ease after all, when we consider the marvelous consummation. This casket, erst the inner (second) body of the creature, is now in process of becoming a mere casement for the mysterious germ sleeping within. During two weeks it becomes more and more translucent, its fiber is gradually assimilated, and the bright wing markings and color dots of the third form are at last visible beneath the thin shell. Some fine morning towards noon (in some dozen observed) this shell cracks at the back, a winged, brilliant creature lets itself down from the shriveling isinglass-like case, slowly unfolds, like a flower, and like the flower clasps the stem; for still it grasps the case. Not at once does it relinquish the abandoned habit, remember.<sup>1</sup> All earthly dross must be purified from

the creature of the skies. So while he vibrates still more tremulously than ever before, waving and trying his wings, there is a drip, as of life blood, from his quivering body. This over, he rests, and we ask, why does he not fly? Hours after, he is seen to suddenly lift his head. The divine thought has touched him! With instant recollection and power he rises, makes an exultant dash for the blue regions, and soars in ever widening circles, lost to us, discovered anew to life. Never have I seen anything more inspired than the electric swiftness of that instinct, coming so suddenly to all. We have placed them on the pines in resinous sunshine, or upon the flower; they will not stir until they hear the soundless admonition; they wait for the ripe moment of the Law: so they never falter in that strong flight. We have lost sight of them, but wide-eyed Science has seen that they presently return to the terrestrial fields, and, full of heaven's sweet essences, have birth in other lives.

This stage of their journey, this visible passage from the first to the third form by means of an essential coupling or link, is most beautiful and typical. Go into your gardens when the year swings round again; gather milkweeds and captives; net them in airy gauze, and nature will teach you how the soul emerges from husk after husk. She will teach you Reincarnation; she will show what a broad scope of change is necessary and appointed to all growth; she will demonstrate that resistance to this Law on any plane is retardation, while as yet only an incipient, encrusting habit; is Death eternal when the habit becomes fixed in the petrified soul.

JULIUS.

## NOTE

1. See Jan. PATH, 1888, Page 290; on the relinquishment of intermediate forms.

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*The Path* – March 1888, Vol. 2, pp. 375-378.

## TEA TABLE TALK.

JULIUS

It has been gratifying to the Aryan T.S.<sup>1</sup> to know that its Abridgements of Discussions<sup>2</sup> have proved useful to theosophists at large and that they are in great demand. It seems that the general thought is often impressed and answered through this means, which affords additional proof to my experience that the members of the theosophical body may, as a rule, be found to think in the same channel. A letter received by the General Secretary shows, among others, the above facts. "I write to say that about two weeks ago I *thought* a question about something I wanted to know, and afterwards decided that the motive was more one of curiosity than anything else, and as the information, I did not think, would be of any special "help" to me, I drove the thought out of my mind. Just at this time came the strong impression of writing to you, which I kept putting off until the feeling that I *must* became very burdensome, so I wrote, as you know. What was my surprise and gratification to find an answer to the thought in the printed "Abridgement of Discussions" (sent him with answer to his letter), "together with some other very interesting information."

The Tea Table opened its budget of experiences this month. *Place aux dames*; let the Widow speak first.

"Three funny things happened to me in one day last week:

1st. My dressmaker had a dress-goods pattern of mine for over a year. I concluded not to have it made up, and wrote her to send it to me. She received my letter the following day and wrote me thus: "Strangely enough, yesterday afternoon" (the time when I was writing), "I happened to open an old trunk, and there I came across your dress goods, which had been forgotten a year, and I said to Annie that I would send it to you, as it was about time."

2d. "I thought of a physician to whom I had written some time ago for information. He had sent me a full reply and the subject had been dropped. I debated whether I would open it up further, and decided not to do so for the present. The second day thereafter I received a letter from the gentleman, who said he had happened to come across my old letter in his drawer the day before and thought he would write me again on some points."

Notice that these persons both "happened" to do the very thing necessary to carry out the idea impressed, and that it is almost always the case in such matters. The third occurrence given by the lady is the following:

"I received a letter in an unknown hand from Rome, Italy. I exclaimed that I wondered from whom it came," (the dear delightful creatures never open it till conjecture is exhausted!), "and my sister said: 'Probably from Otis; he always writes from the land's end.' 'He is in New York,' said I, and opened the letter. It proved to be from the merest acquaintance, with whom I had never corresponded, who, in a foreign land, had selected me to be the medium of a financial favor to certain projects of Otis, simply because he knew no other mutual acquaintance who resided in the same city with his (the traveler's) bankers. Besides this, I had had a talk with Otis about this gentleman on the same week in which he wrote, neither of us knowing where he was: I have forgotten the exact day."

Quickly had ordered a box for account books to use at his house, and another box had been ordered for use elsewhere, made by a different carpenter. Weeks passed and neither carpenter had finished. One day Quickly passed the head of the street where was the carpenter's shop in which he had ordered the box for his house, and hesitated, saying to me: "I'll go down and see if that box is done. No! I'll wait till afternoon." He went to his office, where the clerk said: "The box you ordered for the office has come; there it is."

"Where did it come from?"

"From P; they just sent it." It was the very box from the carpenter's shop he had five minutes before hesitated about. Apparently he had "struck the trail" of the person who must have just passed with the box on the way to deliver it.

The student wrote to B that a document which C had would soon be handed by C to him (the student) for B's use. The student and C live in the same place, but B is in a distant city. There was much delay about the arrival of the document. After several weeks' waiting, the student was on the way to his office and suddenly began to think, "Inasmuch as the paper is delayed so long, I will write B that I will send him a duplicate." Reaching his office he sat down and took paper to write what he had thought of a few moments before, when a messenger entered and handed him the delayed document. Both he and C had evidently thought of it at the same time; he to supply its place, and C to send it at once.

"I can match your stories," said the Professor, "with two psychometric experiences of my own, which have occurred since I began to give some attention to psychometry with a view to understanding certain states of sensitive patients of mine. It is a curious fact, by the way, that all these occult experiences come to us when we turn our attention to such subjects for unselfish reasons, or when we simply begin to live a life in accordance with theosophical principles and open our minds to the

reception of truth, regardless of all previous conceptions. The unseen appears ready to meet us more than half way, and I take it that the real secret of these opening experiences is bound up in the fact of synchronous vibration. Unconsciously to us, the mind, in controlling matter, controls and regulates the vibrations of our inner being, and when we have (by conjoined will and desire) put the mind into a receptive attitude, we vibrate naturally with unseen planes about us, and the inner senses begin to take advantage of the pause and open, at first slowly and faintly.

"Well — to proceed; I was on a railroad journey, and our fast train entered the coal regions unnoticed by me. It was the express, very rapid, and the constant motion and vibration produce a sort of disjunction of the body from the mind. I was sitting in a seat alone; my eyes were closed, and I felt as if I were looking down through the body from the head. I suddenly felt or seemed to see heaps of coal under the car, or veins of coal, and then men working in it. I opened my eyes and looked out in time to see that we were just passing a mine-opening, and were going through the coal regions. I then resumed my seat, when the experience was renewed, with different details. Another time on the limited, near Philadelphia, I had been seated with closed eyes in the same position as before, when I suddenly began to see water, as if under the car, disturbed or dashed. Opening my eyes I looked out and saw that the train was passing over a long water trough or chute, from which the express takes up water by means of a scoop or pipe in the tender."

Many such experiences occur in trains, which would seem to confirm the Professor's vibratory theory. The experience given by me in Vol. I of this magazine under the title of "Singing Silences"<sup>3</sup> first attracted my attention in various railway journeys.

We began to press the mother for her contribution to our notes, when she laughed and said her "only happening was not a happening at all. I dreamed one night that I was alone and driving a double team in a sleigh, when I met a loaded haywagon at which the horses took fright and ran away with me. As I never sleigh, never drive alone, and as haywagons loaded are not generally abroad in deep snow, I laughed at the hocus-pocus on awakening. But very unexpectedly that morning, a neighbor sent her sleigh and double team for me with a request that I do her a service. I was driven off, and in a short while some part of the harness gave way. The driver got down to mend it, and while he was at the side of the road a loaded haywagon came on us round a corner, the horses started and jumped and —— the driver caught them by the heads, and that was the end of it all, as the children say."

Quickly thought he could beat that dream: he generally does go us one better, and I don't know that any one envies him some of his occult adventures at least. He was living in New York, and had an acquaintance who was better known to the family of his uncle than to himself. He went to Washington and put up in a private house on R Street. On the second night he dreamed he was at home and was going in by the basement way in company with the above-named gentleman and his own deceased sister. As they were about entering, the gentleman put his hand on the overhanging stoop, which at once fell upon him, and he disappeared beneath it. Everyone in the dream seemed to feel very badly about him. Next day Quickly made a note of the dream in his diary and dismissed it from his mind. Not writing home, he heard nothing about the gentleman, but when he returned to New York he learned that his acquaintance had had a severe fall which brought on an old trouble, and that he had died on the night of the dream. The Professor listened with the genuine "I-know-all-about-it" air, and remarked at the close that the dream was doubtless caused by the events of the man's life passing rapidly through his dying mind, and when he came to his relations with Quickly, that recollection vibrated in connection with Quickly and caused his dream, reaching him all the more rapidly because his physical nature was at

the moment quiescent in sleep. I do not doubt myself that this suggestion is a correct clue to all *similar* occurrences.

JULIUS.

## NOTES

1. {"Aryan T.S." refers to the so-named "Aryan *Branch* of the T.S." in New York City.}
2. {Abridgement of Discussions, small pamphlets of Aryan Lodge (Branch) discussions for F.T.S.}
3. {See p. 141 herein.}

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*The Path* – April 1888, Vol. 3, pp. 29-31.

## TEA TABLE TALK.

JULIUS

Students have from time to time asked me to suggest means of occult study other than those of book learning; means whereby they might come into closer observation of the workings of Law, or better realize the universality of principles, such as Mind, Brotherhood, and so on, and their actuality in daily life. To such I suggested a method in vogue in the East among younger disciples as yet not accepted by a Brotherhood, but still on probation. These chelas are divided into groups of three. Each person of such a group keeps note of the day's events, thoughts, and deeds, and compares his diary with those of his comrades of that group, when it soon becomes apparent that they are working as a unity, and are being guided in the same direction. They are thus put in a training which quickens the intuition, strengthens faith and fraternal conviction, and helps them to a more ready recognition of the suggestions of their unseen "Teacher," if they are later accepted and put in magnetic rapport with such a Being. Our revered Madame Blavatsky has also testified to the excellence of this method from her personal observation of its working and results.

Two students of my acquaintance had occasionally corresponded upon occultism, and were desirous of strengthening one another in the belief in Universal Brotherhood as a law, and also of demonstrating to their own satisfaction the actuality of a universal principle of mind. They wanted, I may say, to see it for themselves, being without much experience in these matters. They had never met, never seen photographs of one another, knew nothing of one another's surroundings, next to nothing of one another's circumstances or lives, and resided in cities hundreds of miles apart and in different States. One of them did not even know so much as the real name of his correspondent, and was aware that he did not. They agreed to take a certain hour of each Sunday in which to "think to" each other. R. was to think on the first Sunday, while W. remained passive and tried to receive the thought. The next Sunday this process was reversed; it was then R. who passively awaited the active thought of W. On the first Sunday, the hour over, W. sent to R. the results following. The whole record is now in my possession. Remarks in brackets {parentheses} show the subsequent comments made by R. as to the correctness of W.'s impressions, and vice versa next Sunday.

FIRST SUNDAY, W. TO R.

1. Saw colors; olive and red, very deep. Might be colors of your walls. (Yes. The walls are olive with deep red band, gilt edged.)

2. A man in upstairs back-room, lying back in arm chair; hands raised and clasped over head; eyes fixed on ceiling. (Correct; but it was *front*-room.)

3. You thought: "I wish I knew W., then it would be easier to fix my mind on him." Then you took one of my letters and held it, to get in magnetic rapport. (I did all that just so, and for the reason named.)

4. Trying to impress me with an accident, something that happened to you; perhaps about Theosophy. (It was a burn on my hand I was trying to impress.) W. remembered later that he felt pain in hand at time but took it for "writer's cramp."

5. A text from *Gîtâ*: "Whose soul participates in the soul of all creatures." (No.)

6. An interruption and idea of impatience at interruption. It is a child; boy, I think. (Yes; my son, with a question.) W. had not known that R. had a boy.

7. That the mind is hard to restrain, and you wish to know some means of concentration. That "it is harder to think firmly of W. than I supposed it would be." (Correct. I thought: "The mind is restless and hard to restrain, but is reducible by long practice and absence of desire.")

8. As I feel you, you have a very tense, strained, dogged feeling. Try to discontinue this and rest in the Supreme. (Yes. I felt strongly that way, but will try to discontinue it.)

9. You hear the bell sound, and louder than usual. (Yes; I did, and at close of hour.)

#### SECOND SUNDAY, R. TO W.

1. Tall, slim man. Dark brown whiskers, mustache; in slippers and dressing gown, lying on divan or lounge in darkened upstairs room. Blue appears here, but in what connection I cannot say. (Incorrect entirely. No such person in house).

2. My Brother, persevere and your psychic powers will grow. (No.)

3. As if you were standing by me with your hands on my head. (Correct, but I tried to stand rather behind you.)

4. That you find it difficult to separate the higher from the intellectual faculty. (No).

5. One tinkle of bell more distinct and louder than usual. Seems as though you were trying to tell me some secret in psychics and trying very hard. (Partly correct. I tried to make you hear bell and to tell you a text in *Gîtâ*.)

6. As though fingers were being pressed upon my eyes. (Yes).

7. A lady appears here; do not get it clearly. Seems as though some one were sick and you were wanted. (Partly correct, in so far as that I was wanted, but no one came.)

8. Some of my letters appear to be arranged in some mystical manner as regards number and form. (No: wholly incorrect. Have only kept one or two in bundle with others.)

9. "I will try to impress him with the fact" — I was interrupted here and could not resume.

#### THIRD SUNDAY, W. TO R.

I had severe bilious attack and began half an hour earlier than time fixed upon, and so thought of you before you were ready to impress me.

1. You are thinking of business and business engagement. Mental debate. "A bird in the hand worth two in the bush." Seems as if a woman held to the idea which the proverb expresses. (Correct. My wife's idea).

2. Children (2) standing near as if inquiring and being answered. (One child: correct).

3. You looked at watch for time. Laid newspaper across knee; clasped hands over body; closed eyes, leaning back: it was just our hour. (Yes.)

4. *Brotherhood. Unity. Patience.* Something about *Gîtâ* text and general idea of progress and effort on Path. (Correct. From Mohini's translation of *Gîtâ*. "By degrees find rest in the inner Self, possessed of *patience*." "Who everywhere perceives the *Unity* perceives the ego which is in every creature." Also thought; "My heart goes out toward my friend W. in *brotherly* affection and a feeling of *Unity*. Let us seek Divine Wisdom.")

Regarding the above, W. tells me he mailed his impressions and R. mailed his thoughts in such wise that they crossed in the mails, thus affording double verification.

6. Table with draughting instruments. It is long and narrow. A window on left as you face it. Compass and blue paper conspicuous. (This is mine, but is at my office. Correct).

7. Had violent headache and fell asleep here before time was up. (My head felt queer. I am not subject to headache, so there must have been sympathy.)

8. I talked to you to-day of our duty to others. "Having received, freely give." (I got this.)

These students, satisfied with their results, then abandoned the special séances for a general and daily effort to strengthen one another without particular efforts like the above. In this they were probably wise, for a love of the results, and hence of phenomena, might perhaps have been engendered.

Quickly told me of a curious case of second sight. He was standing on the curb, corner of Wall and Nassau Sts., New York. The eastern corner opposite (Broad and Wall) is about ten feet further to the east. The day was wet and he thought; "What a disagreeable crossing; there ought to be a cross-walk at this diagonal crossing!" Suddenly for an instant he seemed to see men laying a cross-walk there; then they vanished. Two weeks later he passed and found a cross-walk laid there between those two corners.

The Professor had a queer morning experience. He slept well (always does, I'll wager!); his watch hung on the bedpost in his waistcoat, just near his head. On waking he turned over, closed his eyes again, and lazily wondered what time it was, and then, "I must look at my watch." Immediately the face of the watch appeared before his closed eyes, showing 7.10 as the time. He started up to prove it, and taking out his real watch, found it marked precisely 7.10. I amused myself asking him which really was his "real" watch, the astral one or the other. The Professor does not quite digest these occult experiences yet, and I must admit it seems rather lacking in tact of them to come and thrust themselves upon science, when science does not want them. But what would you have? The Occult is "no respecter of persons."

JULIUS.

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*The Path* – May 1888, Vol. 3, pp. 60-65.

## TEA TABLE TALK.

JULIUS

It is often the common trifles of life which make us think. I incline to the belief that these small things are the most important of all. They are the esoteric, hidden under the gross bulk of diurnal occurrences.

Yesterday I heard a sermon in a barnyard. I came upon the place suddenly and unseen. Two figures leaned upon a crumbling stone wall; figures feminine, by their

draperies fluttering in April winds. Jaunty toques of blue and violet, undulating lines, a sheen of golden braids, a crisp toss of curls running, tendril-wise, all over a mutinous head,— what is there in the sum total of trifles such as these to stay the steps of a man? The mere flowing of these garments, or one of the multiform curves of these shapes so different yet so like his own, is like a battery applied to every pulse, even that of the crabbed old bachelor. Not in any mere physical sense, either. Most of all, the thoughtful occultist surveys his responsive nature and asks himself what is the supreme, the final, word of the great mystery of sex.

Strange to say, these girls were not talking. That puzzled and stopped me. One, with the profile of a Psyche of fifteen, was studying a *Child's History of England*, just as she leaned on that sheltered sunny wall, with pigeons cooing above, the ferment of the compost heap below, and, all around, the clatter of hens and piping cries of “cheep, cheep, cheep-cheep; little chickens going cheap,” as if there were some barnyard auction.

The elder girl simply stared down at the compost heap, littered as it was with greenish patches of dry corn fodder, and soft eyed Alderney calves, blinking and munching in their unused, make-believe way. There was meditation in that stare. Even the golden coated greyhound, lying on the wall within the circle of her arms, could not engage her attention by shivers of fright when horns were poked at him and curious cows put out rough tongues towards the hands of the young mistress, still sparkling with a few salt crystals.

The book closed with a snap. Psyche glanced at her neighbor, then took her arm and cuddled up to her. Leaning so together, youth so secure of the sympathy of youth, the whole scene took on a confidential aspect.

One noticed for the first time that all the frisking young things about paired with one another. Psyche's eyes followed the direction of her companion's; her low, sweet voice had a note of surprise in it.

“What *are* you thinking about, Pansy?”

The other pointed to the compost heap. I began to think that in her my ideal was realized. My ideal is a young and charming woman — *dumb*.

Well then?”

Alas! Pansy spoke.

“It makes me think that there is no Death.”

The other shivered a little and cast a scared glance about her. The dawn of spring and one's sixteenth year; surely no time to think of Death. Then she smiled with all the unexpectedness of the feminine nature.

“Awfully nice ideas you do have, anyhow. I like that: It's a thousand million times nicer than the other way: tell me about it.” She rubbed her cheek on Pansy's shoulder, just as the little calves rub up against their mothers.

The other girl tousled the greyhound's ears; under cover of its nervous yelp I sneaked a little nearer that I might hear better.

“It was the corn fodder. Don't you remember how it glistened and shone in the moonlight last summer? Sometimes we stopped our banjoes to listen to the mysterious songs it sang when little breezes ran through it.”

“And it seemed to be having some kind of a good time, anyhow. Didn't it now?”

“Yes, but I wonder if it doesn't ever have a better time. I guess the corn, and all the other earth things, the chemicals, you know, have a higher life, a heaven life, somewhere.”

“Pansy! You're just too cute for anything. *A heaven life. Where?*”

“In us; in the animal kingdom.”

The other laughed and clapped her hands. "You clever thing! I see it! I see it!"

"Yes; don't you now? All the lime, and the salt, and all those things are in the earth and get drawn up into the vegetables and all. Then birds and animals and men eat them there; and we eat the birds and all too. Those chemical molecules, or whatever the books call 'em, they supply our nervous force; from that our thoughts and acts come. The dull clod of the field passes by degrees into the brain of the statesman, and nations are conquered. Isn't that the heaven life of the wheat and the corn? And the part our bodies reject, that goes out into earth again like this," pointing to the compost heap. "See the little flies hatching out of it over there. See that green dot down by Io's hoof. That's a weed sprouting; maybe some bird or insect won't think it's a weed, but food. Don't you remember that awful piece of meat cook threw out, with maggots swarming in it?" (She gasped, gurgled; both gave a shudder, a shriek, clutched each other and turned pale. Then giggles.) "Well, where was I? Oh; that'll be the way our dead bodies split up into a million lives in the grave. Yes. It's so. I guess our soul turns our body out as refuse just like this compost heap. Then more life comes. Everything feeds something; everything is eaten up and turned into another kind of life by the world. I don't see any Death about it. I only see change, change, change, and always a higher and a lower life for everything, turnabout. First the life of its own kind, and then a share in the larger life of some higher thing. And that higher thing is itself, too, because it forms a part of that something else for the time being."

"And so they're all one?"

"Yes; one great big world exchanging and changing. I don't see so much difference between things; and I don't know why people talk about Death."

"Did you ever think," said her companion, "that when we died, we went to another star, and lived there, and after that to another and another?"

"Why I never knew *you* thought of such things. You didn't get that out of English history."

"Yes; I know everybody thinks I'm silly. So I am. And Auntie would say that's the silliest idea of all. I asked her one day after church — isn't church just too awful, except Easter and the bonnets? — and she told me to be still and not be a heathen like that."

"When you've got a heathen name, too, Psyche!"

"That was Mamma — and she's dead; so I wondered, when I was little and missed her, if we didn't go on from star to star."

"Or maybe come back *here*. Why not? Everything else comes back here; *everything*."

"So it does. Pansy Allan, you're a real, live genius! You ought to write poetry. That's just what it does; it comes back, like the corn in the compost heap."

"And meantime it's had a higher life in some great body. Where? And for us, where? Is it a star or a sphere?"

They gaze up into the electric air. A tender solemnity dignifies the gay young faces. Involuntarily I lift my hat where I stand in the shadow of life. As I move away I hear a peculiar sound, not so often heard by old bachelors. It is a kiss, and gentle words follow it and me.

"You've made me so happy. You've taken away Death; think of it! I'll never be afraid in the dark anymore. We go on, from star to star, and we come back to this beautiful world."

"Psyche, I say. Never tell anybody, only the girls. People would laugh at us.

"Of course; what makes them so hateful and stupid?"

“Oh, I guess when they get older they’re worn out, poor old things, and they forget.”

More giggles, chatter, and I was gone, having learned an astounding fact. *Girls think!* Fancy! Under bangs and the feathered, beribboned caprices of fashion! Who could have supposed it? *They think!* Even *little* girls. For the other day Sue told me a ghost story under solemn oaths of secrecy. In the village where we summer is a so-called haunted house, which has stood empty for years. In the cold days of late autumn, an hour before sunset, Sue and her host of vandals saw the ghost at a window, a human shape that wavered or pulsated a little; it was spectral and faded, like a photographic negative, but distinct in the waning day-light. They saw it several times. They even showed it to me. On the second occasion Sue thus addressed her companions:

“Now, girls, we know the whole crowd sees it. And the house is empty, cause we dared the boys to go through it yesterday an’ they did, but with one pistol an’ six dogs. So it’s a *real* ghost. But of course grown-ups would call us foolish; some would scold us — not my fam’ly, they don’t dare. But I just hate to be laughed at. So we must swear never to tell a single grown-up, except Mr. Julius: he’s awful foolish about such things; he’ll believe us and maybe explainify it.”

Sure enough, I am so foolish as to believe with Sue that I saw this astral reflection which becomes visible in certain conditions of the atmosphere at a window where report says a faithless wife, imprisoned and insane, stood through the daylight hours of many years, gazing over towards the churchyard where her murdered lover slept in his grave, as men would say.

The consciousness of a child, more limited as to external perceptions and conditions than ours, discovers often the unseen in those objects or states of which it takes note. Especially is this the case with nervous children, whose earnestness often either hypnotizes the others by exciting their imagination, or, by actually raising their magnetic vibrations, enables them to see also the astral plane. Then the first thing “the crowd” does is to vow the total exclusion of “Grown-ups.” The children of the present age are almost all of one mind: they believe that their interests and those of their parents are separate, instead of being identical. They band together to resist them; they afford one another moral support in rebellion and contempt of the mental, ethical, and social dictates of maturity. Their attitude towards all their elders is one of suspicion. It is the most discordant aspect of American life. Our children do not believe that we have their true interest at heart; they question the validity of our experience; they feel that as a body we are mainly engaged in upholding our own ideas. Why is this? Can it be because we have stunted their true instincts by inoculating them with a perverted modesty, a false estimate of so-called “authority,” and futile methods of reasoning from effects alone? Can it be because *we* deny the validity of *their* experience, to them so vivid and strong, by teaching them to disregard the suggestions and hints of their inner selves? Can it be that we have been ignorantly teaching falsehoods to our children and that they are beginning to find us out?

I believe it, as any man must believe who sees that Society is on all sides engaged in repairing decaying erections. It is an organization for the purpose of upholding fictitious theories of all kinds. There is more to be said, of course, on this subject of our children; their irreverence is a reaction from our undue and irrational tenderness, a reaction of the race. This question cannot here be thoroughly explored.

I would add that we are beginning to find ourselves out: the age has misgivings concerning its own nature. Two events of last week were noted by me. One was a lecture by Mr. Perrin, on the Principles of Morality. His is the standpoint of the orthodox, materialistic scientist, and his lecture was an attempt to prove moral

principles based upon and arising from the purely natural order. The scientific and moral principles were sound so far as they went, but the lecturer failed to show the existence of any connection between them; all logical links were missing. Still we see with pleasure this hint that science is recognizing her own ethical poverty and feels the pressure of public opinion in this respect. It is a first reaching upward, an effort to broaden her territory: the effort will increase and bear fruit. So with the Church. At the home of an eloquent Protestant clergyman, a lecture on Psychic Research was delivered to a number of cultivated and religious women. That Religion too feels public pressure, and begins to look about for evidences of the soul, to extend her domain from form to reality, is also well. The pressure comes from Theosophy and from the current of thought inaugurated by it. It is the link between Science and Religion because it is both.

Nor is the value of this latter incident in itself invalidated because it was a mere trap to the cultivated audience invited to hear it. The lecturer, none other than the self-deceived Hodgson of Psychic Research<sup>1</sup> notoriety, played out in London, having quarreled with his society and now "Mr. Hodgson of Boston," gives a brace of psychic incidents, and then launches forth into his worn tale of his Adyar adventures and invectives against Madame Blavatsky.<sup>2</sup> That people are tired of it; that he has been "exposed" too; that the affidavits and proofs of Dr. Hartmann's able pamphlet and the signatures of 300 residents of Madras and Adyar all disprove Mr. Hodgson's unsupported testimony; that people laugh at the lack of common sense which came to "investigate" alone and without witnesses, and which listened to the tattle of a discharged servant (oh! these French maids!) until it was bamboozled,— all this has not penetrated the British skull. The Matthew Arnold spectacles fit more than one Englishman, it seems; our good natured tolerance makes them take us for fools. There have been bewildering women and male victims to their cleverness before now, and the partial youth of our investigator excuses him for having investigated Madame Coulomb instead of her mistress, Madame Blavatsky. No doubt the exchange relieved the tedium of foreign travel. But he is not excusable for playing upon the credulity and evading the expectations of earnest gentlewomen, nor yet for his insular ignorance in supposing that Americans are not well up in the subsequent events of his day. We yawn over dead issues too, and nothing bores us so much as those men who only rise from the common level by standing on the platform of their own mishaps and snubs. We are sorry for Mr. Hodgson's Adyar fever and his London chill, but we heard of them two years ago, and hash is our national *bête noire*. As I said, we are beginning to find ourselves out, our true selves, and it takes all our time and thoughts. The tide of the age is turning. Everywhere I see men and theories reaching outward and upward to broader lines; it is like a springtide whose impulse the very children feel. Well done, Theosophy!

JULIUS.

## NOTES

1. {Society for Psychical Research (SPR).}
2. {Since repudiated by the SPR.}

## TEA TABLE TALK.

JULIUS

A correspondent writes as follows: “Tea Table; I am not particularly interested in the psychometric experiences related at the Tea Table, but it seems that you consider them valuable, or at least interesting. I question very much if mine are worth telling, but I will give them.”

(Let me interpolate here, that this sentence is of itself interesting to students as a proof of how frequently we deceive ourselves as to our own nature. Who reads, thinks over, or gathers together similar incidents, or sends information to one for whom he has good wishes, on a subject in which he is “not particularly interested?”)

“Since I have been searching for the Truth, I have had innumerable experiences like the following; they all run in one line and prove to me that ‘The Unseen gives Unseen aid.’ I saw at our Art Museum a picture called ‘The Automedon.’<sup>1</sup> That was a new word to me, and I wondered what it meant. I looked in the dictionary for it, and the word was not there. Then I, as it seemed, carelessly took up a book of European travel, opened it at random, and the first words I saw were, ‘The coach dashed up to the door, and the Automedon cried Whoa!’

“I came across a bit of poetry signed Havergal.<sup>2</sup> Who was Havergal? I did not know. The next day a package came to me wrapped in a newspaper; as I untied it my eye caught these words: ‘Frances R. Havergal was born so and so,’ a short sketch of her life.

“Many, many years ago I read Leigh Hunt’s *Abou Ben Adhem*; I liked it, but it passed completely from conscious memory.” (Let me interpolate that Mohini Babu had a good phrase for such mental lapse: “It passed out of the active part of my mind.”)

“This winter some thought in the *Bhagavad Gîtâ* recalled it, and I wished I could read it again, but I had forgotten it was Hunt’s and knew not how to find it. The next week some person unknown to me sent me from New York a paper with that poem in it.

“An occasional incident like those given above of course proves nothing, but a constant recurrence of them does, I think.”

They prove in all instances the attractive power of thought, which is a spiritual lodestone. And I would ask my kind and valued correspondent why, if such incidents prove to her mind that “the Unseen gives unseen aid,” they may not do so to many another. I do not consider any of these things so “interesting or valuable” *in themselves*. But as subtle and constant indications of a great undercurrent which we might otherwise ignore, and as proofs of its presence in the most ordinary lives. I do consider them useful and as being there to be used, provided they are looked at in the right light. This right light is set forth by a letter from a young theosophist which was shown to me (and from which I take the liberty of quoting, unknown to its writer), namely, to regard them as analogies and indicators of rules which bear universal application.

“I have thought a good deal about the suggestions in your letter, and, the more I think, the more strongly am I impressed that they voice an important truth. I have always tried not to be sorry for failures in business matters, but when some project has failed, or carelessness or ignorance has caused loss of money or something else, have tried to appropriate the *experience* and disregard the loss.” (This is indeed the process

described in *Gates of Gold* <sup>3</sup> as “the kernel is within the shell, and that, instead of crunching up the whole nut like a gross and indifferent feeder, the essence of the thing is obtained by cracking the shell and casting it away.”) “I believe this is a good plan in business matters, and now I believe it *is* good simply because it is a shadow, so to speak, of a profound spiritual truth, and it strikes me constantly that so many of the rules given for spiritual development are just the very best for a man to paste up in his office to do business by. This may read queerly, but I mean that the eternal analogy between things great and small, high and low, is constantly appearing. It seems to me that the maxim, ‘As above, so below,’ is of universal application.”

This is of course true; it is these correspondences we must study and understand. There is no break in the chain of life or consciousness. We are to live on out “through night to light”<sup>4</sup> from the spot where we now stand, and all these delicate clues are sent us at once to show us the way, to open up our minds, and to be used as aids to still higher steps. The true intuition speaks in the above letter. Another instance of this natural power proclaiming the truth of correspondences was given to me yesterday by the child “Bun,” of whom my readers have heard.

Bun came over to call on his old friend, and found me installed in my arm chair, grumpy, grim, and disinclined to romp by reason of — let us say gout. Bun had excused me from a supper-party of his Father’s the night before for the same reason, and, peeping down over the stair rail at the guests, had missed a chat with his old friend. So he was discouraged, and now informed me that I was “too always in gout” and he guessed I would die. This opinion was delivered in a lachrymose drawl from the arm of my chair. His eyes then fell on a yellow dandelion in his own button-hole; their wonderful fringes uplifted; the great eyes flashed and glowed, and a beaming smile showed his small, even, white teeth. “The flowers dies, an’ then they comes back: we’ll come back too. You’ll go first; you’ll come back first a little boy; you was little oncest. Then you’ll have to wait for me.”

“I think so too, Bun.”

“But you’ll come back away off from here, away, way, *way* off. How’ll we find us?”

“Like we did this time. I was born far away from here, but I found you on the pike.” (An allusion to our first meeting on the highway.)

“Oh, yes. Well, Sir, when I gets *down there* I’m going to watch the seeds bust up. I put seeds in my garden; they bust open, an’ that long white thing, don’t you know, comes out of ’em. It gets to be leaves you bet, an’ flowers too. I *digged* one up to see; it was bust open an’ it died. I’m going to watch out *down there* an’ see them seeds all bust up an’ grow.”

A beautiful thought, this, of childhood; to utilize the grave to discover the secrets of nature, and the flowers to disclose the higher truths of the soul’s return.

Among the many events illustrative of past Karma working in present lives, none are more eloquent to the student of occultism than those by means of which he is first led into Theosophy. With many persons, this is a matter of gradually increasing interest from the earliest period of their lives, which culminates at some given point; with others it lies dormant until mature years, and is then of more rapid but still gradual growth. Yet another class — and this one is more rare — suddenly find themselves in the grip of an irresistible force which sweeps them away from all previous moorings and transports them to the new regions of occultism, new, yet weirdly familiar, as if they had known them in forgotten dreams. It may interest my fellow students to hear the story told to the Tea Table by a lady well known to many of us, of her entrance into theosophic life.<sup>5</sup>

“You know I was what is called ‘a woman of the world,’ both by birth and circumstances of education and so forth. I was a member of a fashionable Protestant

sect; I had a full life, brilliant in its joys and setting, dramatic in all its variations and climaxes, almost tragic at times through sudden glooms of many deaths. It was a crest-of-the-wave life, and always I went with the current unquestioning. Of any undercurrent I had no thought; my days were so crowded, and I rose buoyantly to every day of pain or pleasure. My intellectual and artistic interests were very great, and I reveled in them, in nature, in society, even in the intense storms of emotion, or of sudden change, of music, of poetry, of travel. I questioned none of these things. I never asked the meaning of Life. That it was a great whole, a science, a mystery, I never thought. My ideas, so to say, were separate entities; I never consciously related them or passing events to one another. Yet the sequel shows the action of a great subconscious life and growth: the hidden *knower* related all these things. In the anguish born of those sorrows where the overwhelmed heart cries out for a God it can understand to help it bear these upheavals, I too often called upon some God and longed to know something of Him. I felt that I could and must know Him. Yet when the silence gave me no answer and the new day bore me away into Life, I accepted man's ignorance as final and hopeless, and apparently forgot the brief intensity of my search. That this ever-recurring instinct of a possible knowledge of and union with God, coming always at moments when the blank insufficiency of natural life suddenly confronted the stricken heart, was in fact the soul's cyclic or periodical assertion of His real Being and presence — a faint reminder of its past knowledge,— was what I did not recognize at all. As I said, I did not connect events, and I went on with life just as an awakened man disregards his painful dreams.

"One day a telegram from a friend summoned me to an entertainment she was to give in a distant city. This gay summons I obeyed: it was a disguised call from Karma. By an apparent 'accident,' a work of a kind never approached by me that day fell into my hands, *Progress and Poverty* by George.<sup>6</sup> Waiting for my train, I fluttered its leaves because I had nothing else to do. These words met my eye.

'Passing into higher forms of desire, that which slumbered in the plant and fitfully stirred in the beast awakes in the man. The eyes of the mind are opened, and he longs to know. He braves the scorching heat of the desert and the icy blasts of the polar sea, but not for food; he watches all night, but it is to trace the circling of the eternal stars. He adds toil to toil to gratify a hunger no animal has felt, to assuage a thirst no beast can know.'

"Out upon nature, in upon himself, back through the mists that shroud the past, forward into the darkness that overhangs the future, turns the restless desire that arises when the animal wants slumber in satisfaction. Beneath things he seeks the law; he would know how the globe was forged and the stars were hung, and trace to their sources the springs of life. And then, as the man develops his nobler nature, there arises the desire higher yet — the passion of passions, the hope of hopes — the desire that he, even he, may somehow aid in making life better and brighter, in destroying want and sin, sorrow and shame. He masters and curbs the animal; he turns his back upon the feast and renounces the place of power; he leaves it to others to accumulate wealth, to gratify pleasant tastes, to bask themselves in the warm sunshine of the brief day. He works for those he never saw and never can see. ... He toils in the advance, where it is cold, and there is little cheer from men, and the stones are sharp and the brambles thick. Amid the scoffs of the present and the sneers that stab like knives, he builds for the future; he cuts the trail that progressive humanity may hereafter broaden into a railroad. Into higher, grander spheres desire mounts and beckons, '*and a star that rises in the east leads him on. Lo! the pulses of the man throb with the yearnings of the god,— he would aid in the process of the suns.*'

"See how in these lines by me italicized the hidden instinct speaks again through this writer, who is no theosophist or occultist and who in his very next lines denies his

own last fine intuition by saying, ‘Is not the gulf too wide for analogy to span?’ I have since read this book and found no other message for me in it except this one upon the page which destiny opened for me that idle day. What a passionate tumult they awakened within my breast! Before me rose the People, the vast oceans of Humanity outside my own circle never before thought of; not isolated sections which our organized charities might reach, but the race. It was my first dazzling glimpse of Universal Brotherhood. Yet, like the worldly epicure I was, I enjoyed the poetic emotion and thrust aside the thought. Soon with my friend, I forgot both. That afternoon she opened a magazine which came in the mail and tossed it aside. ‘Why do they send me these things? I’m not a theosophist,’ she exclaimed.

“What is that?” I asked.

“*Mon Dieu!* Did you never hear of Theosophy? Nor of Madame Blavatsky? Well, my Dear, you *have* been buried alive.”

So I had been, in the remote West for a time, under circumstances not relevant here.<sup>7</sup> My friend then told me of the phenomena performed by Madame Blavatsky, and that she had been invited to hear a ‘chela’ talk that very afternoon. We would go and ask him how to put ourselves into training to do these things, even dieting if necessary, as it would be such fun to astound our acquaintances. I thought it would be great larks; I vowed to give six months to it if necessary, thinking it some new and wonderful legerdemain. Before dinner we pirouetted up to see the “chela” (who, by the way, never pretended to be one) and get his occult recipes. As we entered the salon of the flat where the meeting took place, I saw the red evening sky between masses of storm — buffeted clouds, and heard a calm voice from the twilight say these words:

‘When once you forget yourself, then the first bridge to the Eternal is crossed.’

“Never shall I forget that moment, now so profoundly graven upon my heart. In quiet hours I see that far red sky and the gathering shades of night quickened by those words. For an extraordinary prescience, an instant conviction, seized me: ‘This is not legerdemain but the true religion, and I have known it before.’ I sat down too stunned to listen. A great boundary had given way in my life, and through the breach what astonishing thoughts poured in! Prepared by the first touch of the early afternoon, my softened heart was whirled far out of itself. When I came back to ordinary life I was a changed being; I recognized at once a vast unrecognized want and its fulfilment. Still, as I procured the names of theosophic books from the ‘chela,’ I determined to weigh and judge all, but, instead, I found a muffled voice within me crying ever, ‘It is the truth.’ You see now that I am a theosophist, though unworthy, because I must be one: I am irresistibly borne on to it by the impetus of my own soul, the evolution of my own nature. Paraphrasing Royalty of old, I might write myself — ‘By the grace of God, theosophist.’ ”

So spoke the Vedas before this student: “He whom the self chooses, by him alone the self can be gained. He sees the majesty of the Self *by the grace of the Creator*.” Just as the supreme illumination only comes through the Eternal Will, so in our daily life theosophic teachings never come truly home to the soul unprepared by evolution to receive them. Men never listen so readily as when we speak to them out of their own experience, and hence the Tea Table suggests that nearly all people have them and are curious to hear them explained. They are, in fact, the entering wedge of occultism; any one may prove a karmic revelation.

JULIUS.

## NOTES

1. {“Automedon with the Horses of Achilles,” Henri Regnault. Automedon was a charioteer in the Achæan forces in the Trojan war.}

2. {Frances Ridley Havergal, primarily a gospel and hymn writer. From *Poetical Works* (?)}
3. {*Through the Gates of Gold*, Mabel Collins.}
4. {*Through Night to Light* (?), a novel by Friedrich Speilhagen.}
5. {Julia describing her own experiences.}
6. {*Progress and Poverty*, Henry George.}
7. {Probably Julia closing out her late husband's business/holdings.}

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*The Path* – July 1888, Vol. 3, pp. 129-131.

## TEA TABLE TALK.

JULIUS

All classes and all conditions contribute their quota to occultism; this time it is the dentist — Heaven save the mark! — in whose chair we have so often squirmed, in whose horrid confessional the bravest and strongest have owned that man is but clay clothed in the ashes of dejection! As the astral form develops under the steady tension of occult thought, many strange instances occur of the soul's use of this vehicle in order to impress the outer man with a sense of its real though hidden existence. Many are the ways to this end; the most ordinary are dreams of flying and floating, of visiting distant scenes in a body buoyant as thistledown, a "trifle light as air." We have not always in fact made these journeys in our astral body, afar from the physical or outer form, because the ability to do this, even unconsciously, implies a coherence or development of the astral body which transcends that of the average man. We do not need to move away from the sleeping body to see these distant places when we see with the eye — or rather the power of sight or insight — of the soul. These hints it conveys to our waking consciousness of a body and of powers other than those we know, are of deep importance. They imply an urgency on the part of the higher self, and usher in that evolutionary stage known as "the moment of choice:" by their occurrence we may know that the time has come when the soul begins to weary of matter, when Karmic stamina is ripening and man may learn more of the unseen. One of these occult reports was recently made, to the Student under interesting circumstances. For the extraction of four wisdom-teeth he had taken gas; a quantity sufficient to overpower seven men had to be administered to him; he only remained under its influence some 50 seconds, coming to himself as the fourth tooth was drawn. He felt no ill effects and went about his business for the rest of the day, but that night a peculiar nightmare visited him five times; no sooner would he fall asleep than its every detail surged upon him; the fifth visitation left him awake and nervous for the rest of the night. He dreamed that he lay back in the dentist's chair, unconscious and inhaling gas, while also his other self looked on from another part of the office. The dentist bent anxiously over his patient; suddenly he exclaimed to his assistant, "At last he's off!" He threw the mouthpiece aside, snatched his forceps, drew the upper right-hand tooth, tossed it off from the forceps and it fell behind the chair; the lower right-hand was tossed in front to the left of the chair; the upper left-hand one dropped into the cuspidore when withdrawn; the patient came to himself on the fourth, despite all this haste. The first tooth had a hooked root, a thing rarely seen, and the assistant gave an exclamation of horror on seeing it. The whole scene was one of hurry and anxiety. Next morning, on questioning the dentist, the student found that these details were all correct as to order and method, so that he had the strange experience of a state of

physical unconsciousness being reported to him in another state of unconsciousness, namely, sleep. Nor was this all. An intended aural operation made this and another dental one necessary as preliminaries. Just before taking gas a second time, he felt a sudden impulse to have an impaired front tooth removed. Friends deplored the sacrifice; the dentist rather dissuaded him and represented that there was no occasion to draw it, it could be easily filled. The patient yielded, but all at once removed the gas mouthpiece to say that this tooth must also be drawn; the impulse, recurring strongly, simply overpowered his reason. It was done, and the tooth proved to have a concealed ulcer attached to its root, so that, if left in his mouth, it would have entirely frustrated the subsequent aural operation through nervous connection, and its removal would have been ultimately necessary after irreparable damage had thus been done. He said to me, "Jove! how it made me sweat to think what a near shave I had of it. Never again will I chaff women about their intuitions!" Quickly, who was present, furnished another grisly anecdote of this kind. He dreamed one night that he walked along the street and suddenly found that a large piece of one of his molar teeth fell down upon his tongue. He noted that he appeared to be in Wall St. Two days after, the dream having been put away from his thoughts, as he was walking down the street, he felt some hard substance on his tongue. On taking it out, he saw it was a large piece of one of his molars. The dream flashed back upon his memory, and he saw that he was standing upon the same spot he dreamed of, and that the tooth of his dream was the damaged tooth of this waking hour.

Apropos of internal warnings, there was a singular case well known to us of a man who was about to engage unwisely in a business partnership of such a nature and of bonds so peculiar and so firmly fixed that they subsequently fettered his whole life and checked its current, inwardly and outwardly. At the time this proposed step appeared to be satisfactory enough, yet just before its final consummation the intended partner received an anonymous paper full of statements which were to my friend's disadvantage in a business sense. This gentleman sent for my friend and showed him the paper; fancy his surprise and dismay on recognizing that it was written in a disguised chirography of his own! Warned by the inner self, the body had somnambulantly written to its own disadvantage and, while still asleep, had dispatched the letter. The warning was all in vain. My friend, a very determined man, though shocked, kept his own counsel, entered into his co-partnership, and now bravely and calmly bears the losses of both kinds from which himself endeavored to save himself. A very advanced occultist once saw this incident clairvoyantly in his aura, and told him of it, thus affording additional proof of its actuality.

Such pictures of our thoughts and deeds remain all about us, are seen by the seer, and experienced involuntarily and mentally by the unconscious man who is sensitive to astral impressions; they are impressed upon his brain as a photograph is upon the sensitized plate. Quickly walked into a restaurant one day and sat down opposite a chance acquaintance whom he met there only and nowhere else. As Quickly looked at this gentleman the thought of mediaeval knights came into his mind, and he said, "You ought to have a suit of armor of the Knights of the middle ages." The gentleman replied, "I was just thinking of my place at X—ville, and, if you will come down there, I will show you a room of 20 by 30 feet, in which I have a collection of armor belonging to old English and French Knights; I have been getting it together for the last 20 years." Quickly is a careful student who takes note of and obeys these mental impulses, thereby learning much. The collector of armor, being devoted to that hobby, has pictures of the armor and of the place where he keeps it, imprinted all about him in the astral light. These pictures are deeply graven into his sphere because he has thought of them so long and so much. Moreover, he had just refreshed the pictures, so to say,

because he was then thinking of them. Here we have a hint of the way in which thought clothes an idea with a sublimated kind of matter.

Upon another occasion Quickly went to attend a meeting of friends who were about to discuss some philosophical works. The host met him in the hall, and they entered together a room where there were five other persons engaged in an animated discussion of some proposition laid down by Kant. The first idea that struck Quickly as he entered was that someone had said prayer should be offered. Although this was quite foreign to the subject, he exclaimed, "Who wants to pray? Let Mr. Smith offer up a prayer." They all laughed and then said it was very curious, but just before Quickly had rung the bell Mr. Smith had jestingly said, "Let someone offer up a prayer." The astral light quickly shifts and changes automatically into ever new forms. The just-spoken words about prayer had not yet been lost in new pictures, and so both picture and words were taken naturally and quickly from the astral light by the observing student. We live that we may learn, and we learn most by attention to the attitude of our own minds.

JULIUS.

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*The Path* – August 1888, Vol. 3, pp. 167-171.

## TEA TABLE TALK.

JULIUS

We were talking, round the Tea Table, of the very evident necessity for careful discrimination in Occultism. Right thought — which may be called, in a real sense, "discrimination of spirit" — is everywhere needed, but especially is it called for here. This is indeed a vital point, that the student should scrutinize every incident, every word; that he should closely consider shades of expression and assure himself that he understands the inner rather than the outer meaning. Every word of worth bears examination. Every truth has meaning within meaning, until we reach the germ of all.

An excellent instance of such discrimination was given on the occasion instanced above, by the Professor. The incident bears, moreover, upon the fact that in occult directions we have above all to see that we grasp and can follow this inner meaning alone. Else by material interpretation we fall into gross error.

The Professor is a student of the Yoga Philosophy of Patanjali. He had composed himself to fixed thought on the Supreme, and, as sometimes happens at such times, his mind slipped away into a waking vision or trance. This state is of course not that of true concentration; it is a failure to attain to it. At the same time it is a higher state than the ordinary waking one, and in it he sometimes learns things of value. It is a state which he knows not how to name. Suddenly he seems afar from all known surroundings; he is transported into a new experience. Then in another period of time, whose duration he knows not nor has thought of, he becomes conscious that he is seated where he was at first; he knows he has not slept, but that some vision, which he now remembers well, has swept over him. It may have occurred in a flash or it may have occupied more time; this is a point he has never cared to verify. Time exists only on the outward plane, and he has been more desirous of understanding the meaning of the visions themselves, and also of knowing what this state is. Certainly he does not go out in the astral body, as so many persons mistakenly suppose themselves to do. Nor is this clairvoyant vision of scenes actually taking place somewhere, for he, the prime actor, is not then in those distant places in reality. It appears more like

instruction through pictures, and such pictures can be sent along the astral currents by those whose knowledge permits it. Then all those students who had quieted the outer senses could receive them. We can only conjecture upon a state which we have not ourselves experienced, and even when we have, our ignorance of occult science often prevents a true conclusion. These so-called visions of the Professor, however, bear the characteristics of this last mentioned condition rather than those of the others, and it is to be remembered also that the soul, the Higher Self, teaches us also, and might also project such scenes.

The especial vision of which the Professor told us was this. He seemed to be in some distant cloud place where material surroundings were invisible; he stood, as it were, in space, and knew, with the psychic sense, that someone asked what he wanted there. In thought he replied that he had come to pledge himself wholly to the guidance of a Master or Teacher. His thought in that land seemed to be both speech and act. His questioner asked in the same silent way, whether he had examined himself carefully, if he was sure that such was his real wish. He said it was. "And do you give yourself up without reservation to such guidance?" "Yes, I do," was his reply. These thoughts flashed to and fro like vivid, living colors in vibration, and all the clouds trembled with their beauty.

"Have you the power to follow His guidance?" now asked the invisible questioner.

"I think I have."

"It is well. You have the right granted you to be tried. The first order is this. You must sacrifice that which is nearest and dearest to you. Go kill your mother."

The Professor was grieved and shocked at such a grotesque order. Then he felt a chill; suppose it was real! or was it only given to try him? Should he go away and prepare for a deed which he was sure he would not be allowed to do, which he could not do? No! The Master does not institute such grim comedies. Hypocrisy is no part of a disciple's duty, but rather, as in the case of the Pharisees of old (the only persons, mark, whom Jesus unsparingly condemned, and for this vice), to be a hypocrite is a fatal bar to all spiritual progress. So the Professor expressed this thought, and he noticed that its color was faint and cloudy: "That cannot be. The Master would not give such an order."

"It is His order."

A gleam of intuition sparkled through our friend's dim mind. He thought: "It has been given to you, then, whoever you may be, and that may suffice *you*. It does not suffice *me*. Every disciple must hear the Voice for himself, and must know it to be that of his Guide. He cannot take, from minor tones, any command of that Voice."

"But if he is not fitted to hear it? If he has not opened up the inner senses so that he can hear it? Then the Teacher speaks through other instruments which work on lower planes. Other men are often such instruments."

"Then they should bear a token with them."

"They do."

"What is it, and where is it presented?"

"It is truth, and it is presented within you."

Looking deep within his mind, the Professor found with surprise an underlying but extraordinary certitude that the order was a true one. He had denied it hastily, from habit of thought and surface instinct. Sadly he turned away, thinking "I will obey the order, if I can."

Here was a dreadful dilemma. It was easy to neglect such an order. It was not easy to forego discipleship. His whole heart clung to that. It was his only chance to

help his race intelligently. He must obey, but in what sense? He began to study those words.

“Kill my mother? Who then is my mother? My mother, in the ordinary sense of that word, is she who gave birth to this body. *It* is not I myself. So the mother of this body is not meant. Can it mean the earth, the mother of all men? But no; earth merely mothers our grosser elements. Who or what is the mother of my inner self? Before I can know that, I must know what is that self, the me. Is it the Spirit? No. The spirit does not say *I*, or *me*,— It knows no separation. This *me*, then, is the personal soul, the human soul, and not even that higher aspect of it which is purified and united to the One. The mother of the personal soul is Nature. It is, then, that passive and elementary Nature which gives birth to mind, in which these false conceptions of myself arise (as being this body, or brain, or mind),— it is that I am to kill. But hold! The *Gītā* says that nature and spirit (Prakriti and Purush) are co-eternal. How then can I kill that nature? Ah! I see. This lower nature is a gross form or sheath of that higher or subtle one; the only way in which I can kill it is to kill it *as such*, as lower nature, *i.e.*, to alchemize it. I am to raise it from the lower and passive to the higher and positive state. And since this is my first order, I see well that I am not accepted, for I do not even know how to obey. I must go away and try to find out the Way.”

Here the Vision came to an end, and the Professor found himself in his place, looking at the gray stone ledge on which his eyes had rested before he passed off into this other state. It had taught him with a transcendent vividness which words can neither equal nor portray, how necessary is intuitive discrimination on things occult, and how the disciple gains by a method of which this vision is perhaps a mere symbol or parable.<sup>1</sup>

Another lesson conveyed is, that for want of complete concentration a part probably of the injunction was lost,— the very portion, no doubt, in which was contained the explanation of the term “mother.” But the Professor says that he has no doubt he was able to reach the true solution because he found growing up afterwards in his mind the seeds of the explanation left in his memory. This Didymus opined was a part of intuition, and that the greater amount or clearness of intuition found in some men was due to their ability to revive lost memories on such points through their greater concentration, as that enables them to bring back either partly or wholly what they had once learned.

“You mean, of course, in other lives,” said the widow.

“Oh yes,” replied Didymus. “When speaking on these subjects I never look at Man as the mere being who is known in this generation, but as one whose past extends behind him an immeasurable distance.”

Just at this interesting point Sue ran in and said to the Student who had been apparently dreaming:

“Say, I was just talking of Auntie, who was in New York I thought, when she drove up to the door in a carriage. Isn’t that queer!”

The Student looked at her as if she were one seen in sleep, and then, turning to the Professor, remarked that such coincidences were happening every hour of the day, were commoner than any other, and yet science had got no farther than to label them “mere coincidences,” while popular judgment had evolved a statement of the law governing them in the saying “Speak of the Devil and he appears;” “in fact,” he said, “just as Sue burst in upon my devachanic reverie, I was thinking over the strange way in which such coincidences happen. Here the other day, when in Philadelphia, I was walking with Didymus on Chestnut street and talking of our friend Medill who was, as we supposed, miles away. I had just said ‘Well, he is a fine fellow.’ The sound of the last word had not died away when the voice of Medill himself, not one foot away, said,

‘Well, Student, where did you drop from?’ Another ‘coincidence,’ of course. But it is the same as that sort which meet us hourly when we hum a certain tune and around the block we find a boy whistling it.”

These things will never be explained by such terms as *coincidence*, for that is merely a cloak for ignorance. It is a declaration that, because we are so finite that the manifold laws of nature elude us, we have elected to say that here no law reigns and the whole thing is merely coincidence, but don’t ask us, please, to explain what coincidences really are; they happen every moment merely because they do. Theosophists know better than this. They see a multiplication of senses half-perceived by man, through which many events and things are known and noted without our feeling that a hidden sense is used. Our approaching friend, supposed to be far away, propels in all directions about him his own aura which carries with it its own identification and personal suggestion. That strikes upon our aura or sphere, to which Swedenborg referred, and instantly we fall to thinking or speaking of the absent one, who, in a few minutes, comes into our presence.

How easy seem these things to understand when occultism steps in! But science says “Folly; you fit the fact to the theory.” What say you, my reader?

JULIUS.

## NOTE

1. In *Bhagavad Gîtâ* we are told that mind is nature’s first production. Jacob Boehme also says this.

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*The Path* – September 1888, Vol. 3, pp. 200-202.

## TEA TABLE TALK.

JULIUS

To-day we have a chapter of “coincidences,” all collected from friends and students who take a kindly interest in the welfare of the Tea Table. One valued friend writes:

“A couple of notes that touch this month’s Tea Table go to you. ... They are coincidences a little different from this month’s; but, having received my copy of Patanjali only a little time ago, and being at present engaged in a sentence-by-sentence digest of it, I have only had so far two points to lay aside for hunting up, but have been very anxious to get them, for I don’t like to leave forts behind me. One was touching the state of Sushupti; the other was a desire to get a copy of the Sankhya for several references. These desires had hardly been formed a week, when along comes the PATH with an answer to the first question, and a notice that Mr. Judge has the *Sankhya* for sale.”

Bravo, Brother, for that study of Patanjali. It will repay you amply. So deep is it that, no matter how much you perceive in each aphorism, there are still mines below. The best study is done in this wise. After *the mind* has extracted all it can from an aphorism, then hold it in your brain; take it about with you, as it were, into the street cars, while you wait for lunch, or where not else. Simply brood it,— as we say of a bird that she broods the nest. The subconscious mind knows the underside of that aphorism; it is based upon the finer forces; it attracts them and they will enlighten you. This process is mysterious,— that is to say, it cannot be better put into words. It must be experienced to be known. And thus you apply to Patanjali his own method of

abstract meditation. Try then to hold your mind to one aphorism at a time. As to the *Sankhya*; it is a noble work. It does not appear so truly philosophical as the *Bhagavad Gîtâ*, for, while it considers Nature as the all-efficient Cause, “the rootless root; the unevolved evolver,” it nevertheless admits the separate existence of Soul, co-eternal with and unaffected by nature. Yet it gives the Will to Nature. Here seems an anomaly. This all powerful Nature has one thing — Soul — which resists it and is thus seen to be more powerful; hence the basic Will would seem rather to reside there. The *Gîtâ* gives us Prakriti and Purush, or Nature and Spirit, as coeternal and co-operative, and above these the Highest Spirit, the unknown Causal Will. It is well to know that there are the Atheistic and the Theistic Sankhya, as well as the Yoga Schools of Patanjali and the *Gîtâ*, the Vedantic or controversial and mystic Brahmanical Schools, and some minor ones. The *Gîtâ* leads all and, so far as our own studies go, reconciles all. Although the mere words of the Wilkins translation are more euphonious, yet the translation of J. Cockburn Thomson, with notes, I consider the best of all.<sup>1</sup> He is himself a philosopher, and his prefatory account and summary of these various schools of philosophy, as well as his notes on the *Gîtâ* itself, are wonderfully lucid and condensed. As his is the modern Christian point of view, he at times misunderstands the real meaning or the bearing of a text, but if we have developed intuitional discrimination to any extent, we soon learn to discount those mistakes while receiving all that is of value. He, as it were, conducts us within the first door; he enlightens the intellect; then we are prepared to go deeper without him.

I hear that some students are dismayed by H. P. Blavatsky’s recent statement that the Vedantic philosophy is not that of the Himalayan Adepts. But the Vedanta School is not that of the *Bhagavad Gîtâ*. We have been constantly directed to this latter work, and urged to delve deep within it. The Brothers have not yet disclosed Their interpretation to us, because it is needful that we open up our own minds as a preliminary effort. This we are doing. Anyone who sees that the tide of general thought is now coming well abreast of that of the Theosophical Society is led to hope that, in virtue of well-known laws, some further enlightenment will now be given out through that pioneer body. No doubt the forthcoming *Secret Doctrine*, delayed by Karma until the proper hour, will do this; perhaps also there are other events “in the air.”

To conclude, we find the *Sankhya* of use in clearing up our ideas about Nature, or the natural essence of Divine Being, so long as the one mistake alluded to is clearly held in view. The *Gîtâ* says: “The supreme Soul creates neither the faculty of acting nor actions, nor yet the desire for the fruits. But each man’s own *nature* produces them.” The passive Soul Power, or Brahman, is the basis, says Blavatsky; the germ is Prakriti or Nature, which, thrown into the field of neuter non-conscious but absolute and eternal cosmic Force, evolves all the rest through this conjunction. (See *Five Years of Theosophy*, Page 159.)

There is a young student much beloved by those Theosophists who know her, all the more tenderly because in the very flower of her youth she has been stricken blind. A strange blindness, too, for vibrations caused by very heavy sounds cause colors to pass before her eyes. Apropos of this, we find in the *Lotus*, re-translated from the *Chicago Herald*, an account of a blind man who saw everything “by perception” and went everywhere, seeing along the astral light; he called it “my light.” The young girl alluded to is a devout student of the *Gîtâ*, which is read to her until she commits parts of it to memory. Recently her mother wrote to a friend: “She was wishing one day that she could see the book. She was *lost in the thought*, when the book passed before her eyes. She commenced reading, when all of a sudden she remembered that she was blind. She says the book vanished the moment memory returned.”

The words which I have put in italics mark the state of complete concentration. Had she remained in it, further enlightenment concerning the *content* of the page would

doubtless have followed. The return of memory was a change of vibration, in which synchronous action with the finer force was lost. We have to train ourselves to feel no surprise, to give no inward or mental starts, such as lose us these precious moments. So it is upon awakening from sleep. Almost everyone makes some unconscious motion which changes the vibration and breaks the connection.

Still other coincidences. A reader of the *PATH* of last month tells us that she discovered herself to be a possessor of the mantram power. Some friends showed her a sick stallion, drooping in his stall. An impulse made her go up to him, stroke his head and murmur into his ear certain sounds, she knew not what, cooing and rhythmic. The animal threw up its head, evinced much pleasure, and finally trotted out into the field in great spirits and excitement.

Quickly had a business engagement in the Custom House. Arriving somewhat early he went into a corridor to smoke, but found he had no match. While he was wishing for one, an opposite door opened, and someone unseen tossed a match away and closed the door. The match was a wax one; it fell, still burning, at Quickly's feet, and he picked it up and lit his cigar with it. Upon another occasion he was drawing up a paper which required the age of the man whom it concerned. Quickly asked his age; the man hesitated. "I'll make it thirty-two, then," said Quickly. The man stared, and then asked how Quickly came to know his exact age.

A friend of ours wrote that he had a strange dream concerning us. We showed him a *cloisonné* plate, with a medallion in the center, which we called "a Buddha plate," and said it was for him. He added that he supposed the medallion was a portrait of Buddha. Note that this supposition was not in the dream. Now we have no such plate, so the story passed from our mind. Two weeks after, on the expected visit of this friend, we were looking about our summer quarters for some souvenir of his visit to give him, which he could use in his new office. There was little else but trash, which we turned over and over until search in a desk brought to light a *cloisonné* saucer. This we washed off, and only upon bringing it to the lamp to wrap it up did we notice a medallion (without any portrait) upon it; then for the first time the dream returned to our mind, and both commented upon it at once.

We have served up our dish of coincidences, and we have only to offer to those who have taken this interest in our efforts at inter-communion the best thanks of theirs fraternally,

JULIUS.

## NOTE

1. So, we understand, does Madame Blavatsky.

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*The Path* – October 1888, Vol. 3, pp. 226-230.

## TEA TABLE TALK.

JULIUS

Once again our friends have taken my task from my hands. The following letters, depicting their experiences touch the heart with a sense of their truth, and may perhaps encourage others suffering in silent from experiences deemed by them to be unreal hallucinations; whereas they are only abnormal, that is, they are products of a state other than the ordinary, average state of present humanity. This state is none the less

real, for all that. Those who undergo it would not doubt this,— and, speaking truly, in the depths of their hearts they *do not* doubt it,— were they not judging themselves by the verdict of others instead of their own. Because the average man sneers at such things, having no inner sense developed whereby he may cognize them, and because the average man is in the majority, many persons suffer agonies of doubt and self-distrust in silence. Listen to this speaker.

“For many years of my life I saw at different times spectral persons and animals gliding about me. They looked like real persons, only that their movements had no jar; they seemed to pass swimmingly from point to point. Sometimes they had a wraith-like, misty appearance; more often they were solid and strong in color. The animals occasionally wore shapes unknown to me. These creations were first seen by me during an illness occasioned by a severe blow upon the head, received in a moment of great danger, and while my health was in a critical condition. I spoke freely of them to my physicians, who gave it as their opinion that my brain was disturbed by the blow. In other words, for a few months I was considered insane, or partly so. I soon recovered my health and was able to leave my sick room, to travel, to study, to re-enter life, and to engage successfully in business. Yet I was a most wretched person. Why? Because I still saw these appearances. Not always, but from time to time, especially if I felt below par, or if the nervous headaches to which I became subject after this blow were coming on. Now I knew myself to be in all respects,— in all *other* respects,— a perfectly sane person, and I held a high place, socially and intellectually, among my fellows. To make such an admission was to cast upon myself the slur of insanity, cripple myself for life, and give distress to some, at least, of my friends. The fact that a connection of mine was hopelessly insane would also go to overshadow my own case. I determined, naturally, to keep silence. But oh! the doubts of myself, the secret fears when, in company with others, I would see these creatures glide about us and knew that I alone saw and felt them. I almost believed that my brain was fatally injured, in this respect, at least. In all others it was sound as a bell. One day relief came. I was talking with a friend, and one of the creatures passed through the air. I glanced at him askance to see if he noticed my slight start upon seeing it. To my amazement, my delight, my extraordinary joy, he glanced at *it*; his brows contracted slightly, then he glanced at me and abruptly resumed his broken sentence. ‘Hurrah!’ thought I, ‘there are two of us then.’ I felt really ashamed of myself to see how truly ‘misery loves company.’ I resolved he should confess. Imagine the way we fenced, doubled, and twisted! But not for so long. My friend was a student of occultism; he knew the rationale of these shapes. He had no lurking, horrid fear of his own sanity to combat. He only did not wish to cast his knowledge before the ignorant. What a blessed relief! I felt pounds lighter, years younger. Soon I found other persons who had the same experience. When I found them accurately describing the object seen by me at the same moment. I could not doubt that this object was real, and not a figment of my brain. Most of these persons were in perfect health and had never met with any nervous shock or accident. I may say that my life has been renewed since the hour in which that blessed creature — it was a translucent man! — appeared to me at just the right moment, when I happened to have an occultist to my hand. I find fear, or the burden of silence, afflicting most of these seers. ‘You do not know what it is,’ said one to me at a T.S. meeting, ‘to see these things all about, and hear people denying that they exist, and to have to keep still for fear they will call me crazy, or do worse. Sometimes I see these shapes sucked right up into the aura of those who are saying there are no such things. Their thinking about them with scorn and hatred seems to attract them more than desire does. And sometimes people come here and talk so good, and all the time I see such horrible things about them; pictures of dreadful things they have done; or a horrible order of decay about them that comes from the foul astral body inside, which

I can see all putrefied; or bad elementals that come and go and are servants to their wicked thoughts. It is hard then to listen to their fine declarations.’ ”<sup>1</sup>

In the *Lotus* (Paris) for May there is a fine article upon Hallucination (so called) to which *Lucifer* has just called attention, while mistakenly attributing it to the June number. It reminds us that “The ordinary or normal eye seizes a certain state, or series of states, of luminous vibrations of the ether. It perceives material objects by the modifications which these objects impart to the etheric vibrations. If they did not set up this modification for our eye we could not perceive them, any more than the fly can see the pane of glass against which it buzzes obstinately, without any visual perception of the obstacle which it feels. Normal sight, so called, is that which perceives the modifications which material objects impart to luminous vibrations.” (On the principle that every object and every atom try to impart their special rate of vibration to all their surroundings, just as each ordinary human being wants all others to think as he does.) “If other objects exist which are also capable of modifying the etheric vibrations, normal sight cannot perceive them; it ignores them; for it they do not exist. They can only be seized by an eye which is differently organized, which seizes readily such modifications of the luminous vibrations as are imperceptible to normal sight. Like all which is human, normal sight is vain. It is persuaded that nothing can be more perfect than itself. If those who do not see objects normally invisible, admitted that those who do see them perceive real objects, they would by this admission confess that their faculty of sight is not perfect. Common sense — and common in both senses — having concluded that the seer was an individual possessed of a deranged nervous system, only needed to find a word to indicate this derangement or this disease. The word ‘hallucination’ was found, and all was said. But a fact of sight cannot exist without at least two conditions,— the organ of vision and the object seen. There is a simple means of proving the regular or irregular working of the organ of sight. It will be evident that it works regularly if, besides these invisible objects, it also perceives the objects seen by all the world.”<sup>2</sup> Mr. Guymiot then goes on to consider matter and its states. “Matter escapes the finger and the eye; it passes from the solid state to the liquid, from the liquid to the vaporous, from the vaporous to the fluidic or etheric. The most determined materialist is forced to admit that the etheric state is *something*, since it can contain all the matter hitherto contained in the solid state. If matter in the solid state forms beings, the only beings perceived by normal sight, who dares affirm that it does not also form others in the liquid state (undines), in the gaseous state (sylphs), and in the etheric state (salamanders)? It is not capriciously, it is not by hazard that matter passes from the invisible into the visible state; crystallization demonstrates this. To do this, matter obeys what we call laws, a vague expression whose signification would be more precise if we said that matter obeys Will.” Our author then demonstrates that all we know of such laws is that they have an action analogous to the human will-power, and by a series of excellent arguments he deduces the presence, in Nature, of great conscious powers called “gods” in occult literature. We are told by *Lucifer* that “this article has special value as, in a measure, preparing the reader’s mind for this theme as treated of at length in Mme. Blavatsky’s forthcoming *Secret Doctrine*.”

A friend whose experience has been rich writes us:

“Your Tea Table attracted me. It made me feel like inviting myself to join it. I have never had the society of a theosophist, never known one personally. A friend sent me a copy of the *Wilkesbarre Letters*<sup>3</sup> which proved the key to my own experience. This has been so peculiar as to make me the subject of persecution in which I lost home, friends, and fortune. Still I hold that which cannot be taken from me, and have retrieved more than was lost, without the sacrifice of a principle. A kind of figurative language, in which every natural object is the exponent of something in the world of mind and morals, was given me, by which I read many things not found in the books,

and learned to ask and answer questions. Not quite satisfied with intangible evidences, I longed for something more, some proof of the many things which were borne in upon my spirit vision and my spirit ears. So also this was given me. The outward sense of touch corresponded with the hearing ear and seeing eye, so that I tried to lay hold upon objects which appeared before me. In some instances I knew of the presence of persons whom I never saw in life, and have been advised by them; and, unlike the spirits who answer by raps, I have never once failed when following the directions given me through this symbolical or figurative language. Though I may wait for the power to use for the good of others the riches of this interior world as given me, still I realize the truth that "one day with the Lord is as a thousand years," and I am very happy in the light that is around me, *a light which may be felt*, and humble my naturally proud spirit, since I am debtor to Celestial Truth for all my soul-wealth. Her ministers are many and her messengers are divine."

It is necessary to discriminate in experiences. Those of this friend are true; some are very high ones (as since given to us), others again are of the astral plane. This is natural; the being is growing all at once, equally in all parts, and has experience of various planes or portions of his vast organism which has touch with the whole universe. This is the great value of Theosophy, or the *science* of Wisdom. It enables us to classify, to range, to understand our experiences, to cultivate some and disregard others until our judgment has ripened. Where this friend speaks of the "spirit eye and spirit ear," it is really only the astral sense. In spirit, the senses are not; they are blent to one thing, *Knowledge*; this is not subdivided into various kinds of sensation; it is one whole. Again, the reason those teachers proved reliable was because they are probably the messengers of the Higher Self, or reflections from that Self, sent to teach one of pure motive *who did not mistake them for the spirits of the dead and so degrade them to a lower form in the mind*, but whose spiritual sense was sufficiently quickened to know that they had a *real* source of Being. Where the "light that can be *felt*" is mentioned, (the italics are mine), it is evidence that this light is material, substantial, although it is so by means of the developed astral senses which convey its impressions to the gross outer body *from within*. It is the ether in the fourth, or perhaps the fifth, state, which last is "protyle," the latest "scientific discovery" of Mr. Crookes, and it is felt by the above student in the state to him normal, *e.g.* without going into trance. In other words, the astral body is sufficiently developed to be in continuous synchronous vibration with that state of matter, which therefore becomes visible to the student. Scientists forget the spiritual aspects of rarefied matter, and often theosophists also neglect the fact that "Purush and Prakriti (Nature and Spirit) are always conjoined." They think the word matter, or substance, degrades their experience, whereas some substance, however rarefied, is necessary for manifestation, until we pass into the regions where thought itself ends. If we will ask ourselves what part of our nature is affected by a given experience, we obtain a clue to the nature of that experience; we know its plane and order, provided we ask with sufficient concentration, or have opened the spiritual perception. Those who have never known this often think they have; they confound it with the keen astral sense. Once known, it can never be mistaken for aught else; in that state, to *see* is to *be*. A contemporary gives "instructions" how to develop "light and understanding." To force the astral senses thus in advance of the spiritual perception which interprets and governs these others, is as dangerous as giving a child a loaded fire-arm to play with; and, moreover, such acquirements belong to the astral body and are not sure possessions of the soul.

JULIUS.

## NOTES

1. {*Le Lotus Bleu*.}
2. Condensed translation. {*The First Principles of Herbert Spencer*, H. Spencer.}
3. {*The Wilkesbarre Letters on Theosophy*, Fullerton and Besant.}

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*The Path* – November 1888, Vol. 3, pp. 265-268.

## TEA TABLE TALK.

JULIUS

Some of the dream experiences of students are full of instruction, not alone for the dreamer, but also for others. While our lives are aimless, or our motives and desires are numerous and mixed, our dreams partake of these confusing qualities. Once that our aim is determined towards higher things, we are more and more liable to be instructed in dreams, although we do not always bring back a memory of them. Yet the instruction is registered all the same upon some higher plane of our nature which we as yet but dimly feel or grope after. Other students, again, have complained that they had always hitherto slept the deep dreamless slumber which refreshes the soul, steeped then in devachanic experience. But since they had become students of Truth, this state had inexplicably changed, and their slumbers were filled with senseless, confused, and idle phantasmagoria. This fact need not disturb them. By their studies they have set up a great agitation and disturbance in the whole life, and the first stir of the inner senses, the first response of the psychic nature, is like the blind, swift movement of the sap in spring. Later its flow will become regulated. All students are not taught in one and the same manner.

The following comes from a natural clairvoyant of remarkably keen psychic sense.

“One morning in Feb., 1866, while outwardly fast bound in slumber, my inner self seemed to go out unhindered by time and space. I stood upon the shores of a vast ocean. A ship appeared upon the water. It reached from the ocean to the blue heavens above. I asked, ‘What ship is this?’ Though I saw no one, the answer came clear and distinct, ‘The ship of State.’ Then I noticed that it was draped in black from bottom to top. I looked, but saw no one upon the ship. It came with a great shock to me that there was *no band at the helm*. A sensation came over me such as is produced by an electric shock. I saw the ship topple and turn upon its side. Soon it righted and came up. Then it drifted slowly *southward*. Again in mid sea it toppled and turned upon its side. This time it sank slowly but steadily beneath the waves, and bubbles arose above it. A voice near me said, ‘One form of Government is ended forever.’ These words shocked me awake. It was broad daylight! I scarcely need to remind you of Lincoln’s death, of Johnson’s Southern proclivities, and later on of Garfield’s tragic exit, or of the subsequent change of politics in the government of the nation.” (Here we differ from our friend, inasmuch as we believe the final catastrophe pointed to some event yet to come. Predictions of a great revolution in American affairs have come to us before now from the East and elsewhere.) “Also, three days before Garfield was shot by Guiteau, I saw in like manner a majestic oak tree. I asked, ‘Of what is the oak a symbol?’ The answer came, ‘It is a monarch oak, and symbolizes Power.’ Instantly the tree fell with a crash, causing great confusion. I thought it must have hurt a multitude of people, and with this came the assurance that Garfield would be killed. Only a few days passed when a friend to whom I had spoken of the matter came to me and said,

'You were right; Garfield has been shot.' There is also another method by which I foresee events. I have in speaking of it called it clairvoyance, but I am not clear as to whether I am right or not." (It is a species of clairvoyance, not what is commonly indicated by that term, but an instant of inner perception due to the activity or co-ordinated vibration of the gross and the astral bodies). "I do not seek. It comes at unexpected moments. I am physically neither asleep nor in a trance. It seems as though for a moment the veil of mortality is snatched from my eyes and I see; sometimes very beautiful things; bright, sparkling waters, symbols of a happy course of events; white flowers, symbols of the happiness of a pure and joyous nature; corn, symbol of wealth; honey, symbol of love; grapes, symbol of plenty. Affliction and danger are in like manner shown in advance through natural objects. Another form is this, and now, too, understand I am physically awake; I am not in a trance. I am talking to a lady who, I have every reason to believe, is a true friend to Mrs. A., who is ill. I happen to turn my back as I ask, 'Have you seen your sick friend, Mrs. A?' Instantly there seems a cold stone wall at my back. I see it, and feel a chill that makes me shudder. Turning quickly, I see with my natural eyes a scowl of hate passing over the lady's face. The shock nearly took my breath away. I had seen and felt the hatred in her heart, and subsequent events proved this true."

A student on the other side of the world, while not striving after phenomena, evidently has some psychic powers. At one time he was sitting in his cabin, where he lived alone, and was dozing over a cup of tea after a hard day's work. Suddenly in dream he seemed to be in the house of his nearest neighbor, and heard the family talking about him; he saw their various positions, on the lounge or by fire or table. Waking up, he put on his waterproof and splashed three miles through the rain to his friend's house, described what he had dreamed, and found it was exactly what had taken place at the time. Such dreams afford proof of the reality of the inner self, and sometimes are an effort on the part of the soul to awaken the outer man to a consciousness of dual existence.

Another student, when brought into contact with new persons, has dreams which allegorically reveal to him their real character. These are various, amusing, and always prove correct eventually. Thus in one he saw his new acquaintance R. in a large *body*, to which R. was much devoted, in a *dark* room, (and R. is a person of spiritual darkness), dressed in harlequin tights, black and yellow, exact, *e.g.* it fits tight. The black is error; the yellow is partial wisdom, education, and so on; but as both are split up uniformly, it shows that he never has the wise idea unmixed with error. In the dream the student caught R. by the neck, and squeezed him in like a sausage, without rebound or refilling on his part, which shows that his interior padding, or inner nature, is supine, easily crushed, set, and inhabits narrow limits. Also that the dreamer obtained ascendancy over his mind. This prognostic was told me some time ago, and has since proved singularly true.

Another student related the following to a friend: "Relative to dreams, I once saw a letter come to me in dream from the editor of X magazine, and with it seemed to be one from you which was in a No. 9 envelope, small legal size. Just then I woke, but retained a strong desire to read the editorial letter, as I *felt* it contained unpleasant news. Subsequently this letter came to me, and was to the effect that an abusive article concerning me had been sent to the editor which he declined to publish. Reading the letter gave me the *exact* disagreeable sensation I experienced when sleeping. But your letter did not come for several days, and, when it arrived, had no connection with the editorial letter, and was in your usual square envelope. But it did contain matter interesting to the X magazine, so I wrote and addressed a note to the editor, and, on proceeding to enclose yours, found the addressed envelope was too small.

Mechanically I hunted up another, a No. 9 legal size, and enclosed the whole, when the letter seen in dream flashed across my mind.”

These letters chronicled events of importance and of trial in the life of the dreamer. He was thus forewarned, and the incident is a fair example of the way in which the vision becomes mixed up in passing through the various planes before it emerges upon that of the normal consciousness. The *trained* psychic sees it as a whole and in due relative proportion. It is the difference between a diffused cloud spreading by degrees through the atmosphere without form, and a sharp puff of smoke, which, sent with intention and *meeting no obstacle*, cleaves through pure, still air in perfect shape, and is seen complete in itself and duly related to its surroundings.

Another correspondent writes: “Our county seat is 50 miles distant from this place (J-town), and, while we have no railroad, we are connected with the county seat by telegraph. Yesterday the operator was sick, and as I am an old operator, I was sent for and dispatched the following:

‘Dr. Smith, L-ville. Come up immediately. Answer at once. G. Jones.’<sup>1</sup>

It was about 6 P.M. when I sent the above, so we expected an answer that night. I waited some time, then went home and returned again at 9 P.M., but could not ‘raise’ the L-ville office. Next morning my wife rose at 7 P.M., and this roused me sufficiently for me to think that I must go to the office and see if any answer had come from L-ville. But I dropped off to sleep again, and dreamed that I went to the office, called up the other office, and received the following:

‘G. Jones, J-town. Can’t come. Sickness in family. Dr. E. S. Smith.’

When I woke up again, which was probably in a few minutes, I dressed hastily and went to the office, expecting to see my dream fulfilled, but to my inquiry the operator answered, ‘Nothing.’ I came home, forgot my dream, ate breakfast, and was sitting in the office over some papers, when a boy from the store came and said that Mr. H. would like to have me come over a minute. I again went there and received this by wire:

‘G. Jones, J-town. Can’t come. Sickness in family. Dr. Smith.’ My dream did not come into my mind, however, till about 1 P.M., when I was reading “Astral Intoxication” in the October PATH. Then the almost literal fulfilment of the dream flashed over me. I say *almost*, for you see the dream-message was signed ‘Dr. E. S. Smith,’ while the real one was signed only ‘Dr. Smith.’ I remember noting in my dream the S. in the signature. I knew that E. was one of his initials, but was not certain if he had more. I now find that he has but the one, E. Did I in my dream see the message when he wrote it, which was about the time, I should say, that I was asleep?”

He saw the message either being written or to be written. The determination on the Dr.’s part to write it was the same, *in the astral light*, as the doing it. The student should write “Smith” and find out whether he had decided to write it some time before doing so, or if he wrote “E. S. Smith” and then struck out the S., or if in habit of doing it so, or if he sent another person who wrote merely “Dr. Smith,” contrary to the Dr.’s thought. It seems also that the message was repeated from a branch station half way between the places. Mistake might arise there. The student should get the facts. The same happened to Quickly. A clerk was ordered to wire him, forgot it, and remembered the order with anxiety too late to send. This anxiety impressed the message strongly on the astral light; Quickly saw it in dream; and, when the clerk came over to his residence next day early to confess, Quickly verified the fact.

JULIUS.

## NOTE

1. Names, etc., are always changed in these incidents in order to preserve the privacy of correspondents.

## TEA TABLE TALK.

JULIUS

Rich indeed is the chronicle of the past month. The year 1888 closes ripely, full of harvest for succeeding time. The appearance of Vol 1. of *The Secret Doctrine*; the formation of the Esoteric Section; the announcement of the probable visit of our President-Founder next year, (an event sure to be productive of great stimulus and general public awakening); each of these taken singly is a decided step onward in the affairs of the Theosophical Society, and taken altogether they seem to form a bright harbinger of a better day. *The Secret Doctrine* itself is a tremendous event. It is simply overwhelming. The stanzas from the ancient Book of Dzyan are sublime. They have all the thrilling poetry of Truth. There are phrases that run through the body like fire; ideas that make the flesh to curdle and the very hair to tingle with their shadowy awfulness. Who among occultists can read without emotion that weird phrase, *The Army of the Voice*?<sup>1</sup> It is not for me to review this work; not for language to return thanks for it. We can only take the gift in silence, repeating our pledges in our hearts. Two years ago H.P.B. wrote; "Have patience. *The Secret Doctrine* will teach you more definite things than *Isis* now ever could. The latter was only an essay balloon. I hope you will be satisfied with the last and final work of my life." The book verifies this assertion; it teaches definitely. There is much that we cannot fully understand, of course; moreover, the present volume does not complete the work. It would, then, seem wise for us not to be too ready to form opinions, to build up doctrines, or to reject what may conflict with our present ideas. These truths are to be developed by her later. Also to be tested in our experience, and not in our brains, and much of our experience now lies in what we call the Future.

When we consider that these events have come about under the Law of Karma, we may regard them as the just dues of the Society as a body. In these opportunities the Karma of Humanity has also a share, though coming, perhaps, less forcibly home to them by reason of their greater remoteness from Occultism. Following occult analogy, we may see in the T.S. the immediate Karmic vehicle or organism for the distribution of knowledge on our plane to all who can receive it. "To him that hath shall be given."<sup>2</sup> This mystic saying is verified here and continually through processes of Attraction. The above view finds corroboration in the dedication of the *Secret Doctrine* to all Theosophists; "for they have called it forth." This fact is an encouragement and a warning. The first rewards while it prompts us to fresh efforts. The second reminds us of the increased responsibilities of enlarged knowledge. Whether we "take knowledge" or not, as we have called it forth, each in his own degree and according to his aspirations, this opportunity, whether in its use, disuse, or misuse, is now set down to our account. Wherefore it behooves each one of us to ask in the secret tribunal of the soul this question; "Am I doing *all* that lies within my power for Humanity?" What hidden sores this probe discovers in us!

Our Founders are doing their utmost, with every nerve and faculty on the strain; H. P. Blavatsky fighting materialism in England and the world; Col. Olcott sustaining those efforts by his own sacrifices and inexhaustible devotion; and the third Founder, who in the pages of this magazine must go unnamed, but, let us hope, not unthanked by its readers. And the month that has slipped by us has brought some bright examples of unselfish work. Some have cropped out through the working of the T.P.S. Scheme.

Strangely enough, by the way, a comparison of lists developed the fact that THE PATH is almost wholly supported (in so far as it is supported by the public) by truth seekers who are not members of the T.S. From this public comes also the more prompt support of the scheme named. Possibly because the work of copying was not asked of them, as it was of members who stand professedly ready to do work. No reference is had here to persons who disapprove of the scheme. They are as 9 in 225, so far as heard from, and their opinions are of course their own. Undoubtedly a better plan might be devised. But this is the only one that *was* devised, the only help offered. Beyond the mere financial question it has done good in arousing thought and discussion, an effect both desired and foreseen. It is hoped that those who are waiting for some more ideal method to offer itself will initiate some such themselves and go to work on it. They may be sure of aid, for the great thing is to take what work offers itself, and not to stand waiting for the perfect plan or opportunity which never is found.

Here, for instance, is a theosophist who was obliged to re-use the ten cents asked, while expressing his sympathy. Why? Because his income from hard labor has not averaged over \$3 per week for 14 years. On this he managed, by strict economy, to “subscribe for *Lucifer*, THE PATH, the *Esoteric*, and other lesser lights,” to buy *Isis* and *The Secret Doctrine*, to subscribe to one Branch of the T.S., and also to pay a fixed sum towards his church and orphans. His letter asked to “be regarded as an humble confession which tends to show and prove what wonders could be accomplished in this great and good Cause if all interested persons would put their shoulders to the wheel. I can do no more now, further than feel very grateful for the sure and certain *knowledge* that those who can do more are doing it: *e.g. some of them are.*”

The Tea Table, for one, thought it was doing its best, until the above facts made it feel *small*. After all, how many of us make sacrifices of our daily comforts or habits in order to give? The Tea Table does not, more shame to it! But such examples will cause it to reflect and amend. Then there are the Christian or Mind Cure Scientists. We are told by the agent that every one of them on her list has been most liberal, and a couple of soldier members, far on the Western frontier, each gave from his slender pay ten times what was asked. One of them apologized for not handing on his circular by saying, “I know it is not polite, but I do not know anybody who will take an interest in such things.” What a picture of moral courage here rises before us. The brave soul holding to occult truth in silence, distance, isolation, all of them real trials to the flesh if not to the spirit. And this amid the rough army life, and its material tendencies and jests. These instances could be matched with others which, like these, asked to do good in silence, but one can show as well as a thousand that circumstances do not hamper our powers when it is our will to surmount circumstance.

Another touching event has come home to us in the last days and death of our late Brother, Govinda Row Sattay. It is a sad story, with hope and good cheer breaking through the sadness. It is a tale befitting the Christmas season; one of love for humanity, of peace triumphing over life and death: let us read it reverently as an epitaph truer than most in its final eulogy.

Over a year ago the public first heard of Mr. Sattay through a public injustice. He was present at a religious meeting at Ocean Grove where the “heathen” were severely commented upon. Among other statements was made this; viz., that Hindus worshipped the images which they, in fact, make of clay for memorial decoration upon certain high festivals, throwing them into the river when the day is over. Wealthy persons have images of gold for use upon such occasions; these are preserved, for, as Mr. Sattay used to say with his rare smile, “I do not think an American would throw a gold image into the river.” He had previously aroused the anger of some sectarians by his lectures on such points in hotel parlors, and when he rose to ask some questions at

this meeting, in response, it is said, to an invitation addressed to questioners, he was ordered to be silent, and, persisting in his queries, was arrested and thrown into prison. Fancy an American's being so treated if he rose to some question at a public meeting, even without any of Brother Sattay's habitual and serious courtesies!

At this juncture the General Secretary of the T.S. saw the occurrence in the newspapers, and at once went to Ocean Grove to effect the release of the friendless stranger. Mr. Sattay naturally asked what had procured him this unexpected aid, and being told, he remarked that, if he might judge from their actions, he should say that the Theosophists were the *real* Christians. This said, he went away, and was for the time forgotten.

But he did not forget. His Hindu code was simple, but it had a grasp on the daily life of the man such as dogmatic creeds never can have. He had received a benefit in the name of Humanity: that benefit must be returned to Humanity; such is Karma. This autumn he reappeared at the T.S. Headquarters in New York. He had worked at photography until he had saved enough money to live upon (and he ate mainly bread and milk) for one year. He now proposed to join the Society and to devote that year to working entirely for the Cause, whether in free teaching of Sanskrit, in expounding Oriental Scriptures from his standpoint as a Brahmin and a Buddhist, in giving lectures on India or on psychic or literary topics,—in a word, all that he could do. His gratitude inspired him with a single aim; towards it he had worked with {his} whole soul. One humane deed had lit, or revived, the sacred fire within his heart, and the wanderer became an ardent humanitarian. He knew no other course but the following of his inner conviction, and for it he abandoned all else. It was the unqualified action of a strong soul. It reminds us of the acts of our Founders. What human failings do not such acts redeem?

Then the great Shade drew noiselessly near and enveloped our Brother without a warning. He had worked for some brief weeks, happy in his new aims and friendships, with the placid contentment of an exile who feels once more about him that spirit of sympathy which makes the warmth of home. His home had been abandoned from hereditary discontent. Without kindred or ties, he crossed the seas, hoping, as other patriot hearts had hoped, to learn in Western countries the secret of their power and to transfer it to India. Like his friend and fellow Theosophist, Annandabai Joshee, he believed that power lay in our educational system, and both endeavored to procure it for the women of India.

After a short visit to the Philadelphia Branch, Mr. Sattay suddenly fell ill. Just before, he had lectured to the Aryan T.S., and a lady present, seeing him for the first time, remarked that she saw death in his face. Being told that he was always thin and grave, she replied that she did not judge from externals, but from the terrible hollowness she felt and the cold cloud which seemed to envelop him. Two weeks later his illness declared itself; in two days his friends became alarmed, and he was placed in a pay ward of the Brooklyn Hospital, where the doctor in charge said he might linger some time but could not live. A day or so passed, when on Saturday night the lady before named awoke from a sound sleep. Feeling cold, she rose to close the window, and had hardly returned to her bed before a panoramic picture passed through the dark room. She saw a bed in a small hospital ward, and noted all its special surroundings. On the bed Sattay lay dying; a nurse stood by him, and a subjective voice said, "This is Death." With that a second picture slid across the first,—a dark and deserted dead room; in its center stood what looked like a table, yet she knew it was not one. Upon this lay a body prepared for burial, and covered. The face she could not see, but saw through the covering the position of the hands, and *knew* it to be Sattay. The pictures passed like vivid flashes. She exclaimed, "Sattay is dead!" Lighting a match, she looked at her watch. It was half past eleven. He died that night at half past twelve. So she saw

at once what was transpiring at the hour of her vision, and also the future event. Next morning she saw a friend who had been interested in Sattay, and who had just come from the hospital which she had never seen. To this friend she described correctly all the surroundings, the details, and position of the dead, even to the table which appeared like one but was not, and this in our presence.

Our Brother died as a man should die, with firm faith and that courage which is not self-conscious but innate. He said that he was ready to go away, and desired that he might be cremated and his ashes thrown upon the river, according to the custom of the country he loved too well. Making a will by which he left his money to the General Secretary in trust for the Cause, he said: "If I die, all I have is for Humanity. If I live. I will always work for it." And thus, his worldly goods and body disposed of, his debt of gratitude paid, his few comrades thanked, he withdrew into the temple of spiritual contemplation, and, calling upon the Three Great Powers in triple invocation, the solitary wanderer withdrew from solitude, and passed to the place prepared for him where he may rest. His ashes to the waters; his heart to Humanity; his soul to the Supreme. Peace be with us!

JULIUS.

## NOTES

1. {*The Secret Doctrine*, H. P. Blavatsky, Vol. 1, p. 30.}
2. {Matthew 13:12.}

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*The Path* – January 1889, Vol. 3, pp. 325-328.

## TEA TABLE TALK.

JULIUS

A Happy New Year! One year nearer the close of the cycle. One step of countless steps nearer the unknown goal!

A Happy New Year! How easy to wish it! To obtain it is another matter. Yet how vital it is that we should obtain this happiness which every man instinctively seeks from cradle to grave, because it is the only real requirement of the soul. Again and again the soul strives to quaff the waters of happiness, only to see them recede, or to taste a wave more bitter than that of death. This will be so as long as that soul holds mistaken ideals of happiness; as long as it misconceives its own nature; as long as it looks for happiness *without*, instead of *within*. For only *within* is the truth discovered. There only the soul realizes its own nature, and, finding itself to be universal and not personal, looks for happiness thereafter in the life of unity, and not in that of separation. Abiding then under the wings of the Law, the soul knows her own true Being, and is content because all that is, is wisely-ordered Law: entering into the life of all, she goes out toward all. A Happy New Year in the light of this hope, namely; that we may bring the warmth of love, the peace of truth, into the lives of men.

There are ever these higher consolations within reach. There are also other and minor ones, but very commendable ones for all that, to enliven this stern, work-a-day world. I do not know any more precious boon, for example, than a sense of humor. Why should we not begin the New Year with a theosophical jest or two? Here are some samples of the public mind; our Mental Science friends will please take notice — to the extent of laughing with us.

HOPE DEFERRED.

*Mrs. DeWitt Rawlinson.* My dear, you really must pardon me. I hear you're a Buddhist.

*Mrs. Lawes* (Brightening up). Oh, yes! Do you take an interest in —

*Mrs. DeW.* R. (Interrupting). So I thought I would ask you where you buy your idols. It's so difficult to get reliable bric-a-brac!

"UNTO THE PURE."

*Bonton.* What's the matter with that pretty Miss Joyce, that you fellows don't take her out?

*Modes.* Well — you see, my dear fellow, all the women are so down on her. She's a theosophist, and it's not quite the thing, don't you know.

*Bonton.* Aw — Theosophist? What sort of a fad is it?

*Modes.* Takes all the men to be her brothers, don't you know.

*Bonton.* Good Lord, Modes! What's Society coming to? Who says the women aren't more promiscuous than the men?

IN THE LITANY.

(*Clara; behind her prayer book*). Why did you cut Mrs. Charleston?

(*Maud; ditto*). Hush-h-h! She's one of those horrid Buddhists. Never goes to church at all.

(*Clara*). Well, you really can't blame her. She makes her own bonnets.

(*Maud*). One would think she'd want to see ours. No! I draw the line at irreligion. I feel it my duty to cut her.

(*Clara*). Of course. Me too.

(*Both*). "We beseech thee to hear us, Good Lord."

AT THE CLUB.

(*Alfred, to Chollie*). Say, dear boy. There's my friend Rawlins, the orientalist. Dine him and show him about a bit.

(*Chollie*). Oh, I say now! He's shockin' bad form. So deuced enthusiastic.

(*Alfred*). We must make allowances for him. He has such a lot of ideas.

(*Chollie, mollified*). Ideas, has he? Poor devil! The girls shall ask him to their parish tea.

It seems, however, that it is not well to indulge in too much fiction, or Destiny will have us by the ear. For this a good Brother of ours vouches as follows.

"A young friend of mine, of very imaginative turn and some occult tendencies, told me recently that his habit of air-castle building had followed him into his business, and that for some time past he has become aware of its peculiar results. To the best of his memory, every single instance of this habit has, for a long time past, been followed by a complete failure of the plan or negotiation. He might act outwardly exactly the same, but if regarding that transaction he had allowed himself to wander on in thought to the possibilities — counting chickens before hatching —, the eggs were sure to be cracked every time. The evidence became so clear to him that he looked upon the two as simple cause and effect, so that he constantly endeavored at last to drive all speculation on results from his mind, as a simple expedient to prevent the failure of his plans. Of course this illustrates Levi's saying: 'The will accomplishes what it does not desire.' It is very interesting to me as a complete and independent illustration of the plane of Desire, and how moving in it acts as a drag."

It really does seem at times as if the intelligences behind occult laws attempted to illustrate their existence even through our most practical affairs, in the hope of compelling our recognition. Another Brother writes: "I have a friend who is an engraver. She is of skeptical temperament, scouts at Theosophy, and only considers this incident '*curious*.' She had a dream last week, in which she went to a Magazine office, but instead of seeing the editor who had charge of the illustrations, and with whom she dealt, she was requested to walk into the inner sanctum and see a higher authority. This was a room she but slightly knew. The higher authority told her that he had asked to see her in order to get her to engrave for him a portrait of Wm. Lloyd Garrison, then hanging on the wall. He called attention to its age and the cracks in the varnish, and particularly enjoined that these should be reproduced.

Such was the dream. The next morning she went to the magazine office, and exactly this dream in every detail down to the cracks in the portrait, was enacted. She was of course astonished, and told the incident as very singular."

Precisely so. And it seems to me still more singular that such incidents do not make people think. There is, for the occult, an amount of evidence which would prove every other subject true, a million times over, to the hardest-headed audience in the world, but the very same people who accept every fact in — Chemistry, let us say — as absolutely true, without the least knowledge of the unseen combinations, will flout an occultist unmercifully if he presumes to hint at the real existence of the unseen. How many of us have any practical experience of the fact that water is composed of two special gases? Yet we regard a man who doubts the fact as an utter ignoramus. But if we are asked to accept the occultist's statement as a working hypothesis, we are at once far too well-balanced and judicious for any such rash proceeding, and demand a proof for which we will not seek ourselves. So we are made,— or have made ourselves. Kismet!

We hear a good deal of the correctness of occult powers; let us hear the other side. Quickly says: "I had long thought over a curious old mark on a foreign document. It puzzled me because I could not make it all out, and I had kept before me an erroneous recollection of it, always thinking of it as T.A.V. One day I met a clairvoyant at the house of a friend, and she proposed to tell me what 'the spirits' showed her about me. I consented; we sat together, and immediately she said; 'Oh! I see a name written all about you. It is that of your guardian spirit.'

'Yes?' said I, 'and what is it?'

'It is a queer name,' said she. 'Let me see — yes — it is Tar. And it is written all about.'

'Very interesting,' I rejoined. In this case, although a clairvoyant, she saw the deeply-impressed image — in itself an error —, but was not able to see the producing cause, and willingly accepted the dictum of 'the spirits.' Those same spirits were mischievous elementals."

Just one more, and then the Tea Table will excuse you, reader, for the month of January, '89 {1889}. It is a sister who speaks this time.

"A friend of mine was going to London, and we were discussing whether she should sail on the Cunard or the Inman line, and on a certain week or the week after. I urged her to sail on the Cunard, because they never lost a passenger. She replied laughingly that a man who had sailed on the Cunarders some sixty odd times told her that, when he asked for a clean napkin at dinner, the steward said, 'We cannot give one now, sir, but we never lost a passenger!' I parted from my friend, and was thinking intently of her intentions, while on the deck of a Jersey City ferry boat, crossing from New York. Suddenly I seemed to feel the shock of a collision, and a picture flashed through my mind of two vessels colliding. We were in mid-stream and there was no

collision with the ferry boat; only an astral impression. I turned my head, and saw upon the fast approaching Jersey shore the signs of three Steamship lines. The middle one was the Inman, and it seemed to leap out across the water at me. Full of my preconceptions, I took this to mean that the Inman line would have a collision, but subsequent events showed that it was the one my friend should have taken. I wrote her, urging her to sail on the earlier week, and by Cunard. She replied that she could only go on the later week, but would go by Cunard line. The evening she sailed I tried to see her clairvoyantly, but could only see a small and deserted steamer sinking, stern foremost, in the mist, and felt a shock of collision. As no larger vessel was in sight (on my astral field), I concluded the vision had no reference to my friend. Next morning brought me a letter from her, in which she said a collision had occurred with just such a steamer as I saw; that her stern was stove in and she was fast sinking, while the Cunarder had lost her in the fog, and had been obliged to put back to New York. I had sent my friend on the wrong line! So much for untrained seership! But I was right in urging her to go the first week, and perhaps that covers all."

Yes; the ladies are always right in the end. At least they say so!

JULIUS.

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*The Path* – February 1889, Vol. 3, pp. 356-360.

## TEA TABLE TALK.

JULIUS

Thinking over the current number of the Tea Table, a sudden idea struck me. It was one of those ideas that hit hard, and that seem to fall into the mind from "outside," — as we, in our sense of separation, call all that is not visibly interior to our physical shell. This body is really immersed in the one Substance much as a sponge is plunged in the ocean. The sponge seems to enclose a certain fixed amount of water, but in fact that water is always ebbing and flowing through wave and tide, and interpenetrates the sponge without being separated from the whole body of the ocean. Moreover, the sponge can only hold a certain amount at one time, but through that it is related to and impinges upon the whole ocean, and has not the folly, as the human sponge has, to try and hold on to its small share of water, to crystallize and fix it there, shutting out all the rest and impeding the glorious universal influx.

Such ideas are very different from those that seem to originate with a flash within us. A study of the various kinds and methods of Thought is of great help to the student. He sees more and more clearly that we are often "thought through;" that many of our thoughts are suggestions, sometimes from beneficent and also from evil sources: he learns to distinguish all these from that internal and luminous prompting which is his soul-guide.

My idea was a very simple one, and illustrates the point because it appeared to come whizzing directly from some other mind. It had the practical human flavor about it. There are flavors of the mind, as well as of the palate. Its bearing was simply as follows. "This is the people's Tea Table; why not let them furnish it once in a way?" So I only enter this month to bow myself out again, a conventional visitor, leaving as my card the subjoined letters.

"*My dear Julius;* This is the experience of W., a friend who has lived in this mountain fastness for 22 years. ... In 1873 he had (and has yet) a partner named J. They had a little bunch of Indian ponies — 25 or 30. They built a cabin just on the

west side of the Sierra Madre, but it was deemed best to bring their ponies over on the east side to range during winter. It fell to J's lot to take the ponies round the mountain point, 40 or 50 miles from their cabin, to the range selected. They had a very intelligent bitch of shepherd breed, called "Woolly." Usually she remained at the cabin, but on this occasion she concluded to assist J. with the horses. Being a very trusty and, as I said, very intelligent animal, she was accorded a particular corner in the cabin, and it was her habit, when returning from any jaunt, to trot to her corner and throw herself down (when very tired), and groan with satisfaction. W. was sitting in the cabin at dusk, on the eve of J's expected return, listening intently for any sound of his coming.

The weather was pleasant, and he had not yet lighted the evening fire. Everything was intensely still, and W. was expectant, knowing that J. should be near. Inside the cabin it was quite dark. Not a soul within 50 miles probably. Finally, old "Woolly" trotted into the cabin and to her bed, and threw herself down unusually hard, groaning and grunting with evident satisfaction that her hard tramp was over, and she once more in comfortable quarters at home. W., hearing the dog come in, started up to go and assist J. in caring for the horse he had ridden. He looked everywhere for J. but couldn't see him. Old Woolly was never known to desert and come home of her own accord. If she had done so this time, it was the first. J. must be close; so W. returned to the cabin, made up a fire, and began to prepare supper, thinking J. would soon appear. He glanced into old Woolly's corner; *she was not there*. Surprised beyond measure, W. called and searched, but no Woolly was to be found. The fact was, neither J. nor the dog was within 20 miles of the cabin at that moment, for W. found J. the next morning in old Bridges Pass, on the ground, with his collar-bone broken. His horse had fallen, just after dusk the evening before, and had thrown him over his head, breaking the bone; and old Woolly, tired and worn out to exhaustion with the long tramp, had thrown herself down on the ground in abandon, and groaned as she stretched her weary limbs.

That was 15 years ago, and W. (who by the way is nothing if not a Materialist) says that he never was so badly deceived in all his life, and cannot, to this day, rid his mind of the belief that he heard the dog come in just as she always did. I want to say, by way of closing, that they had this old dog in 1883, and it is my firm belief that she understood all that they said to her. They talked to her as though she were a person, and I have seen some strange things done by her, that she was told to do, just as one would tell a child to do so and so. — J.F.C."

It may interest our comrades to see how far our lines extend. The above letter comes from the far West, and the next one relates events of Honduras life. As the Tea Table gathers them in, the wish will arise that we could all draw closer together, could personally inter-act and work. For example, one devoted member and official of T.S., reading in the Tea Table of a Brother's exertions, promptly offered him through us a subscription to T.P.S. publications, with which to do more good. Such events make us glad that we spread our Tea Table.

*My dear Sir;* The accounts of coincidences as given in THE PATH remind me of an occurrence of last November. One morning in that month I awoke impressed by the idea that I should like to stroll to the Sterling Valley station, on the Rome, Watertown, and Ogdensburg road, about a mile from the house of the friends whom we were visiting. It was the first and only time such an apparently causeless impression was felt by me. I mentioned the feeling to my wife before leaving the room to go to breakfast; but became interested in a conversation during that meal and thought no more of my

desire to walk to the station. But during family prayers the impression that I must go to the railroad became so strong that I hurried away as soon as I could do so.

Arrived at the station without having a conscious purpose in coming, and nothing to do when there, I chatted for a moment with the agent, and then paced to and fro along the track. At last I was tempted to go to the switch a few rods to the westward from the station. There was nothing of interest to call me there, for I had seen all there was to see; but as I had nothing else to do, and as little is needed at times to tempt an idle man to do acts for which he has no reason, I walked toward the switch. There I found a piece of the steel rail of the main line broken out and displaced. It was not a large piece — perhaps not more than a foot in length —, but it has happened that great disasters have been caused by smaller things.

Hastening to the agent I told him of my discovery. He promptly telegraphed a warning to the fast express, then almost due at the station next west from Sterling Valley; and when the train came it ran very slowly over the break instead of flying along at a high rate of speed.

If you will take the trouble of looking at page 183 of *Lippincott's* for January, 1887, you will see recorded there two or three other incidents of the like nature which have happened within my own experience.

As I sat writing in my room in the house of Señor Don D. M., in Tegucigalpa, Honduras, one evening in March last, the señor came in, looking rather scared, and exclaimed:

“A most curious thing has happened to me this moment. I heard the voice of my sister calling to me so plainly; did you hear any one call? I thought you might have spoken to me some word, but that could not be so; you were here, and I was on the veranda on the far side of the *patio*, so I could not have heard you if you did not shout. I fear much that my sister, who is in Paris, may have died that moment. I felt my hair to straighten, so,” and my good friend straightened a lock of his curly hair.

I had not spoken. In the salon adjoining the library where I was, la señora sat contentedly rocking and softly singing to the sleeping baby. The three-year-old girl lay curled in one of the commodious rocking chairs sound asleep; the other two little girls sat each on an arm of the chair their mother was in, their arms around her neck and their cheeks resting against her wavy black hair. Juan had just given over trying to finish a sketch by the fast-waning light which came through the little ports in the west door; Luis sat, quiet as usual, his closed book in his hand, and Rafael rested from his practice at the piano. It was a mother's happy, quiet moment, when, every care put aside, she enjoys to the fullest the pleasure of having her children about her. None of them could have been heard by *el señor* if they had spoken, for the walls of the old house were so tremendously thick that no sound of voice could penetrate them, and the doors had been closed to keep out the north wind which was settling down from the cold mountain-top back of the city.

I had that day received a copy of the New York *Herald* of January 1, containing an account of an interview with Prof. Royce of Harvard on the subject of thought transference; and another paper in which was an article by which Richard Proctor mathematically demonstrated that *he* did not know that there were such things as presentiments, and that, therefore, there are none. Having so recently read these, I felt a lively interest in the fancy the Professor entertained that a voice, the voice of his sister, had called to him from across the ocean. In the conversation which followed Señor M. said:

“Several years ago Señor Don Gerrardo Barrios, who was afterward president of Salvador, negotiated the sale of a valuable mine he owned at Los Encuentros, near the

volcano of San Miguel in Salvador. Promising to report in favor of the mine, the expert returned to France.

“For a long time nothing more was heard of him or of the company which sent him. One morning my cousin Señora Barrios said, ‘I have just dreamed that I was in a great city of grand houses, very beautiful. It was Paris. In a room in a house there I saw gentlemen at a table on which were papers. They signed the documents you sent to them about Los Encuentros. They have bought the mine.’

“So Barrios wrote on the wall then the date of the day when she dreamed, and the hour also, because that he knew that curious things do sometimes happen, that no man can explain. And many days after, when the documents came to him from Paris, Barrios looked, and the date of them was the same as the date on the wall of the morning when his spouse dreamed.

“After that, when Barrios was president of Salvador and the conspirators tried to assassinate him and all of his family, he went to Costa Rica. Then they wrote to him to return to Salvador, because all the people were ready to rise in revolution to make him again president. So he tried to go on a steamship from Costa Rica; but the steamer would not receive him on board, because they feared that if they carried Barrios then Salvador would not any more pay them the subsidy.

“Then Barrios went on a little schooner with two masts; and when the vessel was near the little port of Corriento, the lightning struck the principal mast and broke it. Then the captain said, ‘I must go to Corriento to mend the mast,’ and so he did.

“Then, but not that very same morning, my cousin, the wife of Barrios, came to me and said, ‘Diego, cousin, I have seen Barrios in a small ship, and two other large ships pursuing him; but they could not find him because of the storms. And then I saw my sisters before me, spreading their skirts, so, to hide the black coffin; but I saw it behind them, and Barrios was in it — and he is shot.’

“My cousin was much troubled by this dream, and spoke often of it to many people when we lived there together in Costa Rica. Often she said that we would hear that Barrios had been shot. One day news came from Salvador that it was so. Barrios was killed. Then my cousin was wild, and ran that day all the way to Punte Arenas. It was fifteen leagues. I went with her, for she was my cousin and a woman. I was nearly dead when we reached that place, and I wanted nothing else in the whole world so much as I wanted rest and sleep. But she would embark at once, and ran up and down the shore until she found a ship.

“When we reached Salvador we found that Barrios was shot. The people of Corriento, in Nicaragua, gave him over to his enemies, and they took him to Salvador the very day my cousin dreamed. If it was the same hour, the same moment, I do not know.”

“After that he told of other coincidences, then wandered into the secret history of Guatemala and Salvador until, at nine o’clock, our coffee was sent in, after which he left me to reflect upon experiences which may, perhaps without fear of the mathematical geniuses, be called ‘curious’ at least.

E.W.P.”

Oddly enough, on the back of this last letter I find a note in lead pencil by Quickly, who has a way of thus dotting my letters with news when he finds me absent from my desk. The note relates to the frequent pranks of elementals in hiding objects for which we are searching, and explains what Gail Hamilton has called “the total depravity of inanimate objects,” in getting themselves lost, found, or in thwarting our attempted use of them. It is a common experience, and we find we do best in ceasing to look for the object, just as women shake a refractory sewing-machine and leave it alone for a while.

In both cases, our thought being diverted from the object, the elemental loses interest and withdraws the veil or bar.

“This morning F. dropped a knife which he uses to hold his segar by a sort of spike in the knife. When I came in he was looking for it. We both looked, examined the floor well, then gave it up. About five minutes after, I got up, and there in the very middle of the floor, where we had looked, was the knife.”

This note fitly closes the number, for Quickly is in heart and soul one with “the people.” Were we all so within, what vital work we might do towards making our Brotherhood a real one on the inner planes of Being.

JULIUS.

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*The Path* – March 1889, Vol. 3, pp. 387-391.

## TEA TABLE TALK.

JULIUS

### SOME CURIOUS PSYCHIC EXPERIENCES.

From across the “great water”<sup>1</sup> comes this query from one of our unseen friends. Such friends must be many; our true comrades must be near though we see them not; though at times it almost seems as if we stood unaided and alone. The Tea Table often wonders if it can be known how much work of all kinds is needed in our Society; and then sometimes — but too rarely — someone appears as if in answer, and offers some work for Humanity. We believe this would more frequently occur if our comrades only realized the magnitude of the harvest awaiting us, the fields we are obliged to leave untouched, the opportunities ungarnered, for want of help of all kinds.

The query of our friend stands as follows: “I was once standing on a balcony overlooking a pine wood. A great impulse seized me. I prayed. In prayer my whole self-seemed to leave me and to go out to the Infinite. What I desired was to know something. I went to bed and slept like a child, a long, unbroken, dreamless sleep. Very early next morning I awoke. Everywhere there brooded an exquisite, silent peace. In it I rested. Presently through the silence there came a marvelous whisper; it seemed to come from the uttermost ends of the Universe; it penetrated into the very inmost depths of me. It said, *This is mine — thine,*’ and at the same moment I saw within myself a robin-blue flame, of clear, still transparency. Another time I lay in bed, half asleep, half awake. A clear voice within spoke to me and said, ‘I — you — are in danger.’ I thought it meant nothing. A month afterwards I lay dying. The voice seems to use a sense which is unknown to us. I interpret it ‘mine — thine,’ or ‘I — you,’ because this is the nearest meaning: it might be called a dual unity, because the voice does not separate itself from me, as I separate myself from any other individual. What is the voice?”

We answer; this “voice” is simply the psychic sense of the inner man developing and informing the individual brain. It is not the Higher Self, as students often suppose, for that Self does not act on this plane, nor is It concerned with material things. Its intuitions are sometimes *flashed* through us by means of the higher mind. As the various principles in man are *one* when perfected and harmoniously interacting, it is difficult, at any given moment of development, to give rules whereby distinctions may be made. In a general sense we can only establish the fact that, in persons of partial or initial development, the Higher Self does not speak at such times or in such ways. The inner

self, the individual soul, does. Of course this soul is, in its ultimate, one with the Higher Self. But in the earlier stages of development the psychic senses awaken as the inner body obtains coherence and as its currents begin to be established, and through them we receive the first inner testimony to the reality of the Unseen. There is also the mystic voice heard by great mystics, but we need not enter into this supposition, if only because our correspondent plainly shows the "Voice" to be subjective; not speaking in tones, but silently suggesting a meaning. It is quite a common thing to find students so awed by these inner occurrences as to believe the fact more marvelous and more divine than it is. Certainly it is a wonder, this development of the inner man; but it is a wonder we are all heirs to, and we are not to render it the worship of awe, but to study and try to increase it. These manifestations come from the same source as our desires, but are the higher form of the same force. Another student sends still more forcible examples of the same point.

"Several years ago, while seated at the table after pouring out the tea, I impolitely began reading a letter that had just been handed to me, when, with a sudden unaccountable impulse, I tossed down the letter, and, without realizing what I was doing, went quickly around the table to my husband and began vigorously to rub his head and shoulders. This continued for fifteen minutes, when I discovered that I could not remove my hand. Alarmed at this power that controlled me, I called for the assistance of my nephew, he being the only other person present at table. With both hands he was unable to remove mine. He then endeavored to pry it away; this reacted with spasmodic symptoms upon myself, therefore we no longer resisted, and my hand finally came away of itself. Just before we seated ourselves at the table, my husband had complained of illness, but not thinking it serious I had said, 'A cup of tea will do you good,' and thought no more about it until this happened. He now exclaimed, with apparent relief, 'I believe you have saved my life!' The next morning there were dark spots about his eyes, causing his physician to conclude that he had escaped apoplexy. At another time I awoke in the night to find myself walking rapidly towards the servants' room and leaning over the cook. I spoke to her, at the same time shaking her gently. She did not seem to breathe, but she soon revived, saying, 'I knew when you came in, for I was wishing you would, for I felt as though I was dying.' I have had persons that were sick say that, if I only put my hands on them, they immediately felt better.

"Within a few years I had a very serious accident happen to me. A fall injured my head and back, so that I was paralyzed, and obliged to keep my bed for three or four years. The day of the in-jury I seemed to have the impression that I must be very cautious about falling down stairs. This impression left me toward evening, when I went into a neighbor's house to fall down the stone steps as I left. During the helpless state that followed, I was one day taken from my bed, as it were, by the same unexplained power," (the inner man controlling the outer body — J.) "placed upon my feet ... and I glided lightly through the rooms, to the astonishment of both nurse and housekeeper, who exchanged doubtful glances. I now thought that this strength for which I had no name was within my grasp." (See now where the action of the outer self and brain begin and impair the psychic sense. J.) "Therefore the next day while alone, summoning all my will power, with great exertion I placed my feet upon the mat, only to fall helpless to the floor; completely convinced that, unlike the day previous, I must be lifted into bed, and feeling that I was losing the confidence of my attendants, who either thought me very deceptive or that there was something mysterious about me." (It is very clear here that the writer in using her "will with great exertion," made the common mistake of supposing that the ordinary mental effort known as "will" can avail in psychic matters. The true will, which comes from the spirit, is that subconscious force which wells up within us and governs every

movement before we know it, before we can seize it, causing us to swerve aside before we have realized a danger with our brain. This will, *made self-conscious, trained and developed*, is the will-power of the Adept; that force of which Levi wrote; “The will accomplishes all that it does desire.”<sup>22</sup> The inner will, reflected from the divine spirit, when it surges up *conscious of itself*, is the faith which moves mountains. Often we instinctively obey it. We need to try, over and over, to trace it to the hidden well-spring within. Also to obey it whenever it manifests, for such exercise increases its manifestations.)

The writer of the foregoing experiences continues. “Sometimes I have predicted coming events;” (a common event among sensitives, who are impressed by astral images of the events, or who “sense them” as they say. J.) “or, visiting new places, find I have been there before. Last winter a face came to me many times, with large searching eyes and great intelligence; it filled me with such reverence that I would have knelt and worshipped, but *that was not required*.” (The italics are mine. Theosophists have before now spoken of this face with “searching eyes,” which is always described in the same terms, and which never requires worship but always asks for “work,” as here. J.) “I asked; ‘Where are you? Across the water, or in A?’<sup>23</sup> Though I *heard* no reply, there came to me the idea or words; ‘Work for us.’ Again when the countenance appeared, I said, ‘I do not understand. Who and what are you? and the work, where is it?’ Now, friend Julius, I am not endeavoring to do any work, but to follow the bidding of some blessed guide. Have thought I was a Buddhist, but have not spoken it aloud; not that I fear for myself, but would not injure a great and good cause by expressing myself in that way here, when it is food too strong for those about me. To return to experiences; I have found lost articles. One summer I was to take my young son to the mountains. I handed his bank book ... to my daughter for safe keeping. After my return I did not ask about it. I supposed it was where it could be easily produced. So time passed, and several months afterward my daughter was to leave next morning for the West. I asked for the bank book. She had forgotten that I had placed it in her care. Search was made, but in vain; we gave it up for lost.” (Note that when *anxiety* operated no success was had. As the homely proverb expresses this truth, “The watched pot never boils.” J.) “A few weeks later, while very much interested in reading,” — (the *lower* mind absorbed and tranquil. J.) “my right hand reached away from me, but I did not incline to give heed to it. It waited until the same day and hour the week following,” — (see here the recurrence of magnetic currents, or tides, in the astral light, the inner self responding. J.) “when I was again reading and was similarly influenced. This time I followed the guide” — (the inner self, J.) “up stairs to my daughter’s room. It seemed cheerless, and not being inclined to go in I turned away, when this force whirled me around to the door. Now I opened it, went in, was led rapidly to the bureau. Knowing that everything had been placed in order since she left, and feeling confident that I knew there was nothing there for me, I turned doubtingly away, only to be again whirled around to the bureau.” (Note that in *The Secret Doctrine* we are told that the intellectual principle has almost wholly stifled the psychic instinct of man. J.) “Now I raised my hands to open the upper drawer, but the stronger will dropped them to the one below, then quickly beneath a paper, and the lost book was in my hand, which I carried in triumph down to the parlor. I have been referred to you as one who would kindly classify abnormal experiences and explain their cause.”

I have given these accounts at some length because, taken all in all, they give a very clear idea of the inner and progressive development of a psychic nature, joined to decided magnetic or life force. Such development frequently leads persons to imagine themselves guided by “spirits of the dead” so-called, whereas many of them, and many appearances, lights, sounds, and so forth, are really caused by ourselves and are ourselves. I cannot go into greater details here. Sometimes persons have ignorantly worshipped as a “god” their own Mâyâvi Rûpa, or *Thought Body*, made manifest under

abnormal circumstances; or even, in some rare cases, the Causal or Karmic body, or some reflection from the Higher Self. There are spirits not those of the dead which may become visible to the developed or stimulated psychic sense. Also living persons may cause their Mâyâvi Rûpa to be seen by us. When this is done consciously — *i.e.*, — by will power accompanied by self-consciousness, such persons are Adepts — black or white. Sometimes, too, we may see the thought of another as though it were himself. Close study of the eastern philosophy is absolutely necessary if we would be saved from error, for great discrimination, such as that philosophy teaches, is needed by the would-be occultist. It protects him from many a misadventure. For example, students would not have been taken in by a psycho-financial scheme lately exposed as a gross swindle, if they had been able to discriminate in the articles and “calls” previously published the dark material traces of the left hand path, disguised under words. “Z,” once wrote: “Beware of words. They are traps.” The first point of division of left hand path from right is very subtle, very slight, easily overlooked, swiftly passed. It behooves us to take each step with care, to question the intuition, and to analyze with the brain,— in short, *to discriminate*, for the true discrimination is composed of all these qualities. If there be one unfailing test, one sure proof of error, it is to find material advantage of any kind mixed up with spiritual development. The two cannot mix; the very nature of Energy forbids it. Only psychism can go hand-in-hand with material gain or allurements, and psychism of the left hand order, such as ruins perpetrators (even the self-deceived) and victims, in other lives or in this. The victims suffer because causes are blindly set in motion against the innocent, or against the self-seeking (otherwise “innocent”), whose insidious human weakness has laid them open to the poisoned bait. Such causes act by law; their course cannot be stayed. Their Karmic effect is brief compared to that which dogs the perpetrators of crimes against Humanity, and of all such crimes that is the darkest which attacks men through their Ideals. It would be a crime impossible if men kept those Ideals pure, untouched by any material thought, held high like blazing torches against the darkness of our Age. Our faults make the crimes of our brothers possible. On this plane, where, the forces of “evil,” or separateness, greatly prevail, he is wise indeed who takes no step not based upon Universal Brotherhood, Spiritual Identity, and that has not, as its possible goal, the absolute, final Unity of All. Put this test to all acts; if they divorce from it, crucify them. Yet remember even how far easier it is to fall than to stand; to arraign than to be just.

JULIUS.

## NOTES

1. {Atlantic Ocean? Psychic ocean? Symbolic expanse?}
2. {Perhaps from *The Paradoxes of the Highest Science*, Paradox VII — The will accomplishes everything which it does not desire. Perhaps from *Theosophical Miscellanies*, 1883; or *The Theosophist*, Unpublished Writings of Éliphas Lévi articles.
3. {America?}

## TEA TABLE TALK.

JULIUS

There is no point upon which students of occultism find themselves in so great difficulty as upon that of concentration.

We are briefly told in the *Secret Doctrine* that the activity of our physiological senses prevents us from entering the realms of the unseen. The proper methods of attaining concentration then demand our attention. We try to attain the fixed mental attitude, and constant failure results. We go in search of the cause of failure, and pursue it from one point to another, only to find that each is a deeper result, not a cause. We are in need of a clearer understanding of our subject; at once of why we cannot concentrate our thoughts, and in what concentration consists. *Patanjali* might help us, but is hard to comprehend. Help may be had in part from Ribot's *Diseases of the Will*, which exists in English. A recent article in *Scribner* for March, entitled, "Economy in Intellectual Work,"<sup>1</sup> although written from the point of view of modern psychology, contains various propositions likely to be useful in clearing up the subject to Western minds. We call attention to the article as corroborating much taught by Eastern Science, without understanding the basic facts of the subject, as Eastern Science alone does. These propositions are:

1. That concentration of thought conduces to the economy which alone prevents nervous waste and disease. (As is well known, the circulation of the nervous fluid and phenomena, have only been ascertained by the Eastern Scientist or Adepts.)

2. That economy demands conformity to the laws of our unconscious cerebral processes. One important law of our unconscious processes is that of rhythm, traceable in all manifestations of life. (A purely occult doctrine this. The rhythm is due to the regular expansion and contraction of the Astral Light.) The attention seems to ebb and flow in rhythmic oscillation. If we have a regular hour for study or for work upon any particular subject, soon at that hour the Unconscious favors us. It is largely in one's power to establish a good rhythm by regularity in one's activity.

3. That the presence of unessential ideas in consciousness causes loss of energy. We know nothing of these unessential ideas *till we are conscious of them*, when the mischief is done. Their cause is an unstable condition of the attention. There are two kinds of attention; voluntary and spontaneous. Horwicz, Ribot and others show that both forms of attention depend upon the feelings or emotions; that spontaneous attention is the basis of all attention and is dependent upon emotion. *Patanjali* suggests that meditation upon an object or person approved of aids in steadying the mind. Another eastern teaching puts it still more pithily: "The Way lies through the heart." All physical and mental processes tend to spontaneity in their perfection, and drop one by one, all unnecessary processes, just as Nature does when, having once perfected an object, she tends thereafter to make it more quickly. It has been observed that a child, learning to write, screws up the mouth, the shoulders, and even moves the muscles of the feet. When he has once learned, the act is unconsciously accomplished with far less effort; this is a fair example of the tendency of all things towards spontaneous or unconscious procedure. For the unification of those energies which are the soul's forces, concentration at fixed hours upon a subject really loved, is shown to be a logical and a natural necessity.

4. That all our activity is the result of emotional impulse and a tendency to rigid economy is a law of the spontaneous activity of the nervous system. Hence, the more one can work *with nature*, the more sure one can be to avoid waste. (Contemplation is well defined as “the inexpressible yearning of the Inner man to go out towards the Infinite.” It is the cultivation of this yearning and of universal love which creates that spontaneous devotion under which every cell of our body tends to fly to the Divine Thought when released from the temporary digressions of outer life, and this leads to that concentration which achieves Truth, and not to that which is the violent fixation of the inner senses upon a wall, or a pin or what not.)

5. That a large part of education consists in developing the emotions, which can be *rendered stable* by regular and repeated attempts to turn the attention to any particular subject, and that in time this effort converts even drudgery to pleasure. (Here is a hint for students who frankly admit that they find themselves cold to Humanity. They are simply ignorant of their own inner nature, at whose very basis, *Light on the Path* tells us, we shall find Faith, Hope, and Love. These persistent attempts draw our finer elements out from their source, and, as Professor Coues puts it in his finished little poem in *Lippincott* for March —

Then, when the fight is done,— then, when the field is won,—  
Knowst thou thyself.  
Let the loud pæans roll, on through the gladdened soul.  
That, beyond fear or doubt, thrills with the inward shout,  
“Victory! Victory!  
Conquest of self!”<sup>2</sup>

6. That “the great danger from an evil thought is not so much the loss of energy for the moment, as the modification of the nerve center that counts the sin and will use it against us in the next hour of temptation.” (This is pure occultism, and requires no further comment.)

7. That in spite of the apparently reckless waste we see in nature, there is a counter principle of rigid economy. This law of parsimony is especially seen in the mechanism of the nervous system in man. Even our scientific theories and philosophic systems may be looked upon as economic devices to enable us to unify the manifold phenomena of nature, and to remove doubt and perplexity before the mysterious facts of existence.

There are many other propositions, less pertinent to our subject, in this excellent article, whose whole tendency recalls the teachings of *Bhagavad Gîtâ*. The value of such contemporaneous testimony is, of course, only relative. So long as the existence of elementals, and their life and being within as without our bodies, is ignored, so long the real bearing of all phenomena will remain unknown.

Mr. H.,<sup>3</sup> a close and original thinker, says that the oriental ideas cannot reach us as yet in their purity. The western mind has to modify them to some likeness of its own tendencies, and this modification constitutes a tax on ideas. Free trade in thought will only become possible when *universality* has done its broadening and deepening work upon western peoples. The tendency to unification, observable in all nature, as *underlying* the tendency to differentiation, and constituting the *lex par-simonæ* behind nature’s lavishness, begins also to be seen in the co-operative leanings of our time. In art, in trade, in literature, in religion it is gaining ground. And the proportionate value of articles like the above is, that they confirm our perception of this tendency towards unity, towards the occult, and towards eastern lines of thought. If our faith in our own judgment and choice should waver, we find it strengthened by the unconscious

attestations of others to the reality of the Evolution of Thought. This alone makes progress possible.

It is singular how many students look upon elementals as necessarily foreign outside enemies to be fought, whereas many of them, as before said, live within us and form part of the elements of which our bodies are composed. We are too apt to look upon our bodies as a homogeneous whole. Even a small dose of the *Secret Doctrine* will correct this mistake. These elementals are to be purified, not killed. Without them, man's power over nature would be shorn. Power over them is power over nature. We obtain it, in first instance, by so purifying the nature from self, that there is no war among our elements, but all come under the control of the conscious soul. We have before pointed out that these elementals are energetic centers in the Astral Light, and of a number of such centers, forms, like our own bodies, are composed.

Apropos of Ribot's book above mentioned, an experience of Mrs. — is interesting. Rummaging one day in an old garret, she came across the work. Her life was at the time all purely social and very gay; she never read either occult or "scientific" literature. Yet, urged by a strong impulse, she took and kept this tattered paper volume. In many a flight from sea to country, from continent to continent, from house to house, she was continually coming across it and tempted to cast it aside as useless lumber. Somehow, she never could. In time the theosophical current caught her. She became a close student. Her health failing, she found concentration most difficult, even impossible — for the time. She began to study, in herself, the causes of this want of attention, but unsuccessfully, until one idle rainy day last week, she "chanced" (as we so often say) to flutter open a magazine at the article I have quoted here at length. That reminded her of the long forgotten Ribot, and extracting it from its dusty corner, she found, in his chapter on attention *et seq.* the help she required. It is noteworthy that in her present situation, it would have been long before she could have obtained the English translation of the book, had it not been already in her possession, to tide her over a mental crisis. There appears to be much wisdom in the saying of our grandmothers, to wit; that we shall keep an object seven years; turn it once, and keep it for seven more, when it will be in fashion. All the old popular saws are based on occult truths.

A most graceful incident reaches the Tea Table; a bit of the experience of one who is described as "a very pleasing woman and a powerful psychometer." She had not been well, was in a state of nervous tension, and felt uneasy as to her mental state. One day, while sitting in a rocking chair upon a newly bought Persian rug, she heard faint sounds of music, which gradually grouped themselves into a definite and clearly distinguishable song. There was no person or place from which this could have come, and the suspicion arose that it was a mental hallucination, and she herself seriously unbalanced. The same thing occurred the next day, when she confided her uneasiness to an intimate friend, who had called. Her friend examined the room, looked at the chair, and then noticed the rug. " 'This is Persian,' she said, and made herself sure by examining it. Then she said: 'I can explain the whole thing to you. This is a genuine Persian rug and the sounds come from it. In that country everything is done by hand. The weaver sits cross legged on the floor, his piles of colored wools around him, and an assistant to hand him the colors desired. As he works, he solaces himself by continual singing, but he does not interrupt either the song or the work by a word or a gesture to the assistant; he indicates the colors desired by a certain note, appropriate to each. As the song goes on, and the voice rises or falls from time to time, the assistant understands what color is needed and at once hands it to the weaver. The song has become embedded, fused into the very structure of the slowly formed rug, and is now exuding with sufficient force for your psychometric perception.' And this seemed the only explanation. Of course no ear but the extremely delicate one of a psychometer,

who was then in a morbidly sensitive state, could detect vibrations from so fleecy a fabric as a rug.”

Our correspondent knows of course, that it was her inner ear or psychic sense which detected sounds unheard except by trained occultists. The charming incident makes me wonder how it would be if we wove a song into all our work — a song either of the lips or of the heart — to reach to distant climes and solace the hearts of men? How often our dark, sad thoughts must impinge upon other overburdened lives, to weigh them down still more. We never know where the poisoned arrow of our own life may not reach our brother. Let us send out naught but songs instead of sorrows.

JULIUS.

## NOTES

1. {*Scribner's*, March 1889, “Economy in Intellectual Work,” William H. Burnham, pp. 306-314.}
2. {*Lippincott's Monthly Magazine*, March 1889, Vol. 43, p. 436. Poem in whole:

### KNOW THYSELF.

Seek ye the battle-ground, where be the foemen found  
Worthy thy steel?  
No Alexander need sigh for a grander  
World to reveal.

Oh, there's a world to win back from the hosts of sin,  
Sorrow, and death:  
On with the warfare, then,— close with the foes of men,  
Bating thy breath.

Not with the clash of arms, not with war's loud alarms,  
Hurl thy defiance;  
Not on the tongue or pen, not on the strength of men,  
Place thy reliance.

Let but thy guiding star, shining from skies afar,  
Illumine the way;  
Let but the inner voice whisper, and make thy choice  
Clearer than day.

Thou art the battle-ground,— thyself the foeman found  
Seeking thy life;  
There is a world within — oh, what a world to win!—  
On with the strife!

Then, when the fight is done,— then, when the field is won,—  
Knowst thou thyself.  
Let the loud pæans roll, on through the gladdened soul.  
That, beyond fear or doubt, thrills with the inward shout,  
“Victory! Victory!  
Conquest of self!”

Elliott Coues.}

3. {Ernest Temple Hargrove?}

## TEA TABLE TALK.

JULIUS

In the first mild days, harbingers of Springtide, man takes to the woods as naturally as any squirrel. Such days often burst upon us like exotics, from the depths of winter. They seem to brood over the land in heat and a shimmering radiance. The earth has a moist, new-made smell; the cocks go mad with crowing fever, and their call has a sweet, softened, melancholy note, which echoes long after in our memories of Spring. These days are always driven from us by fresh storms and winter roughness, but they are an advance guard, and their hope has been imparted to the human heart.

How much this chain of seasons should teach us. There was once a vigorous French armorer; (whether in sober fact or in man's imagination matters not; he was a type, and types live forever;) he was a pantheist by nature, a silent thinker of rough and sturdy exterior, and when the mad Revolution had him in its grip, he went to the scaffold without any idle words, understanding very well that the chief crime of men in those days was that the grim spirit of the times wanted victims, and could hang an indictment, by way of excuse, on one human peg as well as another. Yet when Death faced him, and his tender wife, convent bred, urged him to think of "Heaven" and declare his faith to her, this man remembered the thoughts hammered into many a good bit of steel at his forge. Going to sudden Death while life still ran red and high in his veins, he would not belie his nature, but simply said:

I have no knowledge of the heaven of priests.  
It irks me when I think that I shall look  
On this brave world no more. Full oft I've watched  
Bluff winter hurl his icy bolts; or spring  
With a swift arrow hid among her promises;  
Or rosy summer, wantoning along the uplands  
Till lusty autumn, with halloo of horn  
And bay of hound, strode on to speed her passing.  
And thus, as season still with season linked,  
I have seen all things, dying, come to use,  
Mixed with the kindly flux of mother earth.  
Even thus I hope, Life's fierce probation o'er,  
To do a brave man's work somewhere, in the open world!<sup>1</sup>

This earnest soul had discovered what Patanjali says so well: "Nature exists for the purposes of soul."<sup>2</sup>

When I took to the woods, I had with me an excuse, in the shape of a small boy. Perhaps some of my readers may remember the child "Bun." We came to a deep brown pool under yellowing willows, where turtles plunge and vanish with a gurgle very fascinating to the imitative mind of youth. How long and how vainly Bun has mimicked that gurgle and plunge! Leaning over the rail, we saw our figures with startling clearness in the beryl brown water. Bending nearer and nearer, we seemed to lose our identity, to merge into that of the water image. Suddenly, in the silence, a turtle plunged, and so completely had Bun lost himself in the eyes of the mirrored picture

beneath him, that he shrieked with alarm: "Oh! It jumped right on my face and hurted me! O-o-o-h —! how it hurted me." It was quite a time before I could remind my small comrade that his water portrait was not himself; his chubby face was red, as if the turtle had really struck it, and on the way home his hand went continually to his cheeks, "because the turtle stinged me so." The incident forcibly struck me as an illustration of the soul's bewilderment. Looking out into the body, it mistakes that for itself, feels all the pains and joys of the reflection as though they were its own, and only by slow degrees learns how separate are the two, that they are only connected, in fact, by the imagination and mind. In the company of small boys one may learn much Truth. On this same walk, a curious incident occurred. We were a trio, the third member being a small greyhound, a firm friend of Bun's. The graceful little creature lay dozing near us, when Bun screamed out in great excitement: "See the dog; there's two of him; he's coming in two!" Protruding, as it were, from the dog's side, was what seemed to be its second self; somewhat fainter in color, a trifle less solid looking, but still a perfect replica of the dog. We saw it for some moments; then the dog sprang at a beetle, and the astral form seemed to melt into the other. I have never seen one more clearly.

A lady correspondent of the Tea Table vouches for the following.

The family of Mr. A. had a pet dog named Minnie, which was treated like a child and loved as one. Mr. A. went into the country and took Minnie with him, when the children missed her greatly. One morning Charlie woke and saw Minnie (as he thought) trying to get on the bed as usual. In a few moments she seemed to go out, when immediately the Mother was heard saying; "Why here is Minnie; Papa must have returned and brought Minnie as a surprise." Just then in another room another member of the family, just awakening, called out: "Here's Minnie!" They all thought Minnie was running from one room to another. On getting dressed they sought for the father, but found that he had not come; the whole house was still locked up and Minnie was nowhere about. In alarm, they all decided it was a sign that Minnie was sick or dead, but on writing to the Father, he replied; "Minnie is all right, and I'll be home in a few days."

Soon he returned but no Minnie came, and he said that she had died at the time they saw her, after pining for some days as if homesick. A short time after that, one of the sons went to another room and thought he heard Minnie scratching at the door, and forgetting her death pushed it open, when she trotted in, sat down by the hearth — and disappeared.

This was the dog's astral body, attracted to old scenes by its great affection and made visible through the psychic aura of the family. The astral bodies of men and animals are much the same subject to similar laws, and visible after death for some time under favorable circumstances. In this case the family are all psychic, or have such emanation as make visible that which, although constantly about us in the astral light, is ordinarily unseen. And luckily too for us it is so.

"Chase, F.T.S.," sends a couple of interesting incidents.

"A lady acquaintance of mine, who is now a member of the T.S., was several years ago, in her girlhood, introduced to a young man who was a very intimate friend of one of her closest friends at school. My acquaintance, whom we will call Miss A — —, met the young man — Mr. B — — several times, but never liked him, and so was never at all well acquainted with him. In a short time she left school, and many years passed since she met the young man, who had apparently passed out of her memory. One day she was riding in a car in N.Y. City, when she chanced to look in the opposite corner and saw a man who suddenly attracted her attention. At that moment she seemed to hear someone say to her, "Yes that is Mr. B — — and he is going to drown himself." The words were so plain, and so loudly spoken, that she turned hurriedly to

see if anyone else had heard them besides herself. No one seemed to be looking at her or in any way paying any attention to her, so she concluded that the remark was only made for her ears. The thing made such an awful impression on her that she for several months eagerly scanned every paper that she saw, looking for an account of the man's death, but it came not, and in time the feeling wore off somewhat and she stopped caring for it. In the meantime she continued to meet the man at various times and places, but never spoke to him. Finally she met him when she was in company with a lady who had in the old days been a very warm friend of the young man, and to her surprise as well as that of the lady with her the man did not speak to either one of them. The old friend of his was very much surprised and then very indignant at the total neglect by him. "Why," she said, "that man has dined and supped at my house times without number in days gone by, and why should he so utterly ignore me in the street at this late day?" And she went her way in a very unpleasant frame of mind. In a short time after this (which was about two years after Miss A—— had first met the man in the car), she one morning picked up a paper and saw an account of the suicide of Mr. B—— who, the paper went on to say, had drowned himself by jumping during the night from one of the Troy steamers and was dead before they could reach him. A few days after this occurrence Miss A again met the same man who had worried her so much in the past, and it ultimately turned out that he was not Mr. B—— nor any relative or acquaintance of his, though they were so similar.

"The second instance was an experience of my own. I was very much interested in the culture of concentration, and asked a friend, who I had reason to suppose had practiced that sort of thing a great deal, what he found was the best sort of a thing to concentrate on. A general conversation ensued, and he finally said that anything at all would do to start with. The heel of the boot, or anything else that one could imagine; but added that probably the best thing was to take some sentence that had a deep meaning, and work on that. Then he quoted for me a sentence from one of the Sacred books, and we soon parted. I went home trying earnestly to remember what the thing was that he had quoted, but I could not remember it verbatim. I could get the general meaning of it, but I could not remember it right. I sat down after dinner and thought as hard as I could, but it was no use, as it would not come. I remembered reading several incidents in the "Tea Table Talk," of people wishing for things that they could not find at once, but that did come in time if one was in earnest in trying to get them, so I continued. Several times I tried to dismiss the matter from my mind, but like Banquo's ghost it "would not down." A favorite position of mine when I am trying to think out some difficult problem, is to sit leaning back in my chair with my left hand thumb in the left armhole of my vest. As I was sitting in this position just before going to bed, I noticed a paper that was in my left hand upper vest pocket, which was resting against my hand and by its constant rubbing attracted my attention. I rather mechanically took it out and found it was one of the "Abridgements of Discussions" issued by the "Aryan T.S.". In less than five seconds I was reading therein the very passage that I had been puzzling over for all those hours. "All things come to those who in silence wait." You can well imagine that this little experience strengthened me more than I can tell."

On this same subject of concentration, another F.T.S. writes that it has been much discussed of late in the meetings of the Aryan (New York) T.S. and consequently the members have it more or less in their minds. The writer (H.T.) then continues: "A few days ago I invited a friend of mine to attend the next meeting of the Society. She accepted the invitation and agreed to meet me at my own home. I had only known her a short time and had never seen her excepting at her own house, and in consequence had never seen her with her wraps on. The night before the meeting, before sleeping, I thought I would try a little experiment in concentration, and with all the force I could

command tried to picture this friend to myself, as she would appear the next evening. I succeeded in getting a fairly clear picture of the lady before my mind. She seemed to wear a fur-trimmed wrap of peculiar cut, and a bonnet. It was a picture that at once disappeared. Imagine my surprise the next evening, the incident having been forgotten in the interim, when my friend was shown into the parlor wearing the very wrap which I had seen before my mental vision the night before, and also the same bonnet; although, the picture having been before me but for a moment, my recollection of the bonnet was less distinct than of the wrap. Had I really seen the latter on the night previous, the identification could not have been more complete."

The number of instances sent in to the Tea Table by Aryan {Lodge} members shows the effect of a body of students all thinking in the same direction. It forms a nucleus, and thus each helps the others. The Tea Table is always pleased to receive such experiences from correspondents, who are requested to receive its thanks, and also to write the incidents fully, and not to assume, as they sometimes do, that the editor of this department was present at such and such a meeting or discussion. Several interesting communications are held over until later; may our store of them increase!

JULIUS.

## NOTES

1. Unpublished MSS.

2. {*The Yoga Aphorisms of Patanjali*, Book 2, Verse 21. As found: "For the sake of the soul alone, the Universe exists." William Q. Judge adds: "Nature in energizing does not do so with a view to any purpose of her own, but with the design, as it were, expressed in the words 'let me bring about the soul's experience.'"} }

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*The Path* – June 1889, Vol. 4, pp. 91-94.

## TEA TABLE TALK.

JULIUS

Very many students of occultism constantly say; "But what can I do to help others?" As I cannot enter into all these lives, I cannot fully answer; but to any or all I might at least commend this editorial statement of *Lucifer*, "The first and most important step in occultism is to learn how to adapt your thoughts and ideas to your plastic potency."<sup>1</sup> How many of us reflect that we are constantly making pictures in the astral light, investing them with more or less vividness and potency, in direct ratio to the energy of thought expended upon these unconscious images which we as unconsciously make? Such pictures are often vivified by elementals as forms wherein they can manifest. Then, too, these pictures remain in the light, in our aura. We ourselves draw them in and out; when we live again in some sad past we clothe its terrors anew with the subtle essence of thought; it is again sent forth upon magnetic currents to impress sensitives, to throw its dark shadow over others who do not know whence comes their sudden sense of depression and gloom. The inner man sees these pictures and feels their effect, which is reported to the physical brain, sometimes as a definite picture, but more often as a vague but chilling terror or sadness. If, then, we can do no more for the world at large, we can rest it in our thoughts, and endeavor, especially in dark moments, to make pleasant pictures in the mind, with which to people the living Light. To illustrate: A lady of my acquaintance recently lay very ill. Her trouble was a nervous one, and during attacks of excruciating agony a marked clairvoyance was frequently developed. At the ebb of one such attack, her sister left the room, after arranging to

return at a specified hour. The sister was very solicitous, a most devoted nurse and punctual, exact to a fraction of time. Therefore, when the hour passed and she did not come, and as time continued to slip by, the invalid became nervously alarmed at her sister's non-appearance. The unprecedented event filled her with anxiety, and finally she began to imagine herself going to the sister's room, unable to open it, having the door broken open, finding the sister dead upon the bed, the ensuing preparations and carrying the dead from the Sanitarium where they then were, in the middle of the night, in order not to depress the sick inmates of the place. In the middle of this waking nightmare, in which her thoughts ran away with her good sense, the sister came in. There had been a mistake in the hour and the invalid said nothing. Next morning the sister remarked that she had not slept well. She had awakened in the night with the sudden idea that a woman had died in the room next to hers, and was being carried out through the darkness and silence. So strong was the idea that she could not divest herself of it, and the physicians and proprietors were questioned. All united in saying that no death had ever occurred in the establishment. A few nights later the sister went to her room in a merry mood, having just quitted a party of friends. She threw open the door, and suddenly, in the dark room, half illuminated for an instant by the hall light, there rose before her sight, upon the bed, a shrouded figure of a dead woman, like herself and prepared for burial. The thing was so vivid that she almost shrieked aloud; she started back (making a change of vibration) and it disappeared. She was unable to use the room after that, though a woman of strong nerve and no psychic development, and the invalid confessed that in her vain imaginings she had made strong mental pictures of just those two scenes. The sister remarked with grim humor, "Well; I've had an experience not enjoyed by many. I have been to my own funeral; and I don't care to go again." The invalid lady has since told me that her sister's fright was a lesson to her, and thereafter she strove earnestly, amid all the pain of her attacks, to fix her mind on high and bright themes.

A correspondent gives another instance of psychic occurrences due to disturbed equilibrium of the nerve currents. She writes:

"I have for many years been an intense sufferer from nervous headache, the pain lasting from 36 to 48 hours. During its continuance I desire neither food nor drink, so that the fasting is complete. When the pain leaves me I am quite exhausted, but clear of brain. Last summer I had a singular experience after one of these attacks. Perhaps the altitude had some effect, for I was at a famous Catskill resort. It was evening when the agony left me, and I was lying on a lounge, my face to the wall and my eyes closed. Suddenly I saw behind me a friend of mine, a believer in and a student of the Occult then in Washington. She was leaning toward me, with a look of deep interest on her face. But what was that just behind her? It was seemingly a mass of white vapor, the size of rather a tall man. I felt, or knew, it to be a male spirit, and I saw, indistinctly, the semblance of a head projecting from the vapor, turned toward and intently regarding my friend, but taking no notice of me. The vapor was constantly in motion, and the edges were tinged with colors.

As I gazed with wonder at this strange sight, the door opened from the hall and my mail matter was brought in. Among the letters was one from the friend I had just seen, but, more curious still, knowing my interest in handwriting as indicating character, and my power sometimes to psychometrize letters, she enclosed an unimportant note written by a well-known Occultist and writer, then in this country, for my inspection.

Can you explain why the vision was the "avant-courier" of the letter, and why both spirits were not equally distinct?"

R.

In this case the term “male spirit” is incorrect. Spirit (Atma) is neither male nor female. The so-called astral body has not sex in our usual sense of the term. It is a center of force; the predominance of negative magnetism as life force would make it “female,” so to say; the predominance of positive force would make it “male.” As regards the inner man, who is without the specialized physical organs of the gross body, these terms “male” and “female” can only refer to the nature of the force manifesting through him, and it would seem to follow that he might be at one time “male,” so to say, at another “female,” and always hermaphrodite in view of the double emanation or radiation of such a body. There is no fixed reason why the vision should have announced the letter, for this is not always the case. But in this special case the lady simply saw, in the astral light, an event about to take place. If I enter a room to awaken a sleeper, my thought (or psychic energy) begins to awaken him (his inner man) before I do — in my physical body. So do “coming events cast their shadows before;” they too have what we may call their aura, and in a super-sensitive state of the nervous system we may become aware of them, or temporarily “lucid,” as some occultists call it. The probable reason for the friend’s form appearing more distinct than the other is that the seer was in magnetic communication, and more or less sympathetic vibration, with her friend; a perfectly sensitized plate takes a better impression than one which is only partially so, and an image already existing in the sphere of the mind (or the aura) is re-vivified in less time than a new one can be stamped there. It is not easy to explain these processes, for we need an exact nomenclature, which the West does not as yet possess, as well as a knowledge of the practical Science of occultism, which is almost equally rare.

Another friend writes to the Tea Table of the January PATH. “It was very interesting, particularly so to children, who are already commencing to endorse the idea of reincarnation and evolution of mind.” (See “The Christ-Child.”) “I think we have a little girl friend who visits here, who is almost as charming as little ‘Carlo.’ When three years old she would make eloquent speeches with appropriate gestures in an unknown tongue. Her mother, does not encourage this strange language. She said to me one day: ‘I had another mother once, and she did not look like this mother; she used to dress lovely. Once she was all dressed in white and they carried her away.’ A little sigh followed, as though the child felt the reality. Now she is four years old, and although a very practical little body, she lives in a world of her own. As she was busily talking and no one was in the room, I asked her who was there. ‘Why, this poor old lady who lies on this window bench. I have fixed the sofa pillow for her, and now I am feeding her.’ At one time I had occasion to leave her for a while. When I had been gone an hour and a half, as she stood looking out of a window, she exclaimed to the girl having charge of her, ‘See! See!’ at the same time insisting that I was in a cherry tree nearby, waving my hand and saying, ‘Anna, what are you doing?’ I inquired at what time she saw me, and remembered that at that moment, though surrounded by people and upon the street, my mind seemed to stretch away home with thought of her. Now she often says; ‘You were up in that tree, weren’t you?’ and I reply ‘Yes.’ I am acquainted with an accomplished lady who has always insisted that in some former life she was a beggar girl; it seems now very clear to her memory.”

Some persons claim that a belief in Reincarnation, even when shown to be shared by many of the greatest and most intuitive minds known to history does not of itself prove anything. To such we would reply that such a belief, if shown to be general, wide spread, and especially frequent in the minds of the very young, has all the appearance and hence the weight of an “innate idea.” Once we prove an idea to be innate, our case is proven. And if this question of Reincarnation rests upon the bulk of testimony, or its quality and the nature of its source, then indeed occultists may well claim it to be proven beyond all doubt. For a modern questioner, however, I should incline to

indicate the line of the conservation and persistence of energy, its correlation and its multiplication, as the best one for him to follow in seeking first analogies, then proofs, of Reincarnation. The average modern mind follows this track more easily than it does that of metaphysics and logic.

I would call attention to the wisdom of the course outlined by the closing words of my last correspondent. Children's minds are plastic and easily chilled. They must be answered in the spirit rather than to the letter, or their attention will be turned to material things and Truth will be lost. To tell the little girl that her friend was not in the tree would be to deny to her the evidence of her psychic sense. The picture of her friend (caused by that friend's thought) was there, and to deny it would teach the child to mistrust her inner self. How many children are thus puzzled, punished for "telling lies," and morally tortured, Karma only knows.

I cannot forbear closing my talk with a striking metaphor from this same letter, respecting Madame Blavatsky: "She seems so like a powerful and wonderful bird who has flown over the earth to sweep up in her bright pinions vast stores of truth and knowledge, and is scattering it abroad like heavenly manna for hungry souls." To such intuitive hearts as this, these words from an Adept may be applied: "As one by one our intellectual forces depart, leaving us only to turn traitors, I say, 'Blessed are the pure in heart, for their intuition will save them.'"<sup>3</sup>

JULIUS.

## NOTES

1. {See "Tea Table Talk," *The Path* — January 1892, Vol. 6, pp. 319-322. The following is the whole dialogue in *Lucifer* regarding 'plastic potency':

*Lucifer* — December 1888, Vol. 3, pp. 328-333.

## DIALOGUES BETWEEN THE TWO EDITORS.<sup>4</sup>

### I.

#### ON ASTRAL BODIES, OR DOPPELGANGERS.

M.C. Great confusion exists in the minds of people about the various kinds of apparitions, wraiths, ghosts or spirits. Ought we not to explain once for all the meaning of these terms? You say there are various kinds of "doubles" — what are they?

H.P.B. Our occult philosophy teaches us that there are three kinds of "doubles," to use the word in its widest sense, (1) Man has his "double" or *shadow*, properly so called, around which the physical body of the *foetus* — the future man — is built. The imagination of the mother, or an accident which affects the child, will affect also the astral body. The astral and the physical both exist before the mind is developed into action, and before the Atma awakes. This occurs when the child is seven years old, and with it comes the responsibility attaching to a conscious sentient being. This "double" is born with man, dies with him and can never separate itself far from the body during life, and though surviving him, it disintegrates, *pari passu*, with the corpse. It is this, which is sometimes seen over the graves like a luminous figure of the man that was, during certain atmospheric conditions. From its physical aspect it is, during life, *man's vital* double, and after death, only the gases given off from the decaying body. But, as regards its origin and essence, it is something more. This "double" is what we have agreed to call *linga sarira*, but which I would propose to call, for greater convenience, "Protean" or "Plastic Body."

M.C. Why Protean or Plastic?

H.P.B. Protean, because it can assume all forms; *e.g.* the “shepherd magicians” whom popular rumor accuses, perhaps not without some reason, of being “were-wolves,” and “mediums in cabinets,” whose own “Plastic Bodies” play the part of materialized grandmothers and “John Kings.”<sup>5</sup> Otherwise, why the invariable custom of the “dear departed angels” to come out but little further than arm’s length from the medium, whether entranced or not? Mind, I do not at all deny foreign influences in this kind of phenomena. But I do affirm that foreign interference is rare, and that the materialized form is always that of the medium’s “*Astral*” or Protean body.

M.C. But how is this astral body created?

H.P.B. It is not created; it grows, as I told you, with the man and exists in the rudimentary condition even before the child is born.

M.C. And what about the second?

H.P.B. The second is the “Thought” body, or Dream body, rather; known among Occultists as the *Mâyâvi-rûpa*, or “Illusion-body.” During life this image is the vehicle both of thought and of the animal passions and desires, drawing at one and the same time from the lowest terrestrial *manas* (mind) and *Kâma*, the element of desire. It is *dual* in its potentiality, and after death forms, what is called in the East *Bhoot*, or *Kâma-rûpa*, but which is better known to theosophists as the “Spook.”

M.C. And the third?

H.P.B. The third is the true *Ego*, called in the East, by a name meaning “causal body” but which in the *trans*-Himalayan schools is always called the “Karmic body,” which is the same. For *Karma* or action is the cause which produces incessant rebirths or “reincarnations.” It is *not* the *Monad*, nor is it *Manas* proper; but is, in a way, indissolubly connected with, and a compound of the *Monad* and *Manas* in Devachan.

M.C. Then there are three doubles?

H.P.B. If you can call the Christian and other Trinities “three Gods,” then there are three doubles. But in truth there is only one under three aspects or phases: the most material portion disappearing with the body; the middle one, surviving both as an independent, but temporary entity in the land of shadows; the third, immortal, throughout the manvantara unless Nirvana puts an end to it before.

M.C. But shall not we be asked what difference there is between the *Mâyâvi* and *Kâma rûpa*, or as you propose to call them the “Dream body” and the “Spook?”

H.P.B. Most likely, and we shall answer, in addition to what has been said, that the “thought power” or aspect of the *Mâyâvi* or “Illusion body,” merges after death entirely into the causal body or the conscious, *thinking* EGO. The animal elements, or power of desire of the “Dream body,” absorbing after death that which it has collected (through its insatiable desire to *live*) during life; *i.e.*, all the astral vitality as well as all the impressions of its *material* acts and thoughts while it lived in possession of the body, forms the “Spook” or *Kâma rûpa*. Our Theosophists know well enough that after death the *higher* *Manas* unites with the *Monad* and passes into Devachan, while the dregs of the *lower manas* or animal mind go to form this Spook. This has life in it, but hardly any consciousness, except, as it were by proxy; when it is drawn into the current of a medium.

M.C. Is it all that can be said upon the subject?

H.P.B. For the present this is enough metaphysics, I guess. Let us hold to the “Double” in its earthly phase. What would you know?

M.C. Every country in the world believes more or less in the “double” or doppelganger. The simplest form of this is the appearance of a man’s phantom, the moment after his death, or at the instant of death, to his dearest friend. Is this appearance the *mâyâvi rūpa*?

H.P.B. It is; because produced by the thought of the dying man.

M.C. Is it unconscious?

H.P.B. It is unconscious to the extent that the dying man does not generally do it knowingly; nor is he aware that he so appears. What happens is this. If he thinks very intently at the moment of death of the person he either is very anxious to see, or loves best, he may appear to that person. The thought becomes objective; the double, or shadow of a man, being nothing but the faithful reproduction of him, like a reflection in a mirror, that which the man does, even in thought, that the double repeats. This is why the phantoms are often seen in such cases in the clothes they wear at the particular moment, and the *image* reproduces even the expression on the dying man’s face. If the double of a man bathing were seen it would seem to be immersed in water; so when a man who has been drowned appears to his friend, the image will be seen to be dripping with water. The cause for the apparition may be also reversed; *i.e.*, the dying man may or may not be thinking at all of the particular person his image appears to, but it is that person who is sensitive. Or perhaps his sympathy or his hatred for the individual whose wraith is thus evoked is very intense physically or psychically; and in this case the apparition is created by, and depends upon, the intensity of the thought. What then happens is this. Let us call the dying man A, and him who sees the double B. The latter, owing to love, hate, or fear, has the image of A so deeply impressed on his psychic memory, that actual magnetic attraction and repulsion are established between the two, whether one knows of it and feels it, or not. When A dies, the sixth sense or psychic spiritual intelligence of the *inner man* in B becomes cognizant of the change in A, and forthwith apprizes the physical senses of the man, by projecting before his eye the form of A, as it is at the instant of the great change. The same when the dying man longs to see someone; *his* thought telegraphs to his friend, consciously or unconsciously along the wire of sympathy, and becomes objective. This is what the “Spookical” Research Society would pompously, but none the less muddily, call *telepathic impact*.

M.C. This applies to the simplest form of the appearance of the double. What about cases in which the double does that which is contrary to the feeling and wish of the man?

H.P.B. This is impossible. The “Double” cannot act, unless the keynote of this action was struck in the brain of the man to whom the “Double” belongs, be that man just dead, or alive, in good or in bad health. If he paused on the thought a second, long enough to give it form, before he passed on to other mental pictures, this one second is as sufficient for the *objectivizations* of his personality on the astral waves, as for your face to impress itself on the sensitized plate of a photographic apparatus. Nothing prevents your form then, being seized upon by the surrounding Forces — as a dry leaf fallen from a tree is taken up and carried away by the wind — be made to caricature or distort your thought.

M.C. Supposing the double expresses in actual words a thought uncongenial to the man, and expresses it — let us say to a friend far away, perhaps on another continent? I have known instances of this occurring.

H.P.B. Because it then so happens that the created image is taken up and used by a "Shell." Just as in seance-rooms when "images" of the dead — which may perhaps be lingering unconsciously in the memory or even the auras of those present — are seized upon by the Elementals or Elementary Shadows and made objective to the audience, and even caused to act at the bidding of the strongest of the many different wills in the room. In your case, moreover, there must exist a connecting link — a telegraph wire — between the two persons, a point of psychic sympathy, and on this the thought travels instantly. Of course there must be, in every case, some strong reason why that particular thought takes that direction; it must be connected in some way with the other person. Otherwise such apparitions would be of common and daily occurrence.

M.C. This seems very simple; why then does it only occur with exceptional persons?

H.P.B. Because the plastic power of the imagination is much stronger in some persons than in others. The mind is dual in its potentiality: it is physical and metaphysical. The higher part of the mind is connected with the spiritual soul or Buddhi, the lower with the animal soul, the Kâma principle. There are persons who never think with the higher faculties of their mind at all; those who do so are the minority and are thus, in a way, *beyond*, if not above, the average of human kind. These will think even upon ordinary matters on that *higher* plane. The idiosyncrasy of the person determines in which "principle" of the mind the thinking is done, as also the faculties of a preceding life, and sometimes the heredity of the physical. This is why it is so very difficult for a materialist — the metaphysical portion of whose brain is almost atrophied — to raise himself, or for one who is naturally spiritually minded, to descend to the level of the matter-of-fact vulgar thought. Optimism and pessimism depend on it also in a large measure.

M.C. But the habit of thinking in the higher mind can be developed — else there would be no hope for persons who wish to alter their lives and raise themselves? And that this is possible must be true, or there would be no hope for the world.

H.P.B. Certainly it can be developed, but only with great difficulty, a firm determination, and through much self-sacrifice. But it is comparatively easy for those who are born with the gift. Why is it that one person sees poetry in a cabbage or a pig with her little ones, while another will perceive in the loftiest things only their lowest and most material aspect, will laugh at the "music of the spheres," and ridicule the most sublime conceptions and philosophies? This difference depends simply on the innate power of the mind to think on the higher or on the lower plane, with the *astral* (in the sense given to the word by St. Martin), or with the physical brain. Great intellectual powers are often no proof of, but are impediments to spiritual and right conceptions; witness most of the great men of science. We must rather pity than blame them.

M.C. But how is it that the person who thinks on the higher plane produces more perfect and more potential images and objective forms by his thought?

H.P.B. Not necessarily that "person" alone, but all those who are generally sensitives. The person who is endowed with this faculty of thinking about even the most trifling things from the higher plane of thought has, by virtue of that gift which he possesses, a plastic power of formation, so to say, in his very imagination. Whatever such a person may think about, his thought will be so far more intense than the thought of an ordinary person, that by this very

intensity it obtains the power of creation. Science has established the fact that thought is an energy. This energy in its action disturbs the atoms of the astral atmosphere around us. I already told you; the rays of thought have the same potentiality for producing forms in the astral atmosphere as the sunrays have with regard to a lens. Every thought so evolved with energy from the brain, creates *nolens volens* a shape.

M.C. Is that shape absolutely unconscious?

H.P.B. Perfectly unconscious unless it is the creation of an adept, who has a pre-conceived object in giving it consciousness, or rather in sending along with it enough of his will and intelligence to cause it to appear conscious. This ought to make us more cautious about our thoughts.

But the wide distinction that obtains between the adept in this matter and the ordinary man must be borne in mind. The adept may at his will use his *Mâyâvi rûpa*, but the ordinary man does not, except in very rare cases. It is called *Mâyâvi rûpa* because it is a form of illusion created for use in the particular instance, and it has quite enough of the adept's mind in it to accomplish its purpose. The ordinary man merely creates a thought-image, whose properties and powers are at the time wholly unknown to him.

M.C. Then one may say that the form of an adept appearing at a distance from his body, as for instance Ram Lai in *Mr. Isaacs*, is simply an image?

H.P.B. Exactly. It is a walking thought.

M.C. In which case an adept can appear in several places almost simultaneously.

H.P.B. He can. Just as Apollonius of Tyana, who was seen in two places at once, while his body was at Rome. But it must be understood that not *all* of even the *astral* adept is present in each appearance.

M.C. Then it is very necessary for a person of any amount of imagination and psychic powers to attend to their thoughts?

H.P.B. Certainly, for each thought has a shape which borrows the appearance of the man engaged in the action of which he thought. Otherwise how can clairvoyants see in your *aura* your past and present? What they see is a passing panorama of yourself represented in successive actions by your thoughts. You asked me if we are punished for our thoughts. Not for all, for some are still-born; but for the others, those which we call "silent" but potential thoughts — yes. Take an extreme case, such as that of a person who is so wicked as to wish the death of another. Unless the evil-wisher is a *Dugba*, a high adept in black magic, in which case Karma is delayed, such a wish only comes back to roost.

M.C. But supposing the evil-wisher to have a very strong will, without being a *dugba*, could the death of the other be accomplished?

H.P.B. Only if the malicious person has the evil eye, which simply means possessing enormous plastic power of imagination working involuntarily, and thus turned unconsciously to bad uses. For what is the power of the "evil eye?" Simply a great plastic power of thought, so great as to produce a current impregnated with the potentiality of every kind of misfortune and accident, which inoculates, or attaches itself to any person who comes within it. A *jettatore* (one with the evil eye) need not be even imaginative, or have evil intentions or wishes. He may be simply a person who is naturally fond of witnessing or reading about sensational scenes, such as murder, executions, accidents, etc., etc. He may be not even thinking of any of these at the moment his eye meets his future victim. But the currents have been produced and exist in his visual ray ready to spring into

activity the instant they find suitable soil, like a seed fallen by the way and ready to sprout at the first opportunity.

M.C. But how about the thoughts you call “silent”? Do such wishes or thoughts come home to roost?

H.P.B. They do; just as a ball which fails to penetrate an object rebounds upon the thrower. This happens even to some *dugpas* or sorcerers who are not strong enough, or do not comply with the rules — for even they have *rules* they have to abide by — but not with those who are regular, fully developed “black magicians;” for such have the power to accomplish what they wish.

M.C. When you speak of rules it makes me want to wind up this talk by asking you what everybody wants to know who takes any interest in occultism. What is a principal or important suggestion for those who have these powers and wish to control them rightly — in fact to enter occultism?

H.P.B. The first and most important step in occultism is to learn how to adapt your thoughts and ideas to your plastic potency.

M.C. Why is this so important?

H.P.B. Because otherwise you are creating things by which you may be making bad Karma. No one should go into occultism or even touch it before he is perfectly acquainted with his own powers, and that he knows how to commensurate it with his actions. And this he can do only by deeply studying the philosophy of Occultism before entering up on the *practical* training. Otherwise, as sure as fate — HE WILL FALL INTO BLACK MAGIC.

(*To be continued.*)}

{Continuation not found.}

2. {See 1889 01 v03 p301 How the Christ-Child was Born — J. Campbell Ver Planck (*The Path*) (*The Wonder-Light*).}
3. Quoted from memory and possibly not verbatim. {Matthew 5:8. As found: “Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.” I believe the change of words was deliberate.}
4. {The Editors of *Lucifer* were: M.C. (Mabel Collins); and H.P.B. (H. P. Blavatsky).}
5. {John King was a most popular spirit guide at the time.}

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*The Path* – July 1889, Vol. 4, pp. 121-125.

## TEA TABLE TALK.

JULIUS

Many theosophists continue to ask themselves and us, what they can do for the spread of Truth in the ordinary routine of life. It is impossible to answer this question specifically. There are as many answers as there are persons. It is for each one of us to discover for himself the possibilities of his life. If our aspirations are towards the higher aspect of things, we shall by degrees be able to make our life center in these aspirations, to focus it there, and to make it wear that aspect to some extent at least. Whatever occupation we may engage in has its inner meaning as well as the outward one. This higher value is often to be found in the relations into which that occupation

brings us with other men, their reality and their weight. If artificial, if strained, these relations can be made real, can be made to subserve a higher use; this use we must find.

For a public and notable example, we may take the Russian artist Vassili Verestchagin,<sup>1</sup> whose large collection of paintings attracted general attention during the past season. It has hitherto been assumed, for the most part, that the chief functions of art are to educate the taste; to inform the public; to vivify and illustrate the world they live in; to please, amuse, instruct. Its students range from those who study art for art's own sake,— for the development of laws of beauty and harmony, to those who follow the profession for the sake of making money and paint what are called “pot-boilers.”

Within any true work of art, however simple, as within every nature, whether of man, of rock, or diaphanous dragon-fly in the moist shade of the water-side, there resides a higher power in their relations to Humanity. This is their moral power. It is the power to make us think, to arouse us to that meaning of the soul incarnated in them, or, in the case of works made by man, to the thought spoken through them. See what the great poet finds in the sheen of gauzy wings.

A still small voice spake unto me,  
“Thou art so full of misery,  
Were it not better not to be?”

Then to the still small voice I said;  
“Let me not cast in endless shade  
What is so wonderfully made.”

To which the voice did urge reply;  
“To-day I saw the dragon-fly  
Come from the wells where he did lie.

“An inner impulse rent the veil  
Of his old husk; from head to tail  
Came out clear plates of sapphire mail.

“He dried his wings: like gauze they grew;  
Thro’ crofts and pastures wet with dew  
A living flash of light he flew.”

. . . . .  
And forth into the fields I went,  
And Nature’s living motion lent  
The pulse of hope to discontent.<sup>2</sup>

The power to make nations think upon higher themes becomes thus the apotheosis of art. Among such themes there is one that embraces them all. It is known by the name — among many names — of Universal Brotherhood. Our duties in this respect, and how we may improve them, form a subject inclusive of universal relations. Within his art, like gold within the mine, Verestchagin has seen at once this theme and this divine power. Let him speak for himself.

“Art in its fuller and more complete development is checked, and has not yet succeeded in throwing off its hitherto thankless part of serving only as the pliable and pleasing companion to society, and in taking the lead, not merely in the aesthetic, but

essentially also in the more important psychological development of mankind. ... The culture of the individual, as well as of society itself, has far overstepped its former level. On the one hand science and literature, on the other improved means of communication, have disclosed a new horizon, have presented new problems to artists."

In other parts of his catalogue, illustrative of his collection of paintings, he then goes on to show how a man may bring a whole civilization face to face with its own tendencies, its own mistakes and moral blunders, by means of his art.

"Observing life through all my various travels, I have been particularly struck by the fact that even in our time people kill one another everywhere under all possible pretexts and by every possible means. Wholesale murder is still called *war*, while killing individuals is called execution. ... Everywhere the same worship of brute strength, the same inconsistency; on the one hand, men slaying their fellows by the million for an idea often impracticable are elevated to a high pedestal of public admiration; on the other, men who kill individuals for the sake of a crust of bread are mercilessly and promptly exterminated, and this even in Christian countries, in the name of Him whose teaching was founded on peace and love. These facts observed on many occasions made a strong impression on my mind, and, after having carefully thought the matter over, I painted several pictures of wars and executions."

A soldier himself, he disclaims the right of judgment, having himself, as he says, killed many a poor fellow creature. He has lived through that form of life himself, has come out from it to think of it, and to tell, with the hand of power and through the mighty language of art, the lessons his own experience has taught him. The tender, airy shadows of his mosques, the cool gleam of marble and the glances of waters, no less than the grim stretch of misery in his huge battle canvasses, are alike eloquent of the inner meaning, the comprehensive relations of the deep spirit of material things. Nature and Spirit are always conjoined, the *Bhagavad Gîtâ* teaches us. The same may be found in every life, in all our work if it be done with this intent. One cannot say the Russians have not thought profoundly. There is Tourgeneff; there is Tolstoi,<sup>3</sup> not only writing but living his convictions; above all there is Helena Blavatsky. In all departments of Thought, our era shows her impress more than it does that of any one other person. She first organized the search for the signet of things, and directed our attention towards it as a scientific possibility for the West, as an accomplished fact in the East.

When the vast tidal waves of mid-ocean come soaring towards the main and before they have reached it, the sea-lover, looking outward, sees tremulous ripples pulsing on the sands. They are heralds of the mighty surges to come. In the same way we sometimes find an intuitive thinker foreseeing and announcing the evolutionary impulse. A skirmisher thrown out from the main army of Thought, he holds an outpost and prepares the minds of men for change. A striking example of this is found in an able work on American Womanhood, written many years ago by Dr. James C. Jackson, a sagacious and intuitive man. There is a fact stated in the *Secret Doctrine*, viz.: that a new race will spring up in America, differing physiologically and psychologically from preceding races, said fact accounting for the special interest taken in America by Oriental Teachers. This fact has been recorded by Dr. Jackson, who observed it in his daily medical experience long before the subject came otherwise before the public at all.

It would seem that such changes must naturally take place through the women, the mothers of the race, and this idea is confirmed by this writer. Space forbids our following his argument throughout, fortified as it is by statistics and close observation

covering a period of years, of all the women he met, but we may indicate them to some extent by quoting his first premise.

“The science of Human Life is as essentially inductive as any physical science. To understand it properly, one must reason from facts to principles, from phenomena which are visible to laws which are hidden, insomuch that it may be justly said that we cannot have a sound and reliable Psychology, or Science of Life, except as we have scientific Physiology, or true knowledge of the laws of the human body. ... In what consists the peculiarities of the physical organization of the American woman, which make her unlike all preceding or contemporary types of womanhood? (A) In the relative size of that portion of her brain in front of her ears to that portion back of her ears. ... (B) In the relative size of her brain-nervous system to that of her organic or nutritive-nervous system. ... (C) In the relative size of her head to her whole body.”

The view of this writer is that of the physiologist, using the inductive method of thought and taking count of a change which he deplores in the physical structure of womanhood. Had he checked this conclusion by that deductive method proper to the psychologist reasoning from principles to facts, he would doubtless have perceived that this physical departure would right itself so far as defective organization is concerned, but would remain as an altered organic structure in the race, one subserving psychological development better than the present structure does. As we are now constituted, we have psychic gifts only at the expense of the physical ones, and *vice versa*. If the race is to expand psychologically at all and yet to go on living,— two facts which few can doubt, however they may restrict their search, it is evident that this condition cannot long continue, that we are now in a state of organic transition and may look forward to a finer adjustment of forces. A man of brave soul, of high cheer like Dr. Jackson, always continues to expand mentally, to deepen psychically, and it would be instructive to know whether he has extended his views since publication. Be this as it may, it is stimulating to find the *facts* of our fellow men confirming those of the Wisdom-Religion, whatever their personal deductions from such facts may come to. Thought, like Life, is, in perfection, carried on by the twin processes of evolution and involution: it must employ both the inductive and deductive methods. Such a swing of the pendulum in two directions regulates motion and represents that spiral curve in which Life — Evolution proceeds. And we are always in Life. Death is only a word that has been coined for us; the coiner is fear. In so far as we can follow the methods indicated to us by Life — or Motion in Nature — just so near do we come to exact and just procedure in any department of Life.

A matter somewhat outside the conversational jurisdiction of the Tea Table is one to which we still allude because it was discussed among us. Members of a Branch wished to leave it “because of the hypocrisy of another member.” These questions arose round the Tea Table. Are not such departing members also guilty of hypocrisy, insomuch as they profess principles of Brotherhood and Charity which disappear when tested? Also, insomuch as they imply, on their own part, a perfection of character which makes no call upon the patience of others. If our brother sins, should we help him? Can we help him if we withdraw from him? As no man is perfect, and as we do not withdraw from association with all men, must it not be some special characteristic of our own, some moral conformation of our own, which makes some one fault more intolerable to us than other faults are? Then have we the right to visit our spiritual defect upon our brother? I call it a defect, because faulty proportion is malformation. In all the worlds, harmony is beauty. Sin is a phenomenal whole, consequent upon manifestation and form. To differentiate it and lay stress upon its various differentiations, or parts, is really to endow each with fresh and individual life. To view it as a whole, while trying to abstain from it and helping others to abstain, is the only theosophical course. From the standpoint of perfected Beings, I doubt not that all our

faults wear one complexion, and that my unjust censure of my brother is as dark to the celestial sight as is the murder committed by Ignorance in the slums. We are judged by motive alone, and the hidden motive may be the same. “Whosoever hateth his brother is a murderer.”

Let us not altogether abstain from our customary anecdotes. The astral light is a great gossip, a tell-tale, a listener at keyholes. A friend said to another: “There is the anonymous author Zero. I once used my intuition and concluded that a certain person must be he. So I wrote to that person, and he acknowledged confidentially that my divination is correct. But I cannot tell you his name.” While not telling his name, of course the speaker thought it, and had it clearly before his mind, so clearly that the combined energy of speech and thought stamped it vividly, so to say, in his aura. A listener, a bystander, heard the conversation, and all at once the name “John Pierson” rose sharply before his mind. “John Pierson,” thought he, “is Zero.” He inquired, and found that he too had discovered the secret. By this we may see that it is quite possible to keep a confidence in the letter and to break it in the spirit, even unconsciously. It is better not to talk of that which we wish to keep unknown, and not to talk around it, which some people love to do, just as they love to play a fish.<sup>4</sup> This incident illustrates what has been said in some Conversations in this magazine, viz: that Teachers would not give out certain occult facts because untrained men could not prevent their being known; in various ways others sense them in the aura.

JULIUS.

## NOTES

1. {(1842-1904). His art was of a very graphic nature for the time, depicting war and hardship openly.}
2. {“The Two Voices,” *The Lady of Shalott, and Other Poems*, Alfred, Lord Tennyson.}
3. {The writers, Ivan Sergeyevich Turgenev (1818-1863) and Lev (Leo) Nikolayevich Tolstoy (1828-1910).}
4. {To play a fish — a losing player, typically one inexperienced or unskilled in the game.}

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*The Path* – August 1889, Vol. 4, pp. 164-168.

## TEA TABLE TALK.

JULIUS

We like dog stories, round our table, good ones especially, and have cultivated the taste until we see no reason why dogs should not have their occult experiences as well as human beings. A pet dog frequents our Tea Table, and one very obstinate in nature, so that she will not learn any tricks beyond “give paw.” This she finds useful when dainties are on hand, and was taught it by me, when owner and everyone else had failed. Encouraged by this success, I tried to teach her to jump over a stick, but was routed with great confusion and amid the jeers of my friends. The dog simply closed her eyes and became a dog of wood, sitting immovably on her haunches. You might kill her, but you could not induce her to move a muscle of her own accord. As I am a bosom friend of this testy creature, needless to say that the trial of will never came to blows. I determined to “get ahead” of her. One day I sat in my chair. She was slowly coming in my direction. Suddenly, with great mental energy but without bodily

movement of any kind, I imagined myself laying a stick before her, imperatively and sharply. Instantly she stopped in her walk, fell back on her haunches as if sharply checked, and then — she leaped right over the imaginary obstacle in the air, and coming on toward me laid her head on my knees! I did it on interior impulse, and have not succeeded in doing it again. I have only tried twice, but neither time did I feel the same energetic force or momentum. No doubt the picture made by me the first time was a very vivid one. This dog has other peculiarities. One is her fear of thunder and premonition of storm. When one is coming she is a perfect barometer, and insists on being shut into a dark wall closet until the storm is over. Her fear is piteous, abject; she weeps real tears and trembles in every limb. Another point is that, while she spends much of her time upstairs and alone in her bed, she has at times some occult experience which makes her fear to remain in her accustomed place; coming down stairs precipitately, when there is no one above, she rushes in amongst us declaring her fear, will not go upstairs, but listens to sounds unheard by us, and is very uneasy. She has, too, a way of seeing an unseen person, of rushing out and catching him on the door mat, when she stands and barks and flies at space a yard away from her, just as if a real tramp were there. On some days she will suddenly refuse to go with me in familiar and accustomed directions, though her walk is her delight; she sits down, cries, and finally tucks her tail between her legs and runs back. It seems as if there were currents which she could not cross, for she will go in any other direction but the one which some mysterious force prohibits. The way is perfectly clear and open, nothing in sight, and the other dogs are perfectly unconscious. To see this small creature staring at something or someone just before her, and either angry at or afraid of *it*, while you see nothing at all, (or perhaps do see something!) is a weird, flesh-curdling sensation.

A physician of eminence gave to a friend of the Tea Table some directions respecting the distribution of vitality, and, incidentally, an experience which is interesting. The first part of his remarks appears really valuable, and may help those persons who live too much in the brain, or other part of the body, to the neglect of the whole as a unity. His remarks are as follows:

“You will find that much depends upon our housekeeping. Upon how we run the house we live in. One of the most important things to do, to be able to keep up good conditions of the body, is to be able to distribute vitality to all parts of the organism equally. Then the upward and downward peristalsis are normal, and all goes on well. The most ready way that I can find to distribute vitality is to lie down in an easy position on the back with the head and shoulders raised, and count the slow and easy breathings up to 49 three times;— then easily and calmly imagine that you are living all over equally in the astral body or the life vehicle. To do this you can locate yourself, your mind, first in one nerve center and then in another, proceeding from the head downward and holding each in turn till you feel a resonance there; then pass on to the next. When you reach the lowest, return with a bound to the brain, and so on downward again. The downward movement of the nerve-current establishes normal peristalsis, and the buoyant leap upward, or recoil, establishes the psychic wave, which always proceeds from the feet upward, while the other normally proceeds from above downward. Keep in the calm state induced by the breathings as long as possible, during which time there is easy meditation in the abstract, where you are in a state to hear anything that may be said to you through the soul. I will illustrate this by what occurred to me about two weeks ago. I was drilling myself in concentration, and when the figure I was intently fixed upon melted away, there appeared upon the scene a great Atlantean and a Superior Being. The former addressed the latter thus:

“Thinkest thou that thou canst upset this great Island *Ipsithypanta*? I was not only perfectly conscious of the presence of these two beings, but every word was distinctly heard *and seen as well*. This sentence was repeated over and over till I got up and wrote it

down, when the scene passed. *Ipsthypantha* is a word I never heard or even thought of. If I had simply heard the word spoken, I should have written it *Ipsi panta*. But seeing the word so distinctly with its letter and sound composition, it was so fixed that I shall never forget it. This no doubt represents an actual occurrence in the distant past, and the picture, being preserved in the astral light, came so that it was manifested on the plane I happened to occupy for a few moments.”

— Or, to put it differently, the gentleman went to the plane where the picture is always preserved and always visible. By a chance in the vibration of the nervous currents, he was enabled to see it. What is noteworthy in this occurrence is that it exemplifies the fact that the soul sense is *one*. A thing is at once seen, heard, felt, and tasted in one sensation, at such times. The same person once said of such a moment, “I not only felt the life current; I tasted it upon my lips; the taste was most sweet. And I heard its song.” All natural mystics, as well as trained ones, confirm this unity of sense if sufficiently advanced. In *Gates Ajar* Miss Phelps has guessed at it in some eloquent passages. Paracelsus confirms it. The above is, however, an experience of the astral only, and did not reach beyond. It reminds us of how Madame Blavatsky, when writing her books, has said that she was shown a long panorama of the Past, in order to impress its occurrences vividly upon her brain. An adept may show such pictures to another by withdrawing the veil between. This veil is a difference of vibration. Or one may do it for himself — *if he can*. I will give a little more of the experience of this student, which reminds one curiously of parts of the *Secret Doctrine*. He says:

“I have never had any plans in life. Something before has guided and something from behind has projected me with an intensity that no opposition could influence.” (This is the attitude and confession of all advanced souls, rich in Karmic experience. J.) “I see it all now. I have been guided to help those who are purely on the physical plane with the diseases coincident to them and to that plane.” (This remark is to be taken in a relative sense. The writer knows well that disease proceeds from and begins in the astral plane. J.) “I have accomplished the work, you know how well. I now am drifting back into my original and natural plane.” (Of his earlier life. J.) “Am having many experiences which I cannot write about. I am satisfied that former lives are rising up to me, and have been for years. Sunday night I witnessed a boxing match between a cream-colored man and a cream colored monster in the shape of a large dog with a perfect and intelligent man’s face. The man was about twelve feet high and finely proportioned, with a cream-colored suit of peculiar but artistic garments that were just tight enough to show the shape of the body, with puffs around the upper legs and arms. The dog-man had no clothing, but was covered with beautiful, cream-colored, curly, short hair all over except on the face, which was free from all hair and was calm and beautiful. This man-animal stood about 3 1/2 feet high when on all fours, and when upon his hind legs, about 6 feet. In the boxing match the man stood on the floor of a large hall, and the animal-man on a table which made them the same height when the animal-man stood on his hind legs, which he did during the boxing. The building was a strange, lofty structure, unlike anything I ever saw in this life. I merely mention briefly this incident as one among many that are rising up before me as I move along through a life of close application to the sufferings of others.”

Whether a picture of past or future, or merely a phantasm of that light in which all the fancies of men’s minds are preserved, this little incident may amuse our readers, as having at least a higher order of interest than the brutally disgusting Sullivan-Kilrain affair<sup>1</sup> to which the Press of the time gives such close attention.

The following letter shows a spirit so invigorating that I cannot forbear to give it space; although it is not an experience in one sense, it is in another. It is a mental experience, and indicates a firm true attitude which, I have every reason to believe,

most of my readers, if not all, maintain. As it refreshed me to read it, I print it for that reason.

"I have read the letters regarding the new departure of M.C., Dr. Coues, and Co. As my sponsor, you might wish to know how I feel on the subject. If after twenty years of practical Theosophy, in which I learned Truth from neither men nor books, I should now be so dependent as to look to Dr. Coues, Mabel Collins, or Blavatsky alone for *Truth*, my heart would be broken and my hope laid in the dust. I was early taught that Jesus was God. When I studied his own words, I found that He was a man. But this did not detract from the Truth which He practiced, nor render His loving sacrifice unworthy of imitation. If Madame Blavatsky were to assert that she had sold herself to the devil to get means to deceive the world, it would not detract one particle from the Truth I find in Theosophy. That which I have — as I used to say — *out of the air*, is mine, as much as is the hand that holds this pen. If all the theosophists in the world were to withdraw their names from their Society, there would still be the same number of *true theosophists* in the world that there is to-day. Those who wish to withdraw should be allowed to go. Truth, like gold, is not injured by being laid in the dust. This conflict is the sifting of souls, and it seems to me prophetic of a day in the near future when there will be a marshalling of the hosts, and no cowards will be wanted in the ranks. Only the true and the tried will be sent to the front. May we be there to live or to die for Truth! Madame Blavatsky has won my love by her courage. She cannot suffer much from any mortal tongue. She can bear her own Karma. You remember in the story of Job that, when the Sons of God assembled for worship, Satan appeared also. Heaven itself had its traitor in Lucifer. We had to have a Dr. Coues. I could not imagine any earthly treasure which would tempt me to degrade myself for a mean, pitiful revenge, as Mabel Collins has done. As she is *myself*, I feel the wrong and suffer with her. I must help her bear her Karma. I am stronger than she is. ... What light I have is set on the hill now, when the cause needs defense. If my power to *do* were equal to my love for the Truth which has set me free, I should accomplish a great work here, but this city is a place of churches and a repository of creeds. I have no other wish than to bear with all my heart the whole weight of wrong effected by M.C. and her co-workers. I know — feels as I do. Whatever theosophists have to bear, there are two of us here who have our hands stretched out to aid — not its salvation, for that cannot suffer — but in its defense and in its spread. My heart is much with you and all who love the Brotherhood. I *know* all is well."

It is! It is! and this is so only because all proceeds by Law. We can better everything, however, if we will, each one of us, live up to all the Truth we have. In bettering ourselves, or in enlarging our hearts to true altruism, to real and practical Brotherhood, we can help the whole world. If each of us were wholly true, no man or woman could be false! Think of that. And if the true meaning of the Lucifer myth be this,— if the Manas or mind principle caused departure from the pure heavenly state, then return can be effected through the purification of that same "Son of God," the wanderer from home. Our brothers departed, who now manifest the lower, earth-darkened state of this principle, may, through the ferment of sad experience, cast all dregs to the bottom, where they belong, in subjection, and come out ahead, in other lives, of those who have remained passive, enjoying Truth as an intellectual banquet, without endeavoring to give one crumb to the starving multitudes. We all stand or fall together. Other societies are a force because of their unity. One member, or official, represents the full weight of the whole. Let it become so with ours. Let us draw close together, fill up the gap in our ranks and *work, work* each for the whole. We can work by constant and pure thought, by deep silent devotion, if we are powerless in all other ways. Let each, then, image to himself a great Brotherhood, of which he is one, whose life he shares, whose joy and pain he keenly feels, and out of this true mental attitude

an inspiration for altruistic work will be born, as worlds are born from star-dust by accumulation of energy.

JULIUS.

## NOTE

1. {On July 8, 1889, two boxers, John L. Sullivan and Jake Kilrain faced each other in a fight for the world heavyweight title in 100 degree heat; the match went on for 75 rounds.}

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*The Path* – September 1889, Vol. 4, pp. 188-191.

## TEA TABLE TALK.

JULIUS

A correspondent writes: “I was very ill one night, and, at the end of a severe paroxysm of pain, it suddenly seemed to me that the walls of the room and everything about me dissolved and I distinctly saw the stars. It was only for a moment. Then I came back to find my friends in tears about me. They said afterwards they thought I had gone. It was not like an ordinary faint, and was still different from another experience. One night I was half-asleep, when suddenly it seemed as if I were standing at the foot of the bed and saw my body lying there. I wasn’t a bit surprised, but the thought went through my mind, ‘I’m glad to get rid of *that*.’ Whereupon a *Presence* which seemed to be visible at my side as a luminous blue radiance answered my thought with another; ‘It is not time.’ There seemed to be, for one brief instant, a sort of struggle, and then I was back in the body. What was the blue radiance, and in what did the two experiences differ?”

It is not always possible for one who was not present to know and to precisely read an event, or for one who has not passed through an experience himself to give it an absolutely correct rendering. Even in visible material things, witnesses are found to differ. We can, however, approximate, always supposing that the witness has seen correctly so far as he has seen. In occultism the same rule holds good. According to this account, I should say that the first experience was one of the clairvoyant state. Through extreme weakness, the bodily senses were all temporarily extinguished, or, to put it differently, the vibrations of the physical body were so greatly weakened as to permit those of the inner body to take control. Then the psychic sense, or clairvoyance, was manifested. The same thing occurs with yogis in self-induced trance of the body, the yogi doing for his body temporarily what physical disease did momentarily for the body of the present querist, who appeared as if dead to surrounding friends through the suspended animation of the physical casing. The second experience appears to be an instance of going out of the physical body in the astral body. It is a very instructive instance because the presence of the mind principle in the *linga sarira* or astral principle, and the *duality* of the mind principle, are clearly seen. The lower mind expresses contempt for its casing, joy at physical release. The higher mind, knowing well that Life is the great teacher while Death is only a state of reward for deeds done, replies that the time has not yet come, and it replies *out of a blue radiance*, which we may say here is the magnetic sphere or aura of every Being. Certain students will understand its further meaning and the deep significance of this point, and that the higher mind should speak from it and appear as an external Presence to the lower mind. The “struggle” spoken of was first the mental struggle for adjustment between the two states of mind, and lapsed into, or was merged into, that psycho-physical shock which always attends

return into the physical body, just as departure from that body is often attended by a feeling of rending or dissolving. These experiences should enable our correspondent to understand in some measure how an adept may consciously do the same things. Disease often brings about such experiences through a change of the normal vibrations of the physical body, when the astral body is attracted by the currents of the astral light. Being the vehicle of mind, the Mind principle naturally accompanies it. But there is a higher body than this astral body, and it is the vehicle of the higher Mind: this higher body manifested here as "a blue radiance," and all the other principles and their vehicles are different aspects of this one thing.

A short but interesting phrase is found in another letter. "The last PATH was of peculiar interest to us. In it we found the answers to several questions which had occupied our minds, and had been themes of discussion during the last month." In this and in similar incidents the solidarity of the T.S. is shown, and is a sufficient answer to persons who frequently ask what they shall gain by joining it. From a central position it is easily seen that one current of thought prevails at given times among students all over the country, and that many get the answers to this given line of questions through their inner natures before the printed reply reaches them. This is of great assistance, for it develops intuition and the inner senses, and such development has been greatly helped by the thoughts of the body of students, tending in one direction and producing a great current or force which is used by the more intuitive ones, but which is at the disposal of all alike, without being diminished by use. The mere fact that a number of minds are turned in one direction renders progress in that direction possible, as is so beautifully pointed out in *Gates of Gold*. Moreover, it is our united action as one Body corporate, drawn together by a common impulse and with common aims, that engenders a current which can be used for and by all, without diminishment: it rather increases by such use.

Mention of *Gates of Gold* brings me indirectly to the subject of a letter in our last number. This letter touched upon a trial which has resulted, on the whole, in much good for the T.S., as trials of all kinds do if borne in a brave and generous spirit. This letter was a refreshing one, in many ways, to me, because of its common sense and naturalness. Yet this Department has received one letter, and has been shown another from a prominent and valued theosophist, in which the attitude of our earlier correspondent appears to be misunderstood. It seemed to me that the true theosophic attitude was one wherein we dealt with our neighbor as ourself. We see our fault, we see a part of our motive at least. We condemn our *fault*; often we turn from it in loathing. But we do not wholly condemn *ourselves*. We do not say — "There is no good in me." If we say so, it is only a mental or intellectual utterance, to which we give the lie by going on with life and by expecting, on the whole, good things of ourselves. We do not, therefore, condemn ourselves, but only that act, now grown hateful to us. We admit this, we try to repair it and to kill out all the seeds it may have sown. Now we cannot do better than this by our comrade. There is a fine line between romantic sentimentality and the spirit of isolation, which line we must tread. We tread it by dealing with another as we really deal (not as we think we deal) with ourselves. The mistake in the attitude of my correspondent doubtless lay in an implied belief that in his or her case such fault would not be possible. All faults are possible to every one of us. They lie latent even in the perfected nature. They are the *negative* aspects of nature. Or call them the *evil* or *separate* aspects: the meaning is the same. It is hard to find a word to describe this latent potentiality existing throughout all nature. We never know what we might be under temptation until it has assailed us, and this truth is implied in the Lord's prayer: "Lead us not into temptation." I am glad to have attention called to this point, which I had mentioned earlier, but which was omitted through defective copy. Another objection is that motive cannot be judged. This is true; it cannot be

wholly judged, but it may be ascertained in part, in specific acts, and, when declared, it may be in so far reckoned with. Observe also that it may be declared without that declaration being known to all persons. When all is said and done, however, we do not ourselves know all of our own soul's motive, because that is hidden deeply within the soul, and our comrades can only judge what are the tendencies of a given motive or act. They must do this to protect themselves and others, and if meantime they hold fast to the spirit of charity and consolidation, no more can be asked. The emotional feeling which avoids all recognition of evil and injurious tendency is as unjust as is the spirit of condemnation. The latter errs chiefly towards one person; the former errs chiefly towards the many.

Another querist says: "The other day I engaged a new office boy. Since then, whenever I have looked at him, I have thought of Arthur. You will remember Arthur is one of the characters in *Tom Brown at Rugby*.<sup>1</sup> This thought kept haunting me. This morning the bill clerk, who has become sort of chummy with him, called him Arthur. How is it that that name kept running in my mind from the day he entered the office until to-day, though I had never heard any but his surname?" The incident is quite natural. His name was in his aura and was sensed unconsciously by the inner man of my querist. We get innumerable ideas thus from the auras of others and never suspect their source.

JULIUS.

#### NOTE

1. {*Tom Brown's School Days*, Thomas Hughes.}

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*The Path* – October 1889, Vol. 4, pp. 227-229.

## TEA TABLE TALK.

JULIUS

MY DEAR JULIUS;

It has been my intention for some time to write to you relating a curious experience that I first heard some 6 or 8 months ago. My relative, a professional scientist, a man learned enough to know better than ever to risk making fun of any one's beliefs, and knowing my interest in occultism, told me the following.

Some 20 years ago, while still young and at college, he had the universal and very bad habit of doing what he pleased during the terms, and "cramming" the last week or so before examinations, to enable him to pass. This operation of cramming is a painful one, for it necessitates continued application to one subject, often for over 24 hours at a time, and to keep himself from going to sleep in the midst of his studies he made some highly concentrated coffee, a teaspoonful of which, he says, made him shiver from head to foot. (I give these details to show that he must have been in a highly sensitive state.) The night before a certain examination, he mislaid a book which it was necessary for him to have. This worried him a good deal, but he worked along without it until 11 or 12, when he decided to take some rest, knowing that he would otherwise be unable to do justice to himself the next day. He went to sleep immediately, and, upon awakening shortly afterward, became conscious that (he then thought) he was dead. Being of a naturally speculative mind, he was very much interested in seeing what would happen and where he was going. Suddenly he became conscious of a counterpart of himself, standing on nothing, or floating in the air alongside of his bed.

He describes it as much smaller than he himself really was. His consciousness then left his body and entered this counterpart. He found that he could move around at will, and, remembering his anxiety about his lost book, he suddenly started toward the library, passing through solid stone walls etc., without any trouble, until he stopped before a certain shelf where, in full view, he saw the book he wanted. He had searched through the books on that very shelf several times the evening before without finding it. Being satisfied, he returned to his bedroom, and having been successful in his journey to the library he reasoned that if he could pass through stone walls he could certainly get back into his body, and not being anxious to die he tried and woke up all right although feeling very badly. Next morning he went to the library and found the book where he had seen it the night before. As a scientist, he naturally has his own explanation for his experience. He says that we are conscious of much more than we are aware of (if the phrase is not too rash), and thinks that, when he searched for the book the night before, he really saw it, although unaware of that fact, and simply dreamed the rest. You are at liberty to publish this if so desired.

Yours fraternally, G. HIJO.

The explanation of the scientist does not necessarily contradict that of the occultist. The gentleman may or may not have seen the book on the shelves before, for it is a truth well phrased that "we see more than we are aware of." The sub-conscious mind holds most things. He went to sleep in a highly nervous condition, hence with the plastic body (inner body) in a sensitive state. Upon it was stamped his strong desire for the book; stamped by thought or will just as the sun stamps an image on a sensitized plate. That body obeyed the impulse given to it automatically, and the tale is a fair illustration of how the manas can enter and guide the thought-body which it has formed and evolved, *and which is itself*. This truth is important and should be studied. As for his "merely dreaming,"— what is dream? It is the going out of a part of our principles into the astral light. They may do so formlessly, or they may be formed, through their plasticity, into a body which mind cognizes as the counterpart of its habitual casing, but in either case dream is a departure into the astral light.

Another friend writes us. "I am reminded in reading your account of second sight (*In re* cross-walk) in the PATH for April, '88 {1888}, p. 31 of a similar personal experience. I am of a somewhat sluggish temperament and not much subject to these affairs, but as the dénouement followed so truly in the way of the preliminary experience, I was somewhat startled at the outcome. The whole occurrence happened within two months. I will relate it.

Shortly after the present administration was installed into office at Washington, there was the customary change in the affairs of the local post-office here. The office was turned over to the control of adherents of the dominant political party, and all, or nearly all, of the old employees were notified that their services would no longer be required. Among the latter was a letter-carrier, one C——, with whom I was slightly acquainted, and in whose future movements (for some reason unknown to me) I felt an interest, and often I found myself mechanically speculating as to his then employment. Finally, about eight weeks ago I chanced to pass C—— in the street. I surmised that he was idle, and the thought occurred to me: "What a splendid police officer C—— would make; why does he not try to secure an appointment on the force?" My thoughts flew silently into space; I gave the matter no further consideration, and it did not occur to me again until, on the seventeenth of March past, in turning a street corner hurriedly I collided with a police officer walking in the opposite direction. The officer was C——. His appointment dated about three weeks before. "Of course the above is fact. B."

Our correspondent also gives us the name of the officer and other data in corroboration of his story. But this is not needed, as we do not print any story in the Tea Table without having all reasonable security of the honesty of our correspondents. Still another friend says:

“My cousin wanted to get security for administration of estate; amount very large; he was not able to find a suitable person. He thought of one man, spoke of it to a relative here in the parlor; just then the man spoken of rang the bell and came in, saying he thought my cousin might want security and gave it to him then.” (In such cases it would be interesting to compare notes in order to see which man had the thought first. Such persons are often “on the same ray,” when thought works so swiftly between them. J.) “I spoke to this cousin to-day of his brother’s widow. He said he had not seen her for a long, long time. We went out for a walk, and met the widow on the third block.”

In some places the astral light is more fluidic, more active than in others, just as some persons are more sensitive, and in these places impressions are quickly received.

JULIUS.

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*The Path* – November 1889, Vol. 4, pp. 262-264.

## TEA TABLE TALK.

JULIUS

In the course of other chat lately a good idea arose. It was this. That if the Masters are “honest debtors” (as One stated in a letter to Mr. Sinnett), they surely never get into our debt by reason of our personal efforts at self-progress, but solely by our efforts for Their Cause, which is that of the uplifting of humanity. Hence it was agreed that we ought to try to get supreme devotion to that work for others, and forget our own progress. This was apropos of one of our group telling how he has noticed in himself a growing absorption in the work of the T.S. and his wanting to know if They wished us to devote more time to personal development. We all agreed that inasmuch as we cannot be adepts in this life, we may as well drop the assiduity in personal development, and acquire instead an intense devotion to the work of the T.S. For practice in development is only for the purpose of acquiring powers — small or great — while we can hardly attempt devotion with a selfish object, since to be devoted we must be selfless.

This does not mean that we are never to practice concentration upon or aspiration towards the Eternal. But the best concentration is that which enters into every moment of our lives by fixing the heart and mind above temporary things, even when necessarily engaged in them.

On this subject of concentration a foreign correspondent wrote us, quoting from an article in the PATH for April, ‘89 {1889}<sup>1</sup>: “If we have a regular time for study or for work ... soon at that hour the Unconscious favors us. It is largely in one’s power to establish a good rhythm by regularity in one’s activity.” Our correspondent goes on to say that “this is good advice for one who wishes to conform to Nature, but we must remember that too close a conformity to Nature would do away with the distinction between man and the animals. An animal is entirely at the mercy of the expansion and contraction of the Astral Light. ... But man has the power to resist the influences of the Astral Light, and in this lies his power of voluntary concentration. Supposing a man had at last succeeded in establishing such a conformity with Nature that he could attain

complete concentration whenever his time for meditation came around. He would not be able to concentrate himself at any other time, nor, if his regular routine should chance to be upset by social necessity, could he concentrate himself even at his regular time. He would be the slave of Nature. This is an extreme case, but it is the extreme towards which the practice of conformity tends. Again, there are more natural influences to be considered than at first sight appears. In the articles on 'Nature's Finer Forces,' in last year's *Theosophist*,<sup>2</sup> it is shown that the bodily and mental states depend upon the prevalence of certain 'tatwas,' or influences, which again depend on the relation of the sun and moon to the earth. ... No man can be in a state of nature without conformity, conscious or unconscious, to these rules, and that necessitates such a constant altering of meal times and qualities of food as would make man a perfect slave to circumstance. The true method of concentration seems to me to consist in overcoming these tendencies."

I quote at length from this thoughtful student in the belief that others may have been led into the same line of argument by the articles to which he refers. The prevalence of certain "tatwas" has nothing in common with the idea of choosing a fixed hour for concentration, since that is not chosen in regard to those tatwas. We are like the settler who makes a small forest-clearing in some spot of his choice, and is, for a while, content to hold that spot against Nature. We win our chosen hour from Nature and hold it firmly against the prevalence of "tatwas," or states of Prana (solar influence), no matter what these may be. It must not be forgotten, either, that these states refer to a certain plane, while other influences prevail upon higher planes, and those we may reach. While all Nature vibrates in unison, this great vibration is made up of different states of vibration, some higher, some lower, and not one uniform and single mode or rate of vibration, as our correspondent seems to infer. The very point he wishes to make is then made by our choosing our own hour without regard to Nature: it is certain that the higher vibration, which we endeavor to reach by concentration, *always* exists somewhere. Or, to put it differently, the vibration differs in different planes. These planes are not places, but are states of being.

Another correspondent says: "Last summer a friend of mine spent some time at my home. In the fall, she went West. We then made an agreement that every Sunday afternoon at two o'clock we would each sit for one hour in seclusion, concentrating our thoughts each upon the other, and would immediately afterward write out any impressions which we might have had, and at once forward them, each to the other. For several reasons, we did not carry out our plan. The first Sunday after our agreement, however, I performed my part. On Tuesday I received a letter from my friend saying that she had been unable to do her part, owing to the sickness of a friend by whose side she was watching; but that, while thus watching, she suddenly had the sensation of pressure on her temples, and then seemed to see me standing in the front room, on the second floor of our house, with the tips of the fingers of my left hand resting upon a library table, against which I was leaning, while talking to some one invisible to her, and that the table was by the foot of the bed, where the person to whom I was talking seemed to be. She then looked at her watch, supposing that the hour for the sitting had long passed, but, upon making allowance for difference in time, discovered that it was just three o'clock, Eastern time. This was the time at which the sitting was to terminate. Upon receiving this letter ... I asked the members of my family what I was doing the preceding Sunday afternoon, and found that at about three o'clock I had gone into my father's room (the room described) and stood by the table in the position described, talking to my father and mother, the former being on the bed. ... The most peculiar feature of the matter was that my friend was entirely familiar with the room, having herself occupied it while at our house; but when she occupied it

the table described as standing by the foot of the bed was not in the room, but was put there after her departure.”

Aunt E. who is the only theosophist in a family not accustomed to talking upon any such matters, has a very intelligent little niece, who is about four years old. She had been reading to the little one an account of a boy who had been dreadfully injured. This seemed to impress her niece, Antonina, very much, for, climbing into the aunt’s lap and nestling close to that lady’s side, the following conversation was begun by the child.

“Aunt E. where did they carry that little boy?”

“I don’t know,” said the aunt, “but I suppose they carried him to the hospital.”

“Well, why didn’t they carry him to God’s house?”

“Why,” was the somewhat startled response; “I think they just took him to the hospital, where they could make him all well again.”

“Oh,” said baby; “they ought to have taken him to God’s house. I’ve been there; I’ve been all through the skies; it’s very nice there; he needn’t have been afraid. It isn’t dark there; that is, it isn’t *very* dark; it’s very nice.”

“What do you mean?” asked E.

“Oh! I was there once, and nothing happened to me at all, and I saw a beautiful great Light coming towards me, and it was God Himself, and He asked me what I was doing there. And I told Him I was getting made into a girl. It had to be made into something, you know, and it was a girl.”

“When was that?” inquired E.

“Oh! that was before I came here,” said Antonina. “I used to be old, and then I was made young again.” Then after a second’s pause, she said: “Aunt E. why doesn’t grandpa get made young again, like Uncle S.?”

This charming little anecdote has one point of surprising intuition: it consists in the description of God as a “great beautiful Light,” and this point hardly comes within the scope of a child’s imagination, appearing rather the memory of an actual experience, or, as *Isis* puts it, a “truth learned while journeying with Deity.”

JULIUS.

## NOTES

1. {Page 27.}

2. {*The Theosophist*, October 1888, Vol. 10, pp. 26-32.}

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*The Path* – December 1889, Vol. 4, pp. 283-286.

## TEA TABLE TALK.

JULIUS

A highly valued correspondent says: “I was specially interested in the early part of the last Tea Table Talk (Nov.), for I have had just the experience narrated of one therein, *i.e.*, a gradual intensifying and enlargement of interest in the work of the T.S., and an obscuring of interest in personal culture. I could understand perfectly the experience spoken of. Some questions connected with it I may not have settled correctly, but the conclusions were these: that, the sum of energy being limited, only an exceptional nature can pursue two things with equal vigor simultaneously; that it is not a matter of very much moment whether one gets ahead an inch or two, more or less, but it is of

very great moment that the T.S. work should be done, and done now; that if one has a bent towards missionary and other schemes in the T.S., it is highly important to utilize it at this juncture, for the aid of all others. It may be a deficiency in my nature which prevents my being able to carry on outside work and personal culture with equal zeal, but, since it is there, I find myself urged from within my own nature to give more and more attention to work for Theosophy, with a corresponding loss of absorption in the personal problem.”

When we consider how few individuals of Western blood are able to make marked advance in things spiritual, exclusive of the growing psychism of our era, the above conclusions appear soundly based and wise. A further confirmation of them may be found in the following lines, taken from an unpublished letter of an Adept connected with the theosophical work from its beginning. The letter was written to an eminent German Scientist.

“Spheres of usefulness can be found everywhere. The first object of the Society is philanthropy. The true Theosophist is the philanthropist who,— ‘Not for himself, but for the world, he lives.’ ... This philosophy, the right comprehension of life and its Mysteries, will give the necessary basis, and show the right path to pursue.”

In another letter from a Source equally high, at least, we find these significant sentences, addressed to a lady seeker.

“Are you ready to do your part in the great work of philanthropy? You have offered yourself for the Red Cross, but, Sister, there are sicknesses of the soul that no surgeon’s art can cure. Shall you help us to teach mankind that the soul’s sick must heal themselves? Your action must be your response.”

There is weight in that last line. Everywhere in thoughts from such sources we find one chord struck, one harmonic theme emphasized; it is that of Altruistic Work. Such work includes the effort to perfect the personal nature, to live and to think along pure and unselfish lines. The following extract from a letter of X. shows the attitude of the clear-sighted seeker again:

“Like you, I merely want to work. I seek no powers; *nothing*. I have made in my heart the martyr’s vow. I am devoted as far as my lights in each life will permit to the service in the altruist army. Just now I only find T.S. to work in here. Next time, some other way — or the same. I am ready ‘to step out of the sunshine into the shade so as to make room for others,’ and I seek no Nirvana. This is your way, too; so be troubled not by words, titles, or confusions. X.”

Nowhere do we find effort towards development of powers insisted upon by true Leaders or loyal students. When it occurs that some member feels himself ready and able to enter that other order of life — discipleship — under its own peculiar conditions; when the possibility of acceptance on trial seems before him, even then he is bidden learn of Life itself; he is met with such words as these.

“Life, in the ordinary run, is not entirely made up of heavy trials and mental misery. The life of a chela who offers himself voluntarily is one long sacrifice. ... The chela on probation is like the wayfarer in the old fable of the sphinx, only the one question becomes a long series of every day riddles propounded by the sphinx of life, who sits by the wayside, and who, unless her ever-changing and perplexing puzzles are successfully answered, one after the other, impedes the traveler and finally destroys him.”

To work, then, studying meantime the Life about us, seems our best present course. As the letters of fellow students keep coming in, the Tea Table finds much reference to the young, and how to guide them. Looking up from our writing, we see a pretty sight. Great heaps of brush and leaves are flaming in the village streets, and about them a band of children gathers, even to babes in their mothers’ arms on the

outskirts. Leaping in and out of the leaping flames, these elfin fire worshippers collect, scatter, overleap, pursue, escape from the live serpentine messengers. Blonde and black locks shine in the ruddy flames. Eager eyes declare the eternal fascinations of fire for the human heart. In a house by which they are playing, these words are carved over the fireplace: "Wherefore glorify ye also the Lord in the fires."<sup>1</sup> Upon another known to the Tea Table we read: "The Lords of the Flame came down."<sup>2</sup> Taken, the one from a biblical, the other from an oriental source, these words point to the same truths. How are we to teach these truths, felt by us, to our children, *without* teaching them in the old literal sense? The question is a timely one in the Christmas Season, when, if ever, the sun-gods come down and are "born again:"— How to avoid the old system grafted upon so many of us, whose forced habits we have unlearned with so much pain? That is, the teaching of doctrines and formulas; the leading a child up to some prepared system and bidding it receive whether it is ready or not. All children have awakening instincts of their own (most are believers in Reincarnation), and it is by and through these they should be taught. Above all, they should be encouraged to seek, to think for themselves. Mistaken thought can be corrected, and through their own experience and the failure of that to "check off" or to agree with the false theory. But the evil habit of accepting the thoughts of another, however good, at first hand and without any examination of them, is too early grown, too deeply rooted, too fatal to self-sustained growth. A wise and tender mother writes me: "We have — children, all beautiful souls that have come to us. ... One is afflicted; a beautiful spirit and an example to us all. We feel privileged to have this soul with us. ... We find much to do daily in helping these dear ones *to find themselves*." (This puts the true idea in a nutshell; the italics are mine. J.) "Theosophy comes natural to them all, and many curious sayings have been theirs in younger days. ... Sometimes I am overpowered with the responsibility resting upon us, and feel the need of so much wisdom and feel I have so little. The first years of a child's life are so important, and one needs to have oneself so under control before one is fitted to deal with these little ones."

These wise words cannot be bettered by mine. Their complement is in my mind, inspired by that Christmas Season which seems so especially dear and near to childhood. Can it not be made a new and true Christmas to them? As they hear again the dear old story of the Christ birth, can it not be made into the royal tidings of the birth of Chrestos, The Light of the World? Can we not put into these eager hearts and souls a-thirst for knowledge, hurrying to drink at life's springs,— can we not instill into them the living seed of a larger hope, a higher truth? Can we not bring the Christ birth nearer to them in words of solemn tenderness and the assurance that in the pure heart he may be born again, that every little child may light that glory in his own soul, may stand upon his childhood, his fresh and loving heart, as upon a throne, reaching up to that crown, that light of lights, if he but will? Can we not tell how all the world, in every clime and age, has heard the story and told it in every tongue, carving it upon the rocks that future men might thrill to it? Tell them the dear old story newly, bring it into their own lives; the birth, in manger or cave (the "cave of the heart"), among the elemental beasts of our own earthy nature, from the *pure* "Virgin of the World" and under the care of the carpenter (or former of material things, or the formative power of matter at once housing the soul and providing experience for it), of the Christ-light. Teach them to watch for it, to listen for it; speak to them solemnly in the twilight of this great potency of their natures, of its ineffable promise, consolation, and hope. Inspire them, Mothers, to love and to serve it. Fathers, confirm the story from your manhood's authority and weight; give them the assurance that to love the Law, and their fellows as the Law, is the whole of that Law Itself.

And in this highest promise and name I greet you, my comrades, and I wish that you may fully know how "every good and perfect gift cometh down from above, from

the Father of Lights,” and that this Elder Light may shine upon you and give to you and to us all, Peace and Goodwill.

JULIUS.

## NOTES

1. {Isaiah 24:15.}
2. {*The Secret Doctrine*, H. P. Blavatsky, Vol. 2, p. 75.}

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*The Path* – January 1890, Vol. 4, pp. 321-324.

## TEA TABLE TALK.

JULIUS

A correspondent sends “two dreams which came true in every particular.” She says: “I don’t tell them as being wonderful, but because I would like to have an explanation as to how an event could be impressed upon one’s consciousness so long before it happened, and would like to know, if it is the “shadow” of the “coming event” in the Astral Light which I happened to stumble against, how it came there? Number 1. — I dreamed one winter of a bridge,— a high, arched bridge crossing a stream which was bordered with trees and young shrubs clothed in the tender green of early Spring. The sun was setting, and its slanting rays fell upon the water in such a way that it streaked it with gold and crimson light. I particularly noticed the branch of a tree which had been partly broken, and the leaves of which having partially died, their yellow hue presented a striking contrast to the other foliage. On the bridge stood three people, close together, looking over the parapet. The center one was myself. On my left was one whom I felt — (the “I” in the picture, I mean; there is a double consciousness about all these experiences of mine which makes it difficult to be exact in telling them) — to be my dearest friend, though I (the one on the bridge) did not see her face. On the right was a gentleman whom the “I” on the bridge appeared to know, but the “I” who was dreaming did not. The whole thing was so vivid that I spoke of it the next day to the afore-mentioned friend. The following Spring, unexpectedly to us both, we together visited Washington, D.C., and a friend of *my* friend one afternoon drove us out to Cabin John’s Bridge, where we had dinner, and afterwards *just at sunset*, walked upon the bridge, and, stopping to look over the parapet, there was everything as I had seen it, even to the broken branch with the yellow leaves!

About the same time I dreamed that my friend and I were upon an ocean steamer. We simply looked around and then got off again. Sure enough, while in New York before proceeding to Washington, my brother asked us to visit one of the steamers, which we did.

Dream No. 2. was as follows: My friend’s sister, who was living in Colorado, removed to this city and went to house-keeping with her mother and sister; her husband, who was a physician, not being able to follow until he had settled his affairs. I had never seen him nor heard him described, but his wife being tall, and I having been told that he was an unusually intelligent man. I naturally formed the idea that he would be tall and fine looking. One Monday Mrs. C. told me she expected her husband on Thursday. That night I dreamed that I saw a man,— a short man, not handsome, but with a pleasant, intelligent face. He was smiling, and I said “Who are you, and what are you so pleased about?” He replied, “I am Dr. C., and am pleased because I shall be able to leave two days before I expected.” He had a moustache and a short beard, and

while he was speaking the *beard* dropped off, leaving him with only the moustache! The next day I told my sister all about it, but meeting my friend simply said I had dreamed the Doctor would be here two days before he was expected. That afternoon Mrs. C. came in and said, "Are you a witch? I have just had a telegram and the Doctor will be here to-night!" Now comes the funny part;— the next day I went to the house, and was introduced to Dr. C. He *was* a short man, looked *just* as he did in the dream, and wore no beard, only a moustache. I afterwards asked his sister-in-law if he had ever worn a beard, and she said he *always* did, but Wednesday morning he took it into his head that the sun had faded it, and had it shaved off!"

When the poet wrote that "Coming events cast their shadows before,"<sup>1</sup> he expressed, intuitively, a scientific fact. All that is or was exists in the Astral Light, and in so-called "Dream" the soul looks into that light, it may be on the higher or on the lower plane of it, and sees past, present, or future events there. Sometimes these are clearly reproduced upon the brain and to the waking memory; sometimes they get mixed up with other things upon the passage back to the waking state, or are confused by physical and other vibrations, and then the image presented to the waking mind is blurred and fantastic. In regard to the question, "how they came there," full explanation is not possible. Terms and knowledge are alike wanting in which to explain such a great mystery. For it is a mystery to the mind; it must be seen to be known. What can be said is that the Astral Light is the universal mirror; it contains the patterns of all things; in it are all forms as well as pictures of all events. Whatever *is*, is first posited there as a center of energy, and forms the mold for the objective form or event. It may be stated that this "mold," or this positing — this coming into subjective existence of the thing which is afterward to have objective existence — is effected by the impress of the idea *upon* the universal substance by the universal mind, or cosmic ideation. In the same way, but in minor degree, the human brain makes pictures in the aether of all its thoughts, pictures more or less vivid according to the amount of energy which clothes them. This is caused by the formative power of Thought, just as vibration causes crystallization, or makes patterns in sand or iron filings placed upon glass, by means of sound.

A correspondent who has had dreams which came true, relates a painful one to us and asks (A.) If it follows that this one will come true because the others did, and, (B.) if the painful event can be prevented or any action taken to stop the persons dreamed of from taking the course seen in dream, which had such a sad ending.

A. It by no means follows that any given dream will come true because others have proven so. It may come true, or it may not. But decidedly it is best not to think of it as coming true, or to think of it at all, because pictures of it, clothed with more or less energy and life, are thus made in the Astral Light and may impress sensitive persons.

B. In regard to this question, it cannot be too clearly stated that the Course of Law cannot be stayed. If an event is to befall one, no person can prevail against the karmic circumstance. At the same time, it may only threaten, and it may be the karma of some outsider to step in and prevent the accident or the misfortune. It is then clearly our duty to do what we can to avert the danger or suffering of another, and, having done what we could, to dismiss the result from our minds. All we have to do or can do is our duty. To this duty all altruistic effort is related. Having done it, we should dismiss all anxiety for the result, and calmly accept the course of Law.

Another F.T.S. says. "At the theosophical meetings which we have been holding lately, there has been present a lady, not a member of the Society, but rather one opposed to Theosophy, although interested in the deeper thought of the time and prepared to look fairly at any question which may come up. She has an unusually clear

and sane mind. She also dislikes phenomena, or rather, the discussion of phenomena. A day or two after attending our last meeting, she visited the home of one of her sisters. While there, she was confined to her bed with some slight indisposition. One day, while her sister was out, the bell rang and a caller left her card. While this was occurring, the invalid distinctly saw the caller, al-though there were solid walls between them, and found upon her sister's return that her description was accurate in every detail, and yet it was a person quite unknown to her.

The above, coupled with a little experience of my own, not to mention things now being constantly spoken of in the daily papers and ordinary social chat, leads me to be somewhat less of a "doubting Thomas" than formerly, and to look without a feeling of condescending amusement and incredulity upon such matters. The experience was this,—slight, of course, but still interesting. While dressing for dinner recently, I laid my shirt studs, cuff buttons, &c., upon my bureau. Later I took them up again, but found that one stud was missing. This is a common occurrence with me, and I began the usual search, not omitting the floor, although confident it had not been dropped. Finally I said to myself rather jestingly, "I guess one of Julius's elementals has been around here and hid the blamed thing. So I will look exactly where I know I put it, and not finding it give up the search. Perhaps in a few minutes it will become visible." So I again looked carefully where I felt certain that I had placed it, being especially certain on account of my very methodical habits and the unlittered condition of the bureau, that I was making no mistake. It was not there. I then proceeded to brush my hair, put on my tie, &c., &c., and then looked again. I could hardly believe my senses when I saw it just where I had been looking. Perhaps I was a trifle "off," but I don't think so. — (P.J.)"

Why our friend should attribute the elementals and their action to "Julius," as if these were figments of our brain or phantoms due to Tea Table indigestion, we cannot imagine. We should be sorry to answer for most of their pranks, and beg to state that we do not endorse, any more than we invent, them, while yet their action is undoubted. In some cases they are centers of energy in the Astral Light, which centers are roused into greater activity by our thoughts, often unwittingly projected upon them.

JULIUS.

## NOTE

1. {"Lochiel's Warning," Thomas Campbell, 1902.}

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*The Path* – February 1890, Vol. 4, pp. 350-353.

## TEA TABLE TALK.

JULIUS

MY DEAR JULIUS;

The following was told me by a friend, and I can vouch for every word of it as strictly true: The latter part of February or the first of March of the present year, the skeleton of a man was found near Beaver Creek, in the edge of the mountains, about 40 miles southwest of Laramie, Wyo., and taken into that city. Evidently the man had died years ago, as there was but little clothing left on him. J, a friend of mine and an ardent spiritualist (and above all a sincere and honest man in all things), saw the skeleton as it lay in a box in front of a doctor's office. The thought occurred to him to try an experiment. "No doubt but this man has been murdered. I will get this skull and take it

to B, and see what he has to say of it.” He obtained the skull, took it to his house, and placed it in a small leather hand-bag, made especially to contain 3 vols. of a book which Mr. J had formerly been an agent for. His friend B, who was and is a medium, is a man of irreproachable character. He had often seen Mr. J. with the hand bag and knew its use, and had no thought of the bag in any way except in connection with books,—indeed, he had kept it in his house weeks at a time, filled with books. I will let Mr. J. tell the story, only abridging it as much as possible. “Perhaps a month after the finding of the skeleton, I took the bag containing the skull and went to B’s house. I had kept my purpose a secret from every one, for, until the morning of my visit to his house, I was not certain in my own mind that I should do what I contemplated, viz. take the skull to B. in the hand-bag, and, without giving him any information of any kind, ask him to take the bag in his hands and give me whatever impression he might receive. We had a long and interesting conversation upon the subject of re-incarnation, for, while we were both spiritualists, we looked favorably upon Theosophy and its aims. I had been in the room an hour when the purpose of my visit came to me suddenly. I reached the bag to him and said, ‘Take that into your hands and give me your impressions.’ He took the bag in both hands, placed it against his forehead, and, as if surprised, said, ‘I see a large, square-built man, with a queer kind of head dress. It’s neither a hat nor a cap, but something resembling a crown. He has on a strange-looking jacket or waistcoat, and a belt over it. His pants are very large at the waist and hips, and taper down to fit tightly just below the knee, ‘English fashion.’ I see him walking along, picking up sand and stones, examining them, and throwing them down. He makes memoranda in a book now and then. Now I see him digging under the edge of a large brown rock. He finds pure gold at a depth of two feet. This hole he covers up again carefully. Makes more memoranda in his book, and marks on the stone, as if to guide his return to the spot. I see a pick and a peculiar looking iron wedge lying under a big flat rock. Now I see a small man, with a brown and a sorrel mule, both small, hitched to a wide track wagon, that has flowers painted on the bed, like the Bain wagon. This small man has brown hair and whiskers, and seems to be waiting for the large man, probably to take him to the railroad. Now I see another small man, with long black beard, who is in some way connected with the large man. Mr. J, he said, turning to me, ‘What have you got in this hand bag anyway?’ I hesitated a moment, and then told him. His face flushed, and he said, ‘I would have given a dollar if you hadn’t told me.’ Mr. B. then made a diagram of the ground where the scene described took place. He also told me that the small man with the mule team had murdered both the large man and the small man with long black whiskers, and he described the spot where the latter now lies, in the edge of a little quaking aspen grove, some 3 or 4 miles from where the large man was buried. His description of the murderer was explicit, and I mentioned a name. ‘That’s the man,’ he said, without hesitation. Mr. B. had seen the man once, and I several times. This murderer is now serving a term in a penitentiary for some minor offense. I made cautious inquiries, and learned that the man had at one time owned such a mule team and wagon, and was occupied, now and then, in taking prospectors and hunters around over the country. Mr. B. and I intend to go to that part of the country and see if we can find the body of the other murdered man, the pick and iron wedge, and the large brown stone that has the gold under it. If we find any or all of these things, then we shall feel quite sure of all the rest, but until then we intend to mention no names, for it would be unjust, and, again, no court in the land would accept such testi-mony. “Imagine a medium on the witness stand!” The readers of the “Tea Table” will readily understand this whole matter, and will consider it, not spiritualism as do both Mr. J. and Mr. B. but purely clairvoyant vision,— psychic phenomena of a startling nature if confirmed. I could fill the “Tea Table” with columns of psychic evidence, of a more or less interesting character, such as have been

and are taking place here frequently, but I consider this of too much importance to pass by. I will some day give the sequel to the above, if Mr. J. and his friend B. make their intended visit to the mountains and find anything to verify their present impression.”

J.F.C.

The Tea Table awaits with interest the *dénouement* of the above, and would like also to tap the vein of psychic interest alluded to. In all new countries, where the magnetic currents are comparatively fresh, the “world soul” is constantly manifesting itself in increased activity which men sense more readily because their minds are not distracted by the unceasing detail of a crowded civilization.

Another reader writes:

“DEAR JULIUS:—

I am prompted by your recent attention to ‘coincidences’ to relate an experience of my own.

During my absence a few weeks ago on a business trip through the western part of the State, my wife went to a small town near Saybrook<sup>1</sup>, intending to remain there until my return. One day after I had been gone about a week, I started, with a sudden change of intention, for the place where my wife was staying, and wrote her that I was coming. My letter was, however, not received, and she went up to Middletown.<sup>1</sup> When I arrived in that city on my way down, I had a few minutes to wait for a connecting train, and was standing in an obscure position on the platform when my wife walked up and accosted me. She had arrived a few minutes previously with two other ladies, had gone with them and gotten into a street car, but, by a sudden impulse, without saying anything to them and with almost a certainty of losing the car, she had left them and gone some distance, and around three sides of the station through a dense crowd of people, directly to where I was standing.

We then went home with our friends and were shown to our chamber and bath-room to prepare for dinner. We both proceeded to the bath-room, which opened from a narrow and rather dark hall nearly the whole length of the house from our chamber. My wife immediately returned to the chamber. When she came back I did not see her, but was conscious that she was in the hall and had passed the door. I had no reason to doubt that she did so intentionally, and as I had never been in the house before, knew nothing of any danger beyond. Nevertheless, by another of those sudden “impulses,” I shouted very sharply and in a manner so foreign and uncalled-for that it immediately surprised myself,— “Stop!” My wife had passed along the hall, which, as I said, was rather dark beyond the door which she wished to enter, and, when my shout arrested her steps, had turned into the next doorway, and, if she had taken another step, would have fallen headlong down a steep stairway.

Of course I was pleased when the first ‘coincidence’ saved me from a needless journey with disappointment at the end, and genuinely thankful when the second averted actual disaster to my wife; and the occurrences have afforded subject for a good deal of thought concerning the how and wherefore.

It may be pertinent to mention that neither my wife nor myself is known to possess any special psychic susceptibility or to be under any morbid conditions, but are both sound, healthy, ordinary people.

Yours sincerely,

F.W.W.”

Another coincidence coming to us from a distance, relates the following. "I was driving one lovely night over post roads to the R.R. Station, and was thinking how impossible it is for human *reason* to understand how God (Perfection) can *love* Humanity (Imperfection). The more I thought of it, the more wonderful and incomprehensible it seemed. Wandering about, inside the station, I found myself standing in front of a large sheaf of Bible texts which hung upon the wall of the waiting room. I never look voluntarily at these public texts: they have some unpleasant association or other,—Cant, perhaps. Something made me read this one, and I saw these words; 'I will shew thee the way in which thou shouldst go. *I love them that love me*, and they that seek me early shall find me.'"<sup>2</sup>

Very truly is it here shown that Love is the living Link, the inseparable bond between all beings and all creation, so that by its light all problems can be explained. We find this law of harmony manifesting in the most unexpected and apparently anomalous conditions. As, for instance, the spread of disease — say the Grippe,<sup>3</sup> whose fatal sneeze pervades the attenuated Tea table — is greatly aided by the mental currents of those who hear of and think of it until it is attracted to their sphere. "Fear" of a thing is simply a passive condition; so is doubt, while anxious expectancy is an open door; but the contrary mental altitude, if really maintained, wards off disease by rendering the person positive to the infectious germs which thus rebound from his sphere. Most "faith" is like that of the old woman, who had faith, she said, that the mountain could and would be removed by prayer. So she prayed all night, and then looked out. There was the mountain still. Cried she: "Drat the thing; *I just knew* it wouldn't move." A chestnut, perhaps, but *apropos*. Something newer is the remark of a dear little maid, still learning to talk with her 3 years' tongue. She visits a relative, who is an F.T.S. A visitor said: "Baby, what's your name?" "The-o-sophy," proudly replied the little one, whose relatives did not know she had ever noticed or could pronounce the word. Imagine the delicious picture of the proud prattler, the confounded caller, the enchanted relatives, enough to warm even the bachelor cardiac muscle, or what d'ye call it, of

JULIUS.

## NOTES

1. {City in Connecticut.}
2. {Psalm 32:8 & Proverbs 8:17.}
3. {Influenza.}

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## TEA TABLE TALK.

JULIUS

"MY DEAR JULIUS;

Will you kindly let me have your opinion on the following:

When it was announced in the papers that "la grippe" had made its appearance in St. Petersburg, and that it would probably in short course of time reach this country, I became apprehensive lest it should attack the members of my family; especially so as, if any one of our little group excepting myself were to be taken with it seriously, the result, on account of certain conditions, might be almost, if not quite, disastrous. I

therefore willed with all the vigor possible that the whole force of the malady, if it came our way, should expend itself on me and that the others might go free. Immediately after Christmas, rather to my surprise, I was taken seriously ill and confined to my bed for several days, having the doctor in daily attendance, and, in fact, having him twice on the first day. The attack, however, quickly passed off, and a few days found me at work as usual. But it was only for a brief spell. I was again suddenly taken ill and confined to my bed for another brief period. Meanwhile the rest of the family were quite well, excepting one member who is a chronic invalid. Does it seem to you probable that my willing had the intended effect? Or, was it all a mere coincidence? And, if it was not a coincidence, was I justified, knowing nothing of psychic forces, in tampering with what I did not understand? It seems to me not."

To reply to the above queries, it does seem *probable* that the will force expended had the due effect. I cannot affirm that it had, for I by no means know all the agencies at work. "Coincidence" it was not, for there are no coincidences as that word is generally understood. Every event is the result of a cause, seen or unseen. So far as the working of cosmic Law is understood by me, I see that the result above given is one that would naturally follow upon the course of action described by my correspondent, while yet I do not know that it did not result from some cause or causes unknown. Certainly his effort was enough to produce the given effect. And I quite agree with him that he was not justified in taking a course so dangerous, because no man is really justified in interfering with the course of Laws which he does not understand. In so doing he sets subtle and powerful agencies at work, and the action of these by no means ends with the results described, but continues for great periods of time. All the discord in the universe comes from opposition to the course of Law, and when the opposition is conscious the discord produced is enhanced.

Another correspondent writes as follows:

"One evening lately, as I was about to retire, a voice said, "You will see something very wonderful tonight." Having frequently and invariably brought trouble upon myself by seeing and hearing "wonderful" things, and having just received a severe rebuke from H.P.B. for placing any reliance upon such visions, I resolved to ignore any spook or vision that might present itself. But nothing of the kind came; though towards morning I had an uninteresting dream, to which I attached not the slightest importance at the time. In that dream I was in company with Mr. —, a prominent Theosophist, and his wife, and other minor *dramatis personae*. Mr. — did nothing, said nothing, but his wife seemed in what follows to be acting *for him* at his unspoken suggestion, and not for herself, being a sort of female counterpart of him, and not his wife as she actually is,— a lady who thinks Theosophy is all foolishness. She offered me a talismanic ring, but I tried to decline the gift, for I felt that it was to save me from something, *and I did not want to be saved*. But Mr. — silently indicated that the ring came from *him* and I *must* take it. I said then, "Yes, I will take it." The ring was set with a pure white stone, rimmed with pearls. As I took it she said, "Mr. L., remember Ferncliff." As these words, like the reply of Poe's Raven, "little meaning, little relevancy bore," I paid no attention to them; but she insisted, "Write Ferncliff three times in your memory, so that you will not forget on waking." I obediently repeated the word thrice, and we parted. Then I dreamed that after wearing the ring for a time I noticed that from the rough work I had to do, and the chemicals I got on my hands, the pearls in the ring had become broken and partially dissolved; I was about to discard it as ruined, when I found that the white stone had changed to the color of a ruby, but was streaked with orange and had a golden flame within it, and I cried out in ecstasy, "It has become harder than a diamond!"

The next evening, as I was walking on Fulton Street, Brooklyn, the word "Ferncliff" on a theater poster caught my eye, recalling my dream of the ring. The next

moment I reached a street crossing, but as I stepped from the sidewalk a strong impulse came over me to stop, and a firm grasp upon my arm drew me back. Turning my head to see who had caught hold of my arm, I saw no one,— not even a spook. At that instant a carriage, driven at reckless speed, came around the corner from a dark side street, the wheels passing within a few inches of my feet. But for the friendly invisible hand that had drawn me back I should have been struck down by the horses. Yet I felt no joy over the escape, but rather like a tired mechanic desired by his employers to do over-time work after his full day's labor had been completed."

A short time ago, an F.T.S. wrote me recounting some dreams which had come true in each case. She then went on to give another, in which she dreamed that a certain friend whom she named to me had died in consequence of a habit he had of jumping upon trains, and asked me; (A) whether I thought the fact that the other dreams had come true would go to prove that this one would also befall. (B) Whether anything could be done to prevent its coming true. To A I replied that the truth of her dreams constituted some probability, but no more, and that any given dream might prove wholly false, notwithstanding the accuracy of the average. As to B, nothing could be done to turn the course of law if the events were written down, so to say, in the book of destiny. Nor would it be wise to try to do so in any occult manner. But we could not be sure that it was so written, and the ordinary precautions or actions of common sense were indicated in this case, such as urging the friend to abandon a perilous habit, and so forth. Shortly after, the lady wrote me to say that her friend had suddenly died, and supplied me with the published data of his death. He had not, however, been killed as she dreamed, but had died of a stroke preceded by sudden business failures. She asked me whether this fact did not point to symbolism in her dream, as that, failing to "catch on" to a certain train of events or circumstances, he fell and died of the shock. This appears to me to be the case. The whole matter shows how little reliance we can place upon dreams or their details, for, as seen in the case of my first correspondent, our very thoughts about an event are often sufficient to determine certain karmic action in a given direction.

We form, as it were, the mold into which karmic force may run and expend itself. A genuine dream experience gets mixed up as it percolates into our ordinary consciousness; its details are deflected, broken, altered; the waking brain does not report it accurately. None but a trained seer can place reliance upon his memory of dream experience, and even he may err, except in cases of full adeptship. It seems, then, that we do well to study these experiences, without over-valuing them. I should give due heed to a dream, so far as studying it is concerned, but I should not permit it to take root in my thoughts as more than a fanciful vision, or, at best, a possible hint. Common sense is an invaluable guide in all such matters, and in occultism is beyond all price.

It would greatly lighten our labors if correspondents to this department would remember to write upon one side of the sheet only.

JULIUS.

## TEA TABLE TALK.

JULIUS

We were talking of various ways in which the spread of Theosophy could be increased, and one suggestion which was made received the unanimous support of the Tea Table. It was to the effect that all F.T.S. who are professional writers should write those letters after their signature to any articles in the public prints. The letters would, in many cases, arouse inquiry as to their meaning, thus bringing Theosophy on the carpet, while in all cases they would serve to show the public how many of our brightest minds have accepted these teachings to a great extent; not that only the curious and the ignorant take Theosophy seriously, while others receive it as a craze or “fad” of the hour. Were it generally known how many practical men and how many writers of marked standing are thorough believers in this philosophy, its sanity could not be so often called in question with any show of reason. Do not our members who are writers owe some such measure of allegiance, some such “brave declaration of principles,” to this cause at this juncture? In the *Occult World* a master has said that believers must prepare to hold high the flag of occultism, and the above is one of the ways in which the public mind may be most readily reached and influenced to further inquiry upon these subjects.

A correspondent says “The Tea Table likes dog stories, and I herewith send one which seems to me good. A while ago my little dog was seized by a large mastiff and cruelly torn and mangled. The surgeon to whom we applied to sew up the wounds declared that, unless the dog were chloroformed, he would struggle so that it would be impossible to perform the operation. I said ‘No; that is not necessary. I can so hold him in thought that he will be perfectly quiet, whatever you do.’ After some discussion, the Dr. consented to make the trial. Under the influence of my thought the little creature remained still, never moved or whined, while a large needle and thread were pushed through and through the living flesh and it was fastened together. After it was done I paid no particular attention to the dog for two or three days; then, on taking him in my lap, I discovered that he had torn the stitches from the largest wound (under the fore leg). The wound was gaping open nearly three inches; the flesh, swollen out beyond the skin, was very much inflamed. I love the little creature, and for one short moment I was dizzy with consternation. Then it was given to me to see the wound closed and healed. I put him down and felt at rest about him. The next morning, about 12 hours afterward, I looked at him. There was no swelling, no inflammation, no raw flesh, and the skin had so nearly closed over the wound that I could not lay a pencil in it. I have, as far as I know, no psychic powers. I have been through a course of Mental Science Lectures. Should any one wish to question me about this, or about some wonderful things I have done for horses, you are at liberty to give my address, for I love to help our four-footed brethren. Many people will think it was a psychological influence which I used on the dog, but the fact that I have had the same response from horses whom I had not before seen, and who were supposed to be dying from disease or fatally injured, will prove (I think) that such was not the case.”

The editor of this department had the same experience with a delicate and valuable Italian hound, which bore eight stitches without moving or protesting. The influence appears to be a psychological one; the usual influence of human beings over their animals, carried to a high point. The fact that it can be done to strange animals

does not change this aspect of the case. The influence is mesmeric (or psychological), and familiarity is not needed to induce it. I frequently walk with a friend who can call strange horses, cows, cats, and dogs to him from the fields by the word "Come" uttered in a peculiar tone, accompanied by an outstretched hand. He says that the word and gesture merely serve to consolidate his thought, and that what really attracts the creature is his tone and his will. I have seen him so attract the "chip-munks" of the Western prairies. Sometimes a creature bounding by will not come to him, but will stop short and eye him panting for a time. I do not accept any distinction between psychologizing persons or creatures and treating them by the various thought-cures now in vogue. Psychic powers are latent in all persons, and the will, mental or nervous disturbance, and various other psycho-physiological conditions may call them forth. The great affection felt for the dog probably induced a condition of the nerve aura in which his restoration to health, as pictured in his aura, was felt and sensed by his mistress. Nor is it unusual to have such flesh wounds heal rapidly if the dog is sound. All events are natural and based upon strictly scientific conditions, if we but knew them. There are no coincidences, no chances; only laws; only cause and effect in endless sequence.

We were saying how subtle are the distinctions made by occultism, and how hard it is to realize that the plane of thought is the source of action, and hence most important to guard. Almost every thoughtful person has been surprised, some time in his life, to find himself doing or feeling something unexpected to himself, and for which his apparent mental attitude had no ready-made proviso. This needs study and care. Mr. Niemand quoted some advice once written to him which may help other students. "How much I wish you could keep quiet; I mean, quiet inside. You are allowing yourself to chafe and rage inside. Outside quiet does not amount to anything unless all inside is quiet too. This has to be learned, and, good boy as you are, you have not yet learned it. Can't you? I have learned that, or else I should have gone mad, as much from myself as from others.

"What is to learn is to be content, or, rather, resigned to ourselves and our limitations even while striving to get above them; and when a bold and loyal nature like yours achieves that knowledge, a great advance is made. You need never excuse yourself at all in the forum of your own judgment, but when you have passed your judgment, bow your head. We cannot all at once live up to these high ideals as some others live up to theirs. Some are pleased with themselves because their rules allow it, and they are thus quiet, but it is not that quiet I refer to. Your soul may be quiet even while the body rages. (See *Voice of the Silence* <sup>1</sup>). I am never, nor you, satisfied with ourselves, but we must be resigned to the limitations of our character as they appear to us. The greatest error in occultism is to doubt one's self, for it leads to all doubt. The doubts of others, which we have, always spring from the inward doubt of self. Do not doubt, then, even so much as you admit, in yourself." As students advance in the study of occultism, it is an undoubted fact that their thoughts gain very active power. I have had occasion to note this in several instances. A. finds that, if she wishes for a thing ever so slightly, the wish just passing through her mind as it were, she receives the object wished for soon after, and in the most natural manner, to all seeming. Also she is able to find lost objects by strong thought directed in a given manner. B. has other experiences; here is a batch of them.

1. In bath room, he spoke in his mind to his sister and she called up, "What do you say?" and declared she heard him loudly calling.

2. At a T.S. meeting a member read a paper, and B. thought; "Mr. —, I would like that paper." Mr. — said, in a moment, to B.: "Did you speak? I thought you asked me for that paper."

3. In the office a man spoke to B.'s clerk, and B. thought: "I wish he would give me his card." The man instantly put his hand in his pocket and handed B. the card, of which nothing had been said.

4. M. wished to send B. a color, *not* named. Next day B. saw white, then yellow and white, and, two days after, blue. M., when asked, said those were the colors he had sent, and in that order.

5. Mr. A. wished to inquire for B. whom he had not seen for a long time. He went to a bank and asked the cashier; "Have you heard of B. at all lately?" The cashier pointed to a man just coming in and said: "There he is." Such instances could be duplicated over and over. But it is better to draw from them the evident moral, which is, that we should more carefully guard our thought than our bodies. Our minds affect this and the following incarnations powerfully, while our bodies, to quote H.P.B., are "only mere evanescent rags." And she adds that to play tricks with the mind does great harm.

JULIUS.

## NOTE

1. {*The Voice of the Silence*, H. P. Blavatsky, p. 29 — "Both action and inaction may find room in thee; thy body agitated, thy mind tranquil, thy Soul as limpid as a mountain lake."}

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*The Path* – May 1890, Vol. 5, pp. 60-63.

## TEA TABLE TALK.

JULIUS

A Theosophist who has won the title of "Much Beloved" from all who know him recently said to me, out of the experience of a busy life — one busied, too, with the core of things rather than their surfaces — these words:—

"In the great struggle of Humanity nothing is lost. No labor, no love is in vain. We live over again our own trials in those we desire to assist. We are drawn upward and outward by those who are trying to assist us."

Thus viewed, Humanity is a long series of links in the great chain of being. The experience of one completes or illumines that of others, and the meaning of a Master's saying, "Karma is the kindest of guides and the best," is made plain. Individual experience does presage the possibilities of all others. Here is a case in point.

"A lady whom I have long known, a natural and clear psychic, avoiding mediumship yet knowing little of T.S., reading little, rather unlearned, has often given me her '*impressions*.' She both sees and feels things, and has done so all her life. She is now perhaps fifty years old. Several children died young; so childless now, she lives much alone, a simple, uneventful life. Since reading some T.S. works, in a very quiet way she observes more closely. Except among a few who know her life and her gift, she would pass as a quiet, pleasant, commonplace, kind-hearted lady. She has dropped the use of flesh meat, (never liked it). Some time ago she began to see a vision of a beautiful young woman standing in a halo of light, and finally recognized it as herself beautified and glorified. She had no '*idea*' of the mirror of Isis or the Higher-Self, yet she *felt* simply and clearly the meaning of the vision, and was inwardly uplifted by it. She has never been in the habit of using wine; had always a quiet dislike for it; and

living so simply, seldom had occasion to refuse it. Recently she was out for the evening; wine was served, and thoughtlessly and indifferently she drank half a glass. A day or two afterward she again saw her 'Lady of Life,' and on her face the saddest, most sorrowful expression she ever beheld. She was grieved and shocked to see this, and said to herself, 'What can it mean? What have *I* done?' Then the vision changed, the white and radiant halo began to waver, to darken, and finally became *blood-red*, and the vision disappeared, while there floated to her inner consciousness the one word, '*Wine!*' She had forgotten the wine entirely; 'but,' added she in telling me of the incident, 'that is the last drop that will ever pass my lips.' These visions occur in broad day while sitting alone sewing. They are not dreams. The crass may ignore them, or laugh at such things because they are so far from realizing or experiencing them. Such little things, however, are the stuff of which the whole higher life of the soul is made. How often has H.P.B. expressed her sorrow, and even her disgust, that any member of T.S. should use wine. When the soul of man or woman has reached a certain stage of development, a single glass of wine may degrade it more than at another stage it would be degraded by a dissolute life. A drop of acid that would leave little trace on a piece of rusty iron would sully forever the brightness of burnished silver. Even a drop of water or a shadow might leave its stain on the polished surface."

It is thus that our danger and our responsibility increase with every advance along the toilsome way; and it is thus that every day are confirmed the wisdom and the beneficence of that Great Soul who has borne so many of our burdens, who has been so reviled for our sakes, and whom we have often rewarded by distrust and ingratitude. Still, all this is in the Karma of H.P.B. no less than in ours and in that of the T.S."

Students of the E.S. will be able to understand more of the above vision, as related to the powers of the soul, than will any others. Many clairvoyants, seeing such all glorified and radiant, have variously mistaken the appearance for an angel, a god, a spirit guide, and the like. We cannot proceed one step towards the real understanding of this, or of any other vision, until we have at least grasped the idea of the powers of motion — Spirit — the Breath, not only in the worlds, but in each soul sphere, wherein its formative functions must be as active as in any other part of the Universe; for the Breath is One. Much of what we see and hear takes place in our own sphere and *is ourselves*, just as the cause is also ourselves. Therefore all sensations should be studied and followed to their source within us. No occurrence should be attributed to the supernatural (which, in fact, does not exist), or to any "outside" cause until we have made close and long search for its cause as internal to us. In our internal world all things are; all elements, all potencies, all forms and powers. This internal world it is which connects us with the All. Sometimes a very small thing will confirm a great truth, as in the case of a student who writes thus:—

"In reading one of the *Theosophical Siftings* lately, I came across an account of the third eye, as described in the *Secret Doctrine*."

One day in talking to an F.T.S. of St. Louis, I made the remark that at times I had a sensation which I could only express as being unable to see behind me. He asked if I could at other times see behind me, at which I laughed, it appearing a ridiculous question."

Annoyance at inability to do a thing is often the mental shape taken in the brain, of the assertion of the inner self that a certain thing can be or should be done. The drawing or contracting sensation in the back of the head, at the pineal gland, often causes this feeling that we could or ought to see behind us. A popular saying, "He has eyes in the back of his head," refers to persons of more than average intuition, and confirms the occult wisdom, as almost all proverbs and popular sayings do. Intuition experiences are usually accompanied with what seems to be a flash of light in the head,

and this too points at the operation of “Buddhi,” or the sixth sense or principle. The principle is the source of the sense; the latter is the objective manifestation of the principle; and, as the principle can manifest upon seven different planes, not all clairvoyant or sixth-sense experiences can be regarded as the direct action of Buddhi. The agitation of the lower astral plane, and of the inner self as reflecting that plane, often distorts and obscures the direct rays of the sixth power. Nor is this power always the vehicle of the next higher power. Naturally, it is not, when the plane of its manifestation is one of the lower ones. Students are too ready to attribute various occurrences to the sixth sense. One such writes:—

“I had, this winter, a peculiar experience with the Grippe. I read thrilling accounts of its ravages in Europe; then in New York and nearer home; but had no fear of it for myself. One morning I suddenly felt myself surrounded by it; a wave of throbbing, fever-laden air seemed to be whirling round me, sometimes retreating, sometimes coming a little nearer, but never really touching me. I felt sure at once that it was the prevailing thought of disease making itself known to — my sixth sense? — and I regarded it simply as a curious manifestation. I had no fear that it would take possession of me and make me ill, neither did I *will* it away. At the end of one day it disappeared as mysteriously as it came. I think I have no psychic powers, but did I not see into the astral or Thought World?”

*Answer.* The lower astral and the Thought World are not one and the same. The Thought World is the highest and first manifested plane of the One, as we understand the teaching. The lower astral is the plane of grosser psychic energies or forces. The student felt the strong vibrations of that plane, either through (A) some quickening of the astral, fluidic body, or (B) through some unusual passivity of the physical molecules. There is nothing in what is said to prove that this vibration was that of the Grippe or disease currents. It might have been. Frequently, we feel all at once the vast surge and roar of the astral plane, or of some one of its currents, simply because some center of the psychic body is, at the moment, set in synchronous vibration with the corresponding center of that astral plane. Such vibrations may be caused in numerous ways. Finally, we all have *latent* psychic powers. In every one of us all potentialities do lie, and can be aroused. That they rarely are, is no proof of their non-existence. We are, generally speaking, like locomotives without steam, into which steam may be conveyed at the will of the engineer, when the steam will move any or all parts as required. We can draw upon the central natural forces by our *soul* Will, which Will itself requires to be aroused and educated, and is itself a dynamo-spiritual force or current of the All force.

“I went to a room for a drink of water. As I placed away the glass and was turning to retrace my steps, I noticed, at a short distance from me, what appeared to be a large body of air. Though transparent, it was clearly defined; not quite six feet high, the same in breadth and thickness. In fact, it was an immense cube. As I gazed upon it, I could detect intelligence, decision, strength; therefore I stepped backward; it advanced toward me just the distance of that step. Then I walked backward; just the distance of each step it followed me. *We* passed through the room into a side hall, from thence into the front hall, until opposite a hat-tree; then it disappeared. ‘What can this mean?’ I thought. Mr. —’s coat was there: I put my hand into a pocket, then into a smaller one, to find my missing eye-glasses. They are very valuable to me. I would have been glad to bow acknowledgments for the kindness of the invisible guide, but I was alone.”

In this instance I should say that the cube was a body of differentiation in the student’s aura, caused by specific vibration, perhaps of thought concerning the missing

and valued glasses, so that the earnest wish to find them became objectively manifest in this way, simply as a differentiated body of etheric force. That it was in and a part of the student's aura, seems indicated by its moving and stopping just as she did, while the inner self directed her steps (or the inner instinct) towards the place where the missing object was. When the object was found, the vibration set up by the sense of loss and the wish to find it was checked and disappeared from her aura, as hot air about a stove disappears if the stove is cooled. The inner self was aware of the recovery of the lost object a moment or so of time before the outer body, and hence the force of desire was cut off and the cube disappeared before her brain and hand had recovered the eye-glasses. Another person might have seen this cube of air as something else, for etheric vibrations wear various shapes to various persons, which shapes are governed by the receptivity of the seer.

JULIUS.

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*The Path* – June 1890, Vol. 5, pp. 93-94.

## TEA TABLE TALK.

JULIUS

There are many vacant seats at the Tea Table now; theosophy has not been able to keep the Professor nor the widow away from preparation for the summer vacations. Yet the dreamers and the doubters, together with the wise student, continue to have flashes of memory of the old discussions, and even with mere worldly matters to fill up their time, they meet strange "coincidences" now and then.

The Professor met me yesterday just as I rose from the Table and said,

"Julius, what a huge joke that word 'coincidence' is; what an excuse for ignorance of law."

"Why," said I, "what new event has aroused this tirade against a pet explanation of science?"

"Well, the other day I was talking with several friends who were saying that they had difficulty in remembering certain things, and one lady said she could not remember any dates except one, but did not give that date. Just as she ceased speaking, my friend Urban, who was with me, said, 'Who can tell me the date of William the Conqueror?' 'Why,' said the lady, 'that is my only and sole date; how did you get it?' 'Oh replied Urban, 'it just came into my head as you ceased speaking.' The lady's husband said it was 'only a coincidence,' whereupon we theosophists laughed."

"Well, Professor, what is the explanation?"

"Why, just what Urban said, it *came into his head* because the lady had it in her mind, and he seized the fleeting impression before it left him. These thoughts are communicated either as vibrations which act upon the other's mind, just as in the phonograph, or as pictures projected through the astral light."

M. writes that he had a singular coincidence like the first. He was talking to a young lady about going to Europe and meeting her there, and said, "You know, if I should go over there, I would learn to speak the language correctly, and, having acquired the proper accent, I would never lose it." The young lady, quite startled, said, "Why those are my exact thoughts!" The Professor's explanation also meets this case.

F., a correspondent, writes:

"I had a dream of two parts. In the first I was on a shining white road running between two banks which were covered with beautiful trees. On these banks were all the living people I had ever known, and all gathering brilliant flowers. In my mind rose the desire to have some, but, as I stooped to pick the flowers, they had disappeared. Disappointed, my friends tried to show me them, but a voice said, 'Come up here.' I went up and the voice bade me look for flowers, but I saw nothing save black moss. 'Look deeper,' said the voice. I parted the moss, and below were beautiful flowers, immortelles. Pleased, I returned and saw now the first flowers, but with no desire to have them. What was this?"

My answer is: It was a symbolical dream. The first flowers are the joys and ideas and delights of earth and worldly wisdom, the second are the flowers of the divine and higher nature; but those latter plants are covered with the moss which education and wrong theology or philosophy have made to grow over them. You must strike deep below this crust of error to get the flower that belongs to you and is immortal, and then you will no longer desire the others. This dream will be repeated under various forms until you obey the injunction from your Higher Self. — J.

Another sort of dream is that of K, who told it while we waited last night for a late friend. "I lost a diamond ring of great value and failed to find it after much search. That night I three times dreamed it was under the carpet in the parlor, at the corner of the mantel. Waking up, I went not dressed to the place, and there found the ring." This was the astral self-searching in sleep for the ring, finding it, by the trail connecting it with the body, just as a dog finds his master, and then impressing it on the brain. This is easy to match. Readers ought to study the chapter on Dreams in the *Transactions of Blavatsky T.S.*, London.

JULIUS.

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*The Path* — July 1890, Vol. 5, pp. 128-130.

## TEA TABLE TALK.

JULIUS

The Professor sat alone at the table. Far from feeling the desertion of his friends and comrades, there was an expression of grim pleasure upon his face. So much I saw through the half-opened door. On my entrance he hailed me. "Well, Julius my boy, it seems we are coming on, and through the fair sex too. I always did respect the intuition of woman, and now I am justified."

"Are you hoping The Widow may come in," I asked dryly, "or do you want me to write that to her?" "Ah! So you write to her, do you? I often wondered how that was," and the Professor chuckled, while I endeavored to conceal my annoyance over the teapot. The Professor is a good-natured soul, questions of science apart; in the interests of science he would draw and quarter all the human race, psychologically, at all events. He let my annoyance pass unseen, and reverted to the original topic.

"A wonderful discovery has been made by a woman and published in one of our art journals," he said. "It demonstrates that sound creates, or, let us rather say, molds form. A thin membrane is stretched across a tube. On this membrane is spread some very sensitive paste. The notes of the musical scale are sung into the tube, where various forms, such as leaf, crystalline, and star shapes, are found impressed upon the paste. By experiment, certain notes are found to produce the same form always. For instance, one sound forms a daisy petal, and by continuing to sing this same note into

the tube the whole daisy may be built up. The variety of forms is said to be beautiful and wonderful. So here is another claim of occultism sustained by modern re-discovery." "A similar support," I answered, "is instanced in *Lucifer* for May, where the fact that the passage of rays of light through given colors produces given musical sounds is quoted from a scientific contemporary."

"Yes, I noticed that especially. Reflection on these points leads one a good way. For instance, take this question of form impression through sound. Imagine how our words are molding the ductile ether every hour. We can readily comprehend the pictures of our thoughts and words seen above our heads by sensitive Clairvoyants. If we doubted the power and effect of every careless word, here we have the assurance of Science that not one is lost, but each is registered in that book of judgment known to us as the ether, or Astral Light. Some such assurance of our accountability for our words is found in the western Bible, and a flood of light is let in upon the real and potent bearing of morals and ethics upon occultism. I find so many students saying that, to them, the *Bhagavad Gîtâ* is 'only a code of ethics.' Expunge me that 'only.' Every day the root of ethics in natural law, and the illustration of natural or spiritual law in ethics, become more clear to me. Upon my word, Julius, the growth of our responsibility, coextensive with that of our knowledge, gives me to understand more and more clearly why men are warned not to rush into occultism, but to scrutinize motive and eradicate sin. For look at the case as it stands. So long as we do not know, we are not responsible. But when we do know, Karma holds us to strict account for every sharp word and unjust thought. One lives, a malignant form; the other, a discordant note. Both are sensed by the inner man of all persons; both impinge upon and disturb the 'music of the spheres,' or harmonious motion in ether. And we can see now the rationale of that much quoted phrase, since the passage of light makes sound."

"I agree with you, Professor, on this subject of responsibility. A student gets some sharp lessons on thought control. He finds that his thoughts reach others more swiftly than before, and, apparently, with some compulsory power. Here he is at once tested. The true student will endeavor to suppress such thoughts; the curious one, the selfish one, the experimental doubter will all try to give out such thoughts for the sake of the results. I can instance a case. R. was thinking of a rare cactus he had once seen and much desired. From his window the green-houses of a florist with whom he had dealings were visible. Idly, but with some amount of desire, he found himself wishing that he could get such a cactus from that florist. In the afternoon the florist's son came to R.'s house with just such a cactus in full bloom, and a message from his father to the effect that this was the only plant of the kind he had, and he had that morning thought that perhaps Mr. R. would like to have it, so it was sent as a gift. The two men had never spoken on the subject of cacti. Relating this occurrence to me, R. said that it was a lesson to him to govern his thoughts, lest he should again compel another to do him a favor, or in any way bias another's free will. In contradistinction to this attitude of R. is that of another student, P. He wished to induce a friend of his to make a certain business arrangement which he believed would conduce largely to the interests of both. The friend did not see the matter in this light, and was about investing his capital in another direction. Learning this, P. was much annoyed, and, as he sat smoking late that evening, he began to picture in his mind the probable failure of that industry and the calamities which would overwhelm his friend. He did not do this with any fixed intention, but, annoyed as he was, his imagination began to set up the dark side before him. In the morning he met his friend, who told him he had had such calamitous dreams about his intended investment that he should think it over awhile. The unhopèd-for delay gave P. a chance to talk him over, and the result was finally such as P. had desired. Talking to me of the matter, P. said: 'Hereafter I shall know how to

move the minds of many men without appearing to move in the matter at all.' Now, Professor, contrast the attitude of P. with that of R."

"I see, I see," said my friend. "It is clear that not every man can resist the use of even such small and unstable gifts for his own advantage. They are unstable, because they do not always work or act. Indeed, it would often seem as if their spasmodic occurrence really marked them as tests of our altruistic standing."

"Agreed, if by tests you mean such as evolutionary law itself supplies, and not some specific trial brought about by powerful beings."

"Certainly, I referred to such tests as would naturally occur in the action and reaction of nature, and in the ripening of mental germs, long deposited and now quickened by that very procedure of nature. In one sense, every occurrence is a test; our choice between two alternatives shows our exact evolutionary standing and advance. Like the electric Watchman's Detector, we ourselves infallibly register our own progress; at any moment it is all displayed. Of course this subject is a difficult one, but we are not without glimpses of the living power of Karma in daily events."

Here our talk ended. Not so, the thoughts opened up by it. These, comrades can follow out themselves.

JULIUS.

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*The Path* – August 1890, Vol. 5, pp. 156-160.

## TEA TABLE TALK.

JULIUS

As the Professor and I continue to be thrown together through the summer absence of our friends, our discussions take on a more or less scientific tinge. I have had occasion to notice how mental classification, or similarity of mental processes, acts like division into types, in predisposing persons to cohere. It is as strong as racial or family ties. We say, "blood is thicker than water." We might say, "brains are thicker than water," and imply the same recognition of individual attraction. So surely as a man is trained in any specific mode, whether mechanical or intellectual, his fellows of the craft will have an *a priori* weight with him beyond that granted to other men. He exclaims with Browning's *Luria*;

"... But you are of the trade, my Tuccio.  
You have a fellow craftsman's sympathy;  
There's none knows, like a fellow of the craft."<sup>1</sup>

The lad who shouts "Columbia!" or "Harvard!" becomes the man who mentally gives precedence to graduates of those universities. The general who has *not* been at West Point, and the M.D. who is *not* a college graduate, are on their guard against and undervalue the training of the "regulars." The clerical mind has dominant influence over its peers. The merchant, the politician, the carpenter all argue best with their fellows. Let an outside man attempt to convince any of them upon any point remote from their professions, and all will depend upon his own power; he must force or pick the lock of their brains, while a man of the same professional type finds the door ajar and has odds in his favor. A preliminary degree of confidence he may safely count upon, because his mental processes are supposed to be, in a measure, like their own,

his experience of the same general type as theirs. This is an insidious mental habit; it predisposes us to renew our own mistakes. I do not mean that we always yield to the argument or conviction of our *confrères*. But we give latitude precisely where we should be on our guard, as if we were sentinels over our own tendencies, among which this habit may with certitude be numbered. We see somewhat the same thing in women, who incline to believe the persons they like, while others must produce multiple proof — and even then be doubted, if they are not sympathetic to the fair inquisitor. An adept writes: “Before you can become an occultist you have to give up every prejudice, every earthly liking, every feeling of preference for one thing over another. It is easy to fall into Black Magic. The natural tendency is to Black Magic, and that is why several years’ training is necessary to cut away every source of prejudice before power can be entrusted to you. An Adept must entirely separate himself from his personality; he must say, ‘I am a power.’ A Black magician prepares to do mischief without giving a thought to whether it will harm others. A deed of kindness done with partiality may become evil, *e.g.* by stirring up animosity in the mind of others. It is necessary when acting to lose all sense of identity and to become an abstract power. Justice is the opposite of Partiality. There is good and evil in every point of the universe, and if one works, however indirectly, for one’s own partiality, one becomes, *to that extent*, a Black magician. Occultism demands perfect justice, absolute impartiality. When a man uses the powers of nature indiscriminately with partiality and no regard to justice, it is Black magic. Like a blackleg,<sup>2</sup> a Black magician acts on certain knowledge. Magic is power over the forces of nature, *e.g.* the Salvation Army, by hypnotizing people and making them psychically drunk with excitement, uses Black magic. The first exercise of Black magic is to psychologize people. When the 6th race reaches its close there will be no more Dugpas (Black magicians). A Dugpa may become converted during life at the expense of terrible sufferings and trials. On the astral and psychic planes the Masters are always stronger than the Dugpas, because there good is stronger than evil. But on our material plane evil is stronger than good, and the Masters, having to exercise cunning if acting on this plane, which is contrary to Their natures, encounter great difficulties and can only palliate evil effects. In powers *not* good there is absence of good but not presence of evil, and the higher we go, the more does evil become the absence of good. Only by following the absolute sexless *unity* can the white path be trodden.”

With this digression, which shows where partiality may lead us, I revert to my previous point, which is, that the Professor is specially exultant whenever he finds any scientific “authority” confirming the Secret Doctrine. While he can and does think independently, their dissent cuts deeper and their assent encourages him more than those of other men. He showed me with especial delight these lines in Sir John Lubbock’s work “On the Senses, Instinct, and Intelligence of Animals.” “It cannot be doubted that the pineal gland in Mammalia is the representative of the cerebral lobe which supplies the rudimentary pineal eye of Reptilia, and this itself is probably the degenerate descendant of an organ which in former ages performed the functions of a true organ of vision.” As man is classed with Mammalia by orthodox science, this admission is important. Lubbock again says: “— it seems to be established that this organ is the degraded relic of what was once a true eye. From the size of the pineal orifice in the skull of the huge extinct reptiles, such as *Ichthyosaurus* and *Plesiosaurus*, it has been, I think, fairly inferred that the pineal eye was much more developed than in any known living form. ... But in the fossil Labyrinthodonts the skull possesses a large and well-marked orifice for the passage of the pineal nerve. This orifice is, in fact, so large that it can scarcely be doubted that the eye in these remarkable amphibia was also well developed and served as a third organ of vision. In birds the organ is present, but retains no resemblance to an eye. ... In mammals it is still more degenerate, though a

trace is still present in man himself. ... It now, however, appears that the vertebrate type did originally possess a central eye, of which the so-called pineal gland is the last trace." He says that these discoveries date from 1829, and gives interesting cuts and further information, well worth reading, upon the subject. It appears that Descartes considered this organ to be the seat of the Soul.

What I have quoted further back, in so far as it relates to the suggestion that partiality may lead us to the unconscious use of Black magic, reminds me of the remarkable experiences of a young man, a personal friend, in the matter of prayer. I will let him tell these in his own words.

"The incidents I shall note occurred about a year or more ago and up to the time I began to study Theosophy." (When he abandoned the habit. J.) "I don't remember the first one, but it seems it was always so. I had been brought up a strict orthodox Sunday School boy, and had been taught to be a great believer in prayer. At first I experienced no results, but as I became older and knew more, as I thought, *how to pray*, I began to note how my prayers were answered." He goes on to describe his church experiences, and how prayer became a habit rather than a vital thing. Several things brought him to feel that "fibs," anger, swearing, and drinking were wrong. In revival times he felt "extremely sorry," but "bad company and temptations would be too much" for him. He began to have evil desires which he did not try to curb, when a few kind words from a friend and a confession to his mother induced him to make promises of reform; he was then about 18 years of age. "I then promised to *stop* drinking and never touch it again. I then set to work and prayed that the *desire* for drink might entirely leave me, and *it did*. Every time the thought came up I would think of my prayer, and, much sooner than I expected, the thoughts stopped coming up." He had the same experience with tobacco, finding it much harder to stop that, but praying that the *desire* might be killed, and bringing up the remembrance of the prayer when tempted. With swearing and impure thoughts it was the same. He reversed *habit* like a natural occultist, for he says: "What had been a desire *for* such things was then a desire to be rid of them, or against them," thus practicing a substitution of mental images (the prayer image) referred to in another article in this number. To continue. "The next experience gave me something to think about. I was greatly attached to a young lady, and my love (or passion) was strong towards an immediate marriage. She also was willing, but things came up between us which made me question myself. Little doubts as to future happiness and our being suited kept coming up, all of which I tried in vain to throw aside, until finally I had myself in a very unpleasant state of mind. I then prayed (if ever) earnestly, that the question might be decided for me. Before the end of the month we had parted forever, but as dear friends. This I have always considered as a direct answer to what I asked, as well as the two following experiences. The first one seems rather peculiar, inasmuch as I believe one has no right to pray for money. But I did, and with good results. There came a time when, with my small salary and the necessity for wearing good clothes, etc., I was out of money, and, what's more, I had incurred a small debt which I could see no means of paying at the time when I had promised to do so. I then prayed that, if it were right and just, I might be shown some means of earning or obtaining the amount of my debt. Two or three days later, much to my surprise, my employer asked if I would like to do a little extra work and make extra money. I saw at once that this was what I had asked for, so accepted, and in a few weeks I had made enough to clear me up."

Space forbids me to give more than a synopsis of the last and most remarkable of these experiences. Of his two employers, he was much attached to one. They took to drinking together, and used to send him for the liquor. To refuse to go was to lose his place, and also the chance of helping his friend. In much anguish of mind, he prayed that he might not be sent for it and that his friend might give up the habit. This prayer

was often repeated and always held in mind, and in three weeks' time his friend said to him: "You will have to buy no more liquor for me. I have given it up." He had conquered the habit entirely.

We see in these experiences the action of an unusually strong *inner* will, to which the act of prayer, like the invocation of a magician, only served to give focus and point. A reflector, a reverberator, a focus is necessary. Such a will sets the subtle etheric currents in motion and attracts what it desires powerfully. The *inner* will is not a mere cerebral desire. It is an attribute of the inner self. It arises in the center of life, as a powerful motion there, reflecting intense conviction to the heart, and it acts from within outward. Without such will, prayer is useless. Let him study his inner self the next time he feels the prompting of that will. Used for partial and material, personal ends, it is Black magic; he is only responsible for that now that he knows it. Used in aspiration towards the higher life and in silent fraternal communion with the inner self of any person he may desire to uplift or ennoble (without mentally prescribing to that person a specific course), it is a powerful agent of the White path and should be cultivated. Invocation of the Highest will assist and intensify it; faith will multiply it; tranquility will give it point and enforce it. By its aid he may greatly help mankind and himself, if he keeps his motive pure and his body chaste. Let him read in *Isis* on the subject of will.

The inner self must be heeded when it suggests doubts. Socrates said that the Voice did not command him to do things, but warned him when he was about to do a mistaken thing. This difference should be heeded; it pays heed to Karma. Especially on the subject of marriage should such suggested doubts be heeded, as neglectful students have learned to their bitter cost. Any marriage made for low-plane motives or material attraction (and these include mere intellectual conviction of general desirability) has terrible power to retard both parties and forges a tenacious karmic bond. And why did he not include in his efforts the employer who was not his friend? Is it too late to do so? The occultist invokes Krishna as "Lord of *all* worlds and friend of *all* creatures." May the Higher Self inspire us with that strict Justice which is the only true Charity, under the Law!

JULIUS.

## NOTES

1. {"Luria," Robert Browning.}
2. {A 'blackleg' is a person who continues to work while others they work with are on strike.}

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*The Path* – September 1890, Vol.5, pp. 192-195.

## TEA TABLE TALK.

JULIUS

When that small witch, Antonina, first appeared at the Tea Table, we were led into instant captivity; all, all; not one escaped the thrall of this airy little philosopher, gowned in white frills, mouth serious, eyes smiling, ready to laugh or to frown as she might swiftly prefer. The halo of her four years hung innocently about her; she enchanted by her abrupt and natural transitions. Now she was a hearty child, running, laughing from corner to corner, a little romp, eager only for play. Suddenly she would drop down upon any preferred place, her deepening eyes would take on a far-away

expression; her face grew rapt; it paled into that illuminated pallor which suggests a light shining through alabaster, and shows the interior soul-light breaking forth. In these moods, truths seemed accessible to her. She had innate ideas. The childlike language in which she clothed them was poetical; its earnestness thrilled her hearers almost to awe. While we still vibrated with this sensation, presto! up jumps Antonina, again a jovial child, off to the lawn and her playmates and toys. Already she has the power, when her baby fingers slip along the piano keys, to produce little tunes of her own from them, just as she sings such new airs to rhymed verses of her own improvisation. And, if you ask who taught her these tunes and songs, it is "*the Pillikatuka*."<sup>1</sup> The word is also her own. Asked, "What is the 'Pillikatuka,'" she replies, with a small hand laid upon her breast, "The Pillikatuka is in here. When you see, Auntie, it is not you that sees; it is the Pillikatuka. *You* don't hear anything; you think you do, but it is the Pillikatuka that hears. When you go to sleep, the Pillikatuka gets out and goes to heaven for little while. If the Pillikatuka didn't come back, you would never wake up. You would be dead. My Pillikatuka knows everything."

The parents of Antonina are not theosophists, and she is not by way of hearing much conversation on such subjects, even if her three years could understand them. Yet she is the child of whom it was told in a previous number of the Tea Table that she said she had been in heaven, where she saw God coming towards her "as a great Light," and when He asked what she was doing there, she replied; "Getting made over into a little girl." In all this conversation, reincarnation is plainly postulated by our small philosopher. She had been shut between city walls all winter, and on the first occasion of her being taken into the country in spring, she having then attained the mature age of four, her joy knew no bounds. All day she ran about the lawn; the ripples of her delightful laughter rang from every nook, and from under every spring-laden bush shone her beaming face. At dusk she abandoned her play. Coming into the house, she sat down in a corner, apparently revolving the day's pleasures in her mind. At last she spoke.

"Auntie, I shall sing you a song. It's a pretty son, Auntie. It's about spring birds in the air." The baby voice piped up, and she gave one of her little improvisations, the words and air being her own. Sweet it was, and of a flute-like quality; it might have been the "Great God Pan" piping among "the reeds by the river."<sup>3</sup> A little pause followed, while again she collected her thoughts; her rapt face summed up experience. "Now, Auntie, I shall sing you another song. This one is much prettier. It is the song of the winds in the pines." A more finished air and song followed. "And now," she cried, "I shall sing you a most beautiful one. This, this is the prettiest of all! It is *the joy of ripe fruit*." I do not need to say how enchanting was this "prettiest song of all." In the babe, the poet spoke. The ardent ferment and impulse of ripe fruit under the sun "wooded from out the bud,"<sup>2</sup> the first sentient thrills towards consciousness, were brought before the mind as Antonina, in her shadowy corner, sang with veiled eyes and shining face this occult teaching in her child's words, at the bidding of the "Pillikatuka."

I do not know that word, nor do those whom I have consulted. If Antonina were asked where she got it and what it was, she would reply, as in effect she has, "The Pillikatuka is my Pillikatuka in *here*; you have one, Auntie; don't you feel it? Everybody has a Pillikatuka." All health and peace to the baby occultist; may the Shining Ones protect her ever!

The following experience seems a very clear case of Pillikatuka. (I venture to predict that this word will pass into our nomenclature. Already it is in current use by the Tea Table.) It was sent to me by a friendly correspondent.

“My dear Julius;—

Not long since, I and a business acquaintance got into one of those easy, rambling chats which come so readily when people are together in a sleeping-car. I noticed that he did not smoke, even after dinner, and also judged from his conversation that he did not drink. In fact he told me that he was considered by commercial travelers, of whom he was one, as rather holding aloof from them. Now, having myself “been on the road,” as the phrase goes, I know that, as a class, those leading this life are a rather jovial, sociable set, generally given to enjoying what are called the good things of this world. So I asked my friend why he was so abstemious, and found that, like many another, he had once had ‘a very peculiar experience,’ which was this. He was sitting one evening at dinner with his father and sisters, when suddenly he thought he heard the voice of his mother. As she had died some time before, he was startled; so much so that the others noticed it. ‘What is the matter?’ his father said. ‘Nothing,’ replied my friend. But again he heard the voice, and again his father asked him what the matter was: he only motioned for the others to keep silence. The father became alarmed at his manner, and for the third time asked him what it was, but again was only motioned to keep still. This lasted for a short time, and then my friend fell from his chair in a swoon. What was said to him he did not tell me, but he said that in spite of the temptations to which he was exposed he had been kept from yielding to them by what he then heard. Of course it can all be explained away on the ground of hallucination, but as he is and was a particularly vigorous man, and not given to fancies but devoted to a plain commercial life of money making, and eminently practical, the word hallucination does not fit him very well.

On the day before this I heard, not from the person having the ‘peculiar experience,’ but from a friend to whom he related it, something similar. The man who had this other ‘peculiar experience’ was rather fond of a social glass, but suddenly stopped drinking, although he never before drank to excess. When my friend asked him his reason, he gave it, though with much reluctance. It seems that one of his companions had been killed by an accident. Shortly after his companion’s death, he dropped into a saloon for a drink. There were two men at the bar, and he was approaching them, when to his amazement he saw his deceased friend come in join the others, and begin drinking with them. This friend was very much given to bowing and scraping, and, he went through his antics quite naturally, although, as my friend related, ‘he kept jabbering and jabbering, but devil a word did he say.’ This experience was quite sufficient, and from that time on he left bar-rooms alone. Delirium tremens, most will think, but is it not possible that delirium tremens more resembles this man’s experience than the experience resembles delirium tremens?”

The above distinction we believe to be correct. The nervous disturbance arising from excessive drink is such that nervous vibration is greatly heightened and the sufferer sees into the astral light. He beholds pictures there, often the shapes of his own imagination and thought. In the case above cited, I should say that, for some Karmic reason, his “Pillikatuka” had shown him the form of his friend, in some place where he used to come, as a warning from within. It seems to me an instance of spontaneous soul action, carried out, possibly, through the medium of elemental vibration.

JULIUS.

## NOTES

1. {“Pillikatuka” is not defined or described anywhere. Perhaps it is a completely made-up word. In Tamil *Pilli* can mean “magic,” and in Sanskrit *Katuka* can mean “fierce.” “Fierce magic” is how I define it for myself. A strong force beyond the material.}

2. {"A Musical Instrument," Elizabeth Barrett Browning, 1860.}
3. {"Song of the Lotus-Eaters," Alfred, Lord Tennyson, 1832.}

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*The Path* – October 1890, Vol.5, pp. 225-227.

## TEA TABLE TALK.

JULIUS

Not long ago the Professor stood at a street corner, waiting for a delayed car. A number of persons had collected for the same reason, among them a pair of lovers. They had been caught very young, very "green," and they seemed to have the disease in its most severe form. There they stood, hand in hand, eyes plunged in eyes, breath waiting upon breath, their movements one. Occasionally the September breeze blew her towards him, when his arm went round her. Or his lips went to her ear to whisper and remained to — how should inveterate bachelors like the Professor and myself know what those lips remained at her ear for? The Professor, studying the species, did not see them move. Yet he must have had a theory (scientists always *have* a theory, for all they declare that they start in without one), because when I suggested that the girl had an earache and the man was trying hot magnetico — positive breath, the Professor said, "Pshaw, don't be a fool." At all events, there was also in the crowd a burly, thickset, snarly kind of man, who looked upon these lovers, blind as young lambs to all the world about them, with a fierce contempt. He frowned, he scowled, he turned his back and tried not to see them, and just had to look over his shoulder to see if they could really be still at it, and seemed forced, at last, by a weird fascination, to stare at them, saying d—— to them under his breath. The Professor counted up to 57 d's of this species, who fairly danced with suppressed rage, before the car came along. And when it came, what happened? The burly man rushed into it, the crowd followed, the lovers were absorbed at the moment trying to find a caterpillar in her collar, and would have been left if the conductor (married species, the Professor said) had not "hi! hi-ed!" at them. When they came aboard all the seats were taken; the car was packed like a sardine box, but more squeezing made room for the girl. The man had to stand up. Then their sufferings began. Tears stood in her eyes. The deepest gloom overcast their faces. It got blacker and blacker, it spread itself out over the whole car; the Professor says you could have cut it with a knife, and it smelled like a London fog. The burly man fidgeted about; finally he could stand it no longer. He, even he, felt the chill of that separation to the marrow of his bones. He rose as rise the doggedly determined; the girl was next to him. "Here, Sis," said he, "here's my seat for your *bo*." No time was wasted in thanks. The "bo" snapped back into that seat like a released rubber-band; the cloven twain came together again as the bark and the tree do. The Professor rubbed his glasses and studied awhile. When the car came to his street, he paused on the platform, where the burly man had taken refuge, and said to him, "Excuse me, Sir, but why did you give up your seat and let the act go on?" The burly man turned his quid over and spat in wrath. "Gord knows, Sir, I don't; unless we all was born like that an' feels it inside some'eres, a feeling' I despise" — and softly began to d—n again, knowing no other way to help himself to unconcern.

When the Professor told me this anecdote I proved to him, for the thousandth time, that the world is not yet so old but that it still "loves a lover," and I passed about the tea table a pretty tale of an occult courtship. It was told me by the heroine, an honored friend, well past the body's youth, but whose soul is not worldworn or

worldly wise, retaining a fine touch of its primeval purity. It seems that she lived in the country as a young girl, and had a friend come to visit her. This friend used to talk of a certain young man whom she liked, and her hearer always felt a peculiar impression, to which she could give no name. One night in a dream she saw the face of a man, and was told that this was to be her future husband. It was a face she had never seen. She told her dream to no one. Her friend, Miss L., went away. A week afterward, at dusk, a man stopped at her father's gate and asked for her by name, as she stood there. It was the man of her dream, and, as she recognized him, something impelled her to exclaim, "You are Mr. —, the friend of Miss L." He said that he was, and that he had felt he much wished to know her. The dénouement came at the end of a week in the shape of an engagement, and if ever two helpmeets have borne one another's burdens and made them light with love, these two have. Both felt their marriage to be foreordained and that they had met before, though at that time not a whisper of theosophical teaching had stolen across the land. And she tells me now that some days, in some half-lit silent hours, she feels so near, so very near, to remembrance.

From life and love we pass so swiftly on to death, so mixed the cup, so instant the change. In the mail with this tale of tender fidelity came only one other letter, which I give here in its entirety.

"DEAR JULIUS:—

I do not know whether the following will be of interest to your "tea table" or not, and submit it on a venture as a curious coincidence, or it may be something more; at any rate it is one of the inexplicable happenings which more or less come to everyone, whether noticed or not.

On the 6th of June last we commenced removing some heavy gear connected with the driving machinery of our rolling mill which required replacing. It was important that these repairs should be completed with the least possible delay, and, to facilitate matters, a gang of men was detailed to continue work during the night.

On the morning of the 7th I was awakened by two loud raps. These were so emphatic that I rose up from my bed and called out loudly, "Who is there? Who wants me?" Receiving no response, I got up and looked around and noticed the time as half-past four. Feeling unaccountably restless and indisposed to return to my bed, I got up and dressed. I had hardly finished doing so when I was called by a messenger from the mill, who requested me to go down immediately, as a man had just been killed. On reaching there, I found that the sling, supporting a portion of the gear, had given way and one of the workmen had been crushed to death. The accident happened at half-past four. The man was instantly killed; his body fell to the bottom of the pit as the section of gear swung past him. It was taken out immediately, but no groan or motion evinced any sign of consciousness after the accident.

Although the man had worked all summer in some very dangerous positions, I do not know that I ever spoke to him or noticed him specially, although, of course, from the nature of my position in the business, he must have known me very well. There was nothing in the shape of personal intimacy, friendship, or hardly acquaintance between us; consequently if the circumstance be anything more than a coincidence, it can only be explained on the hypothesis that I was aroused because I would naturally be looked to under the circumstances.

I have stated the facts briefly, but if there is any question you would like to ask, or desire fuller particulars, I shall be glad to respond. What puzzles me is, what occult lesson this experience is intended to teach, as no special, particular, or even personal interest existed between us.

C."

I should not use the expression “intended to teach,” for that implies that a lesson was intended, whereas it seems that this is simply one of the facts of life, a happening, not a teaching. When a death by accident occurs, a great commotion is set up in the astral light, caused by the shock and acceleration to all the victim’s energetic forces. A tumultuous current is created, and, like every other force of nature, it seeks the line of least resistance. It appears that the writer was much in the mill, was of importance in the business, must have thought much about it, and must have been much in the minds of employees. In this way, a constant current existed between him and the mill, and between his house and the mill. It was a highway or path along which the other current rushed. Such currents often produce a rap, from concussion, on reaching the point to which they are attracted. The mental currents of table-turners produce raps upon the table, for some such raps are so caused. When two students of theosophy are discussing a subject and a conclusion is reached, loud raps, as of assent, are often heard. They indicate a climax of mental force. Once the student said to me, “What is Quickly doing now?” I answered automatically, “Walking along, head bent, looking at rain-swollen gutters, and thinking of us at the tea table.” At once two very loud raps were heard. We noted the hour, and next day asked Quickly what he had done at that time, when his reply was almost word for word mine as above. Perhaps here there was concussion of currents. Possibly the dying man thought too of his employer, but what is here given seems the rational and most natural explanation.

JULIUS.

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*The Path* – November 1890, Vol. 5, pp. 258-259.

## TEA TABLE TALK.

JULIUS

The account of Antonina, in a previous Tea Table, was received with so great pleasure by many readers, that these will doubtless be glad to hear more of our little friend. A relative writes: “I had hoped to go to X— and thought I would then gather some more notes about Antonina ... but I can now tell you one more thing she said which I consider the most wonderful of all. One morning she was lying in bed talking with her Mother about this Pillikatuka, explaining about its uses and so forth, and finally worked up to this;— ‘And when you are asleep you know it goes up to Heaven, and then you seem as if you were dead, but you aren’t, you know!’

‘Why, what does it go there for?’ asked mamma.

‘To get something to eat; of course it can’t eat what we do,’ was the ready reply. (As if she knew it fed upon heavenly ambrosia. J.) ‘And when we *really* die, the Pillikatuka goes to Heaven and stays there.’

‘And what does it do there?’ was mamma’s next question.

‘Oh! well, you know, it doesn’t stay there very long, because your Pillikatuka has to keep working all the time, so in a little while it comes down to earth again, and goes into another human being, and then it just goes on working here again.’

Then, while mamma kept silent from sheer amazement, Antonina went on after a moment’s pause, rather slower than before. ‘And Jack’s got a *kind* of a Pillikatuka too’ (Jack is our lovely setter dog, her great friend and playmate). ‘And when Jack dies, his Pillikatuka goes to Heaven too, and perhaps, *perhaps* —’ (with her dear little emphasis) ‘next time he’ll be a man.’

Now what do you think of that, Mr. Julius? If Antonina had said those things to me, I don't know that I should have been willing to believe my own ears, but, as they were said to her Mother in the presence of an Auntie, neither of whom is in any way a Theo-sophist, and as each told me the same thing at different times, I feel we have a *right* to believe it. I must say that outside of these occult speeches Antonina shows a most remarkable intelligence, demonstrating that she is capable of great mental development in the future. Let me tell one little anecdote to show what I mean. During the Harrison<sup>1</sup> canvass, when Antonina was barely *three* years old, she was playing in one corner of the room in which were seated her grandmother and one of her sons, Antonina's Uncle S. These two were talking together, and S. began to joke a little with his mother, who is a most enthusiastic republican. Said S.: 'Weren't there ever any democrats in our family, Mother?'

'*Never*' was the indignant response. 'Oh! I guess there must have been one somewhere,' laughed S. 'There *never* was,' said his mother. 'Oh! well,' she continued, 'there was my Uncle Joseph who had always been a republican and always voted that ticket, and one time — well — he felt he didn't want to vote or — well, he hardly knew what to do and —.' 'Why didn't he be a Mugwump?'<sup>2</sup> interrupted Antonina with her little giggle. There was that baby, three years old, taking in the whole situation, and fairly laughing at her Grandmother's dilemma, and I think it was as bright a thing as a baby ever said. Think of her realizing that, if a man had been one thing and didn't quite want to go over to the other side, there was a third party where he could rest with an easy conscience."

The unconscious theosophy of children possesses very great interest for almost all students, and we should always be pleased to hear more from the little people. Few are the hearts that do not warm to a child. These sayings of Antonina have been copied, in one instance by a great metropolitan daily, and so her gentle message is borne far and wide. It is interesting to speculate upon the Karma which makes such early recollection, such early teaching, possible. All blessings on the little head at once so simple and so wise.

Writing at the desk of a friend, I saw hanging above it a slip of paper containing these words:

If I think of the world, I get the impress of the world.  
 If I think of my trials and sorrows, I get the impress of my sorrows.  
 If I think of my failures, I get the impress of my failures.  
 If I think of Christ, I get the impress of Christ.<sup>3</sup>

This sermon needs no addenda from my hand. It bears truths of the deepest order home to the heart. Reading it, and wondering how I could frame some rule of action which would tide me over the many mistakes of both action and inaction, I seemed to hear the inner voice make this reply:

"When doubtful, ask thyself this: What would Buddha do?"

JULIUS.

## NOTES

1. {Benjamin Harrison (1833-1901) was running for President of the U.S.}
2. {Mugwump — a person who remains independent, especially from political parties.}
3. {"Selected" excerpt for August 8th, from *Thoughts for the Quiet Hour*, D. L. Moody.}

## TEA TABLE TALK.

JULIUS

As the year with its freight of joy and sorrow drew near its close, there was one to whom a vision came.

He was thinking of all that the Past was about to shut into its dark caverns; all the stored-up germs of future harvests. He tested the new self by the old; he weighed the outcome of 1890, and strove to find upon which side of the ledger his higher nature stood: here it had gained, there it had retrograded. He came, by degrees, to ponder upon selflessness and the desire to help others; he analyzed motive and capacity until he felt a great need of some scale or measure by which to try them. It was then that the Mind-Angel appeared to him. In one hand it held the balance of Universal Brotherhood; in the other, the torch of Truth, emitting a pure white radiance with opalescent rays: he understood that he must test himself by the light of the true meaning of Brotherhood.

"Canst thou remember others even to the participation in and bearing of all their woes?" So spoke the Mind-Angel.

The man began then with the family group, those nearest and dearest by ties of blood and Karmic association. The physical infirmity of one, the moral obliquity of another; encroaching age, the ferment of youth, the unmanifested hopes and sorrows of all passed before his inner eye. Could he assume all these willingly in his own body, draw them into his own soul and set them all free? That soul gave glad assent.

"These are thine own, thy nearer selves," spoke the Mind-Angel. "Add yet others to these."

Then the thinker joined to this company a typical man and woman from the outer world beyond his hearthstone; types, they should be, of degradation and despair. The man be conceived as one buffeted and beaten by fate, scorned and hated of men, guilty of all crimes, condemned to a death which he deemed eternal, yet hardly worse than life as he had known it. The woman was pictured — ah! the awful reality of the portraiture — as one degraded by the lusts of such men, seared with loathsome disease, broken down to mere animal instinct, to the refuse even of that: both these creatures were beyond despair; they inhabited those dim regions unvisited by mental action.

Could the thinker take such ills as his own, could he relinquish his good name, his health, cleanliness moral and physical; could he feel the hatred endured by these and the hatred which consumed them transferred alike to himself? Could he then, disgraced, scorned, derided, die upon the scaffold in order to free all such as these? Vividly he pictured the whole to himself, humbly he bent to hear his soul's reply. There was a silence.

After the silence his soul answered in a deep strong affirmative. Then he rejoiced. "Yes," he exclaimed. "Suppose the test here. Suppose I were asked to sign the compact with a glowing pen clipped in my own blood; suppose no retreat were possible. I would sign it with joy. I am ready to give up all the world may bring me of peace or happiness, to release others from darkness and sin."

The Mind Angel spoke. "But fame, gratitude, these help men to endure all things. Suppose others redeemed, yet none but thyself knew how or why. Wouldst thou die

sufficiently rewarded, in dying unknown?" Again the soul of the thinker answered, "yes."

It seemed then that the Mind Angel took a probe in its hand.

"In signing that compact, in passing beyond death, however sharp the anguish, still, then thou wouldst be free. The untrammelled soul might then rejoice over the unselfish attitude it had gained, rejoice in the unfathomable world of hidden bliss. Here is a glorious reward. Suppose all else the same, but that Death came not, but that Life stood in its place! Couldst thou *live*, bearing the burdens of these?"

The man paled inwardly: he felt as if his blood faded and shivered in his veins. He questioned his own soul, saying: "Couldst thou, oh my soul, live out the life of each until the tale of the longest life were told? Couldst endure the filth, the disgrace, the murderous hate of men? Still came from his soul a deep affirmative.

He questioned again. "Couldst thou indeed endure this prolongation of *conscious* degradation?"

His soul answered then: "Not so. I should know my own high intent and be, by it, sustained. For the living soul cannot deceive or be deceived. Its own state is known to it. Thou and I can retain or quit this and other bodies for the good of men, but to me, motive is clear. In brotherly motive my staff is found."

"You hear," said the man to the Mind-Angel. "Is the test complete?"

"It is not complete," the Vision said. "A greater than I will speak." Uprose a Majestic One, the great Archangel of the Heart, he of the crystal glance before whom men stand shamed.

"None of these are the test of the Law," he said. "In all of these thy known motive sustains thee. The Law asks no large heroism, it sends no mighty deeds to warm thy soul. It tries thee in the small dark places of daily life, in the pin pricks, in the thorns. Canst thou simply know thyself? Canst thou simply conquer thyself? Canst thou control thought, deed, word, as the rider calms the fretted steed? Canst thou forget the great heresy of separation, lose all sense of separateness so utterly that thou canst pass to and from thy body to the world-mother as a child passes through an open door? Canst thou only obtain, in every petty thing, self-mastery and self-forgetfulness? The Law has asked no more of thee. Canst thou live thus; thus victorious and obscure, unruffled ever, self-oblivious ever? Canst thou dominate that small space which contains thy bodies? Instead of atoning for the world, canst thou atone for thyself only, and, working the great At-One-Ment, become, not the Saviour, but the helper and servitor of Mankind? Pass from thy grand deeds to this simple thing and do it. The Law demands no more."

The man bent his head. His soul was silent. Yet in some deeper recess of his Being, in some inmost shrine of that soul, he seemed to descry a calm hope, crowned and shining. But his heart was not silent. It gushed forth in unwonted tears from his eyes. "I cannot; but I long to do it. I will try; I will try on forever."

The Heart Angel smiled. It was as if the whole world glowed with inner light. "Thou hast made the first step towards the goal," he said. "Thou hast recognized thine own deficiency." He touched the man's heart with his bright lance, and a host of hideous shapes arose, the foes of that heart's best desire. The man shrank in beholding them. He saw that, coexistent with his high intent, were all these horrid forms of desire; the same heart held all potencies; it was a kingdom divided against itself. He cried out in perplexity, "Who shall help me to stay myself?"

"I," answered the calm Hope enthroned in his soul. So he passed into the objective world again, but out from that vision he never wholly passes, yet, alas, it is often clouded while he battles with the monsters deep under the waters of his heart. While he is in Nature he must experience its ebb and flow.

Others have had this vision. One writes: "There is nothing higher than selfless love. I try hard to make this idea a factor in my life. I was thinking earnestly about this end, and it seemed to me that the idea took possession of my entire being. All my mental furniture underwent a most wonderful change. Lower tendencies seemed to have vanished forever; life became clear and sweet as the purest Spring to me. A boundless pity for my fellow-beings filled my heart, a sensation indescribable. I cannot put it into words. For a few moments I realized what is meant by the peace that passeth understanding. Alas! Alas! It went and I cannot bring it back. Have you ever had a similar experience, and can you give me its rationale?"

As a traveler mounts some hill top and beholds the fair goal of his dreams, and then descends into deeper valleys, mounts other hills, to descend, to rise, again, so we who journey through Nature must rise and fall with her rising and falling, for that alone is the gait of progress. The greatest soul, while living in a body, feels nature's alternations thrown upon that body as upon a screen. The difference between such a soul and ourselves is that our consciousness lodges in that body and calls it "I," while the other is related to that body as a man is to the coach in which he rides. He feels its jars but acts not upon them, knows they are not his own vibratory changes, and dwells on higher themes. These gleams of Thought show us what may be; we can revert to and dwell upon them until they come again — again — and so gradually become more frequent in their blessings.

Comrades! Brothers! The old year declines. Soon all the forces of Nature mount upward and lend us their support. Can we be truly fraternal one day, one hour even, in every issue, against every circumstance, putting ourself in the place of other men and creatures, until, with the changed attitude, right deeds are revealed to us? I wish we may pass — with the ascending New Year — into a larger phase of Brotherhood. We are pledged. Disregarding the Mâyâ of distance, the Heart Angel draws us close. I salute you in the names of the Sons of the Christ-Light, and I wish you loving kindness and peace.

JULIUS.

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*The Path* — January 1891, Vol. 5, pp. 319-321.

## TEA TABLE TALK.

JULIUS

The Professor lately gave us a beautiful illustration of the superiority of intuitional processes. He was doing some professional work, when, all at once, the elucidation of a problem in occultism *flashed* upon his mind. This problem had not hitherto engaged his attention. It was an ancient legend, which he had hitherto (like most other persons) read by one of its keys alone. Suddenly, while his mind was otherwise engaged, a new, interesting, and most valuable interpretation came to him like a brilliant ray. It covered the whole ground. He told it to the Student, who felt the vibration of truth at once, and who then worked for three days to collect data and quotations to prove it to the mind — not his own alone, but the mind of the average man. For the intuition, less than a second of time. For the mind's conviction, three days' work. The superiority of intuitional processes is thus demonstrable, but both methods must be used to complete our knowledge and render it available to our fellow men, until we shall have fully acquired the faculty of direct Super-Sensuous Cognition. The advantages of association in theosophical work are no less evident in this experience. When several persons are

in the habit of meeting and discussing these topics and are desirous of using their knowledge for others, we soon find quickening currents established which appear to develop the prominent faculty of each, and each such faculty in one is reinforced or completed by that of another. One has his intuition sharpened, the receptivity and mental power of another, his working force, is increased. The vitalizing currents provide for their own manifestation, for the objectivizing of the knowledge brought by them or gained through them, for the benefit of men. It is said in *Isis* that the greatest magician will be he who shall know how to render his force bi-sexual, and this fact is mirrored in the associations of students for work and study, to which each one brings a different quality of force. They become one body whose force is one and is polarized, upon the plane of force. Such associations are useful precisely in the degree in which each one does his own work and not that of another. Their reality has been thus expressed by Jesus: "Where two or three are gathered together *in my name*, there am I in the midst of them."<sup>1</sup> In the name of the One, the Life Principle, lives are invigorated and helpful powers engendered, while also we realize the beauty of the real bonds of fraternity and true love. All others pale before these strong, sweet, subtle ties of Soul; its unity is demonstrated, its fructifying blessings descend. Each in each, one necessary to all and all to one, the group is indissolubly united in that common bond of Brotherhood, illumined by a glorious Ideal.

We came thus to speak of work and the powers of individuals, their aim and endeavor. A book recently published, *A Buddhist Lover*,<sup>2</sup> whose author is known to be an accomplished and devoted lady theosophist — though her name is modestly absent from the title page — was spoken of in illustration. This novel fills a certain niche. It is written so that "he who runs may read." The intention of the author appears to have been to reach the average mind — and as many such minds as possible. While the cultivated reader may enjoy its pages, the general public has its attention attracted by a novel *mise en scène*. The unity of man, the truth underlying all religions, the ravages and even the disadvantages of the dogmatic and conventional spirit are conveyed through the actions of personages; they filter through, as it were, and the public does not discover that it is being taught higher ethics until the water of life has been unconsciously distilled and instilled. The chief characters are distinguished for simplicity and purity of aim. The intention of the author is manifestly service to her fellow beings. As the book has run through two editions and a third is called for, it is plain that she has supplied a want. Someone objected to certain mistakes in the orientalism of the book. From a literary standpoint these are regrettable. But that standpoint is not everything, is not supreme by any means. The public cares very little for oriental technicality. If a Hindu makes mistakes about our Scriptures or our teachings, it does not even smile. *The spirit is what impresses*. Here are higher ethics, charity, fraternity, self-sacrifice, taught naturally amid scenes evidently taken from real life, and barely passed through the alembic of literature. The result is a book which is widely read. Its usefulness is proved, and the author is to be congratulated. Her aim lay in a specific direction and has been in so far fulfilled. We need more light tales, vehicles of earnest thought in semi-disguise, to attract the general public, and those who can do such work should bend themselves to it if in earnest. To wait for perfection is egotism. The public will judge whether you have given them what they want, and will give critics the go-by. If your aim is helpfulness rather than fame, by all means do what you can with your whole heart. Almost every student can help in some way.

One such sends us an anecdote of a grandchild. The susceptibility of children to influences from the astral plane suggests a different training from that now in vogue. It might be well to teach them that they have two sets of senses, the physiological and the psychic; that both are equally real and equally unreal; that both may be sources of usefulness and of danger, and that both should be used with self-control. The child

who hears of the plane of force and finds its own experience corroborative of that, grows up with a larger outlook; it has a doorway leading out of the material plane into another, equally phenomenal, it is true, but suggestive of higher possibilities otherwise denied by it because unseen. Parents now take every pain to shut the mind and senses of children from all but the gross objective plane.

One friend writes: "Baby has quite a habit of getting by herself. One little spot she frequents more than others, just under one of the parlor windows on the piazza. There she will remain until called away, talking incessantly to some unseen personage, asking and answering questions. Her Mother said to her, 'Baby, whom are you talking to?' 'Why Mamma; can't you see Elah? Here she is. Why don't you talk to her? Here she is right by me, telling me all about my Sisters and my other Papa.' Her Mother said, 'Baby, you have no Sisters and no other Papa. What do you mean?' (She gets very nervous and sometimes alarmed when Baby insists on what she sees and hears.) 'Mamma; I *did* have a great big papa and sisters. They are dead. Elah has been telling me all about them.' One evening when supper was ready Baby was called, but she begged to stay a little longer, for Elah was there. Finally, when told she must come, she came in sobbing, as if her little heart was broken. She had left Elah all alone, and begged permission to bring her unseen friend with her. It was granted, but Elah had gone. Baby is always trying to have us see Elah, and has made the servant so nervous on this score that she says she will not stay alone with the child. One evening her parents were driving in the dusk with Baby, and the moon came out with a great flood of light. 'Mamma! What is that?' she cried. 'It is a big light that God has hung out so that we can see how to get home.' 'Who is God? Tell me all about him.' Her Mother wishes she could answer all her questions."

It is indeed desirable that we should fit ourselves to tell these little ones what we believe and why, leaving them then free to judge and to be. For instance, we could tell them so much about the moon, the earth-mother; of her hold upon tidal mysteries and upon the tides in man. One lovely and beloved mother, whose life is a blessing to all who meet her, does more than this. Under her gentle suggestion, her children save their Christmas money, not for their blood relations or for themselves, but for children poorer and less fortunate, to whom they give in a spirit of joyous fraternity such as emanates from this ideal theosophical household which has succored, strengthened, and cheered many sorrowful souls with its harmonies. Why? Because *Altruism* is the key note set by the parents, repeated by all every day of their lives.

JULIUS.

## NOTES

1. {Matthew 18:20.}
2. *Eastward, or A Buddhist Lover.* {Mrs. Robert Hosea.} J. C. Cupples & Co., Boston.

## TEA TABLE TALK.

JULIUS

She was singing, and this is what she sang:

{LIFE.}

Our life, our life is like a narrow raft,  
Afloat upon the hungry sea;  
Hereon is but a little space,  
And all men, eager for a place,  
Do thrust each other in the sea;  
And each man, eager for a place,  
Doth thrust his brother in the sea.

And so our life is wan with fears,  
And so the sea is salt with tears;  
Ah, well is thee, thou art asleep!  
Ah, well is thee, thou art asleep!

Our life, our life is like a curious play,  
Where each man hideth from himself.

“Let us be open as the day,”

One mask does to the other say,  
When he would deeper hide himself.

“Let us be open as the day,”

That he may better hide himself.

And so the world goes round and round,  
Until our life with rest is crowned.  
Ah, well is thee, thou art asleep!  
Ah, well is thee, thou art asleep!<sup>1</sup>

{MSS. or Old Song.}

When the tremulous minor chords had died away, I asked her where she had found the song.

“It is called ‘Life,’ and has been set to music from an ancient MSS.,” she replied. “I like it, because it is so true.”

“Then you believe in a universal brotherhood, even when so grimly displayed?”

“Yes’ — thoughtfully — “I do, because I must.”

“That is generally a reason — with ladies — for *not* doing a thing. Permit me to congratulate the exception.”

She laughed. “Come, Mr. Julius; you must not parade your masculine ironies before me. I do not believe in them, you know. Let us find a better subject.”

“Yourself,” I ventured to suggest. She held up a warning finger, merrily. I hastened to exculpate myself.

“Seriously, you know I am a collector of experiences. Tell me some of those to which you referred a moment ago.”

She hesitated a moment, during which I threw all the pleading expression of which I am capable (it's not much) into my figure.

"I will tell you what I call my triad," she said, at length. "These are three prophecies, all similar, delivered in various ways, at different places, and during a period of ten years."

"No. 1 occurred thus, ten years ago. My Mother had often heard of the wonders performed by Foster, the medium. She determined to go to him, unknown, and without telling any one else, and see what would befall. She chose for this visit a day when she journeyed from our city to New York, and heard some curious things. Suddenly he said to her: 'Who is Leontine? (That is my first name.) Is there a Leontine?' My mother replied that there was more than one. 'This is the one to whom Henri belonged.' (Henri was the name of my late husband.) 'Henri is here and he has a special message for Leontine. He says you belong to her and will take it to her.' Here Foster appeared to listen intently, and then resumed slowly, as one who delivers a message. 'Tell Leontine she has had a great deal of trouble; heart trouble, ill health, financial trouble; she will have more. But it will not last. She will have health, wealth, fame, love even:— tell her that particularly — even a great love.' Here ends prediction No. 1.

"No. 2. Five years after that I was driving with an Aunt in a beautiful country town. At the post office, where we stopped, stood an Italian with a stand of those dear little green parrots, the ones that tell your fortune, don't you know? My Aunt asked me if I had ever seen them do their pretty trick, and, as I answered No, she called the man to us and paid for two fortunes, stipulating with me that the first should be mine, the second hers. This agreed upon, the bird was released; it hopped along the line of sealed envelopes ranged closely in the box, appeared uncertain, but finally selected one, at which it tugged for some moments, without relinquishing it for any other. Finally extracting this one, it was raised on its master's baton and flew to my lap, the envelope in its beak. When recalled to choose my Aunt's envelope, it pecked at several indiscriminately; when it had withdrawn one, it was given to her and we drove off. The fortune of my Aunt was irrelevant and absurd. Mine you will find in the bonbon box on the *etagère* yonder."

In the bonbon box was a scrap of coarse blue paper, with the following printed upon it.

"For a Lady."

"You have been much crossed in the past; do not despair; you will succeed in many things that you might wish; fortune will be more favorable to you in future than what it has been in the past. You have many things that trouble you, but be calm, they will end soon. There are many things to happen which will bring you great advantages. You will get great profit and fortune, and you will receive what you have lost. You will be very lucky in love; you will surmount all and live 78 years, 22 days, and 40 minutes."

Leontine continued as I laid down this ornithological document:

"No. 3 is the most curious of all. I was going to make a visit to friends whom I had never seen, arriving on a Tuesday morning. In the night between Monday and Tuesday, a sister of the house dreamed this dream. She was looking out of the front windows upon the familiar street, but opposite was a house of somewhat old-fashioned architecture, which she never saw before but will not now forget. I will give the story in her own words.

" 'While I looked at the house, an elderly woman came out, tied crape on the door knob, and then began to brush up the hall and steps. I thought that there was a

sudden death over there, and I ought to go and offer help. I ran over and said to the woman: 'Who is dead here?' She answered that no one was dead yet, but her daughter was dying and she was making ready for the funeral. I asked where the daughter was, and when told she was alone in the upstairs front room, I ran up to her. It was a room I had never seen before, but I remember it well. On the bed lay a slender young woman; she looked very ill but not then like a dying woman. Her eyes were wandering restlessly about the room and to each of the windows, as if she wanted to look on familiar surroundings for the last time; such longing, intense looks, and that was not their real meaning. I asked if I could do anything for her, and she begged me to help her to the window. She was emaciated and very light, so that I could easily do so, and she looked hungrily up and down the street, turning away with a sigh and entire collapse. I bore her back to the bed, and a great change came over her; all the grey glaze of death, the set features, the rattle. She is gone! was my thought. Just then I heard a man come running up the stairs. He sprang into the room and snatched her in his arms. 'I am here, I am here!' he cried. 'I have come to bring you life; I have come to bring you love.' He covered her with caresses, he held her to his heart, and slowly her pulse began to throb, the color crept up into her face, her glazed eyes saw again, her form filled out; she turned upon him such a face, the most radiant face ever imagined; it has left an indelible imprint in my memory. I slipped away and left them so together. My dream ended here. In the morning I told it to my sister and roommate, but begged her not to tell it to the others, as I felt a strange reluctance to have it known. I told her that if I ever met that woman I should know her at once. You, Leontine, arrived three hours later, and when I came down the stairs and you turned to be introduced to me, I recognized the sick woman of my dream.' "

Leontine said as she concluded this narrative, "I was quite ill at the time of my visit there. And her reluctance to tell the story was so great that I did not hear it until I had been there a month. She seemed to feel almost as if it had been a sacred experience, so real and solemn did it appear to her. But she identified me at once to the sister who had been her *confidante*."

"How long ago was this?" I asked.

"A few months ago."

"And — er — may — er — an inquiring philosopher venture to ask if any of these predictions, which do tally curiously, have come true?"

"As to wealth, a moderate sum has been left to me. As to fame, after many failures, I achieved success in my chosen branch of literature. As to health, it still fluctuates." She paused.

"And as to love?" I inquired drily, as an impersonal collector of facts should do.

"Pray do you think such things are to be dissected in your omnivorous Tea Table?" she asked. "I should refuse to reply, if you were so rude as to ask."

"And if I persisted?"

"Then, Mr. Julius, I should ask if you are not still unmarried." And the creature actually made eyes at me.

When a woman looks at you that way, there are only two things to do. you may retreat or you must surrender. Hitherto I have always retreated, and I did so now. Possibly the witch knew my habit. I thought I heard a soft laugh as I passed under the *portière*. Woman will laugh at anything; things that have no trace of humor in them. But over my evening cigar I find myself often asking that question, "Has love come to her or has it not?"

As a philosopher — *I wish I knew*.

JULIUS.

## NOTE

1. {*Conflicts with Oblivion*, Wilbur Cortez Abbott. "Life" used as the Proem.}

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*The Path* – March 1891, Vol. 5, pp. 387-389.

## TEA TABLE TALK.

JULIUS

Tea is over. The silence of contentment falls upon the group. Conversation is lulled for the moment. The fire-light plays upon the silver, the white drapery, the walls; plays upon the wee small figure of a beloved and cherished guest, seated in a tiny chair before the hearth. We are all thinking, with various shades of regret, that it really is bedtime, that the gentle little figure must soon be passed from arm to arm, saying its sweet "Good night," the lisp of babyhood scarce off its sweet lips, for she is only five years old. And, as if she knew our reluctant thoughts, Antonina (for it is she) looks up from under her russet, fluffy bangs, and remarks:

"Auntie, do you know why I *like* to go to bed?"

That envied mortal who is her aunt and confidante makes encouraging and due inquiry. Antonina settles herself in the mite of a chair, gazes again at the flames, and amidst our affectations of unconcern (not for worlds would we spoil our natural Antonina) answers musingly:

"I like to go to bed, because of my *superstitious monkey*."

"Your *superstitious* monkey, child? What's that? I think you mean a *supposititious* monkey."

"What's that, auntie?"

"Supposititious means make-believe; a make-believe monkey."

"No; *no*. I don't. My superstitious monkey is a *real* monkey, and he comes to me when I am in bed."

The aunt abandons all philological discussion, all attempt at definition. She is a highly discriminating aunt, worthy, I may say, of the honor which has fallen upon her. With all seriousness, is there any greater tribute possible to human character than that conveyed by the entire trust and love of a young child? She knows that Antonina has an ear for rhythm; also a decided character; if superstitious is her epithet, superstitious it must be. It is the music, not the meaning, that Miss Five-year-old hears in words; who can deny that "superstitious monkey" rolls glibly off the tongue? With a swift change of base, the estimable young aunt inquires:

"What does your superstitious monkey do?"

"He comes when I'm in bed and sits on the footboard; then he drums, drums his heels on it; he drums them at me."

Pit-a-pat go the sturdy little heels on the hearth in illustration. It costs us all something not to kiss the child at that moment. But we should lose the tale if we did. Antonina is a person of character and dignity when she converses thus; a person of dreamy tone and clear thought. The child romp disappears; she cannot be approached now with familiar impunity. Some of us pretend to sleep; some pretend to read; one accomplished actor yawns and touches the piano keys softly, but all listen as with one ear.

"You don't like the drumming, do you?" the aunt asks.

"Oh! I don't mind. I rather like it; its my superstitious monkey, you know."

"And what else does he do?"

"Talks to me."

"Eh?"

"Yes; talks to me."

"What about?"

"Oh! well — about — oh — the flowers;— and the butterflies;— and all out doors; and — and a great many things *you* wouldn't understand. But I understand. Only I couldn't explain them to *you*, auntie."

The little maid rises. Her soft "Good nights" are said. Sighing, we let her go to her warm nest. In the twilight we sit and chat awhile. Silver moonbeams tremble through the panes. What is the dim white shape stealing across the floor? Is it our blessed baby in her nightgown, a sweet, serious smile upon her face? With the air of one who confesses the whole truth, she slips to her aunt's side. In a wee hushed voice she says:

"Auntie; do you know what my superstitious monkey *really* is? It's the Darkness. It is not *really* a monkey. It's the Darkness that speaks. It isn't everybody that can hear the Darkness speaking. You have to listen very, *very carefully*, and everybody don't understand what the Darkness says. I understand. But I don't think you can hear it — I —"

The voice murmurs a few drowsy words more, then trails off into indistinctness and silence. Softly smiling, softly breathing, the little one has gone to that land where the Darkness reveals its secrets.

A friend gave Antonina a book of children's tales, written by a lady theosophist and conveying theosophic truths.<sup>1</sup> These were recently read to the child by her mother (who is not a theosophist) as an experiment. She remarked afterward:

"That child's attitude before that book is entirely different; she does not listen to it as she does to any other. She has made up her mind that those tales are to teach her something, and you should see the way she settles down to it. She is a picture as she listens and seems to weigh it all."

Presently Antonina comes in, with the book, to which she is much attached, under her arm. "Auntie," she says, "H. reads history to you every morning. You're always reading that book you call the *Secret Doctrine*; it's *your* history, and" (proudly) "this is *my* history." After that, she called her book "My History-book" always.

Another little maid of my acquaintance suddenly said to her mother:

"Mamma, when I come here again, I hope I'll be your little girl."

"Nonsense, don't talk so; you won't come here again."

The child played silently for a time. Then the restless mind broke out again:

"Mamma; what was I when I was here before?"

"You weren't here before."

"But what was I before I came?"

The eyes filled, the voice quivered. "Oh! Mamma. Wasn't I *anything*? Not a lamb? Not *even* a clock?"

What pathos in the soul's thirst for the assurance of immortality, its reluctance to take denial! To little children, the clock or watch is alive. They listen to your heart, feel their own heart, then hearken to the "ticker-heart" in breast of clock or watch. Of all inanimate objects, these alone are alive to them; they look upon them, deprived as they are of locomotion, as the lowest order of life. Hence the — "not *even* a clock."

California theosophists are full of the idea of theosophical schools for children, and surely, no more hopeful field of work could be found than that of encouraging

these little ones to listen to the inner instinct, to seek truth within the intuition, to accept that monitor alone.

There is great hope for a movement of Thought when the poets begin to sing it. Considering the sensuous quality of Swinburne's verse, the materialistic tone of its earlier tendency, we come upon the following verses in his *Songs before Sunrise* with a shock of pleasurable surprise.

Unto each man his handiwork, unto each his crown  
The just Fate gives;  
Whoso takes the world's life on him and his own lays down,  
He, dying so, lives.

Whoso bears the whole heaviness of the wronged world's weight,  
And puts it by,  
It is well with him suffering, though he face man's fate;  
How should he die?

Seeing death has no part in him any more, no power  
Upon his head;  
He has bought his eternity with a little hour  
And is not dead.

For an hour, if ye look for him, he is no more found  
For an hour's space;  
Then ye lift up your eyes to him and behold him crowned,  
A deathless face.<sup>2</sup>

May we succeed in our efforts so to spread the tidings of Universal Brotherhood from sea to sea that every human being may have the opportunity to hear the glad tidings that they who live for and in all Humanity, all Life, can never die.

JULIUS.

## NOTES

1. {*The Wonder-Light and Other Tales*, Julia Campbell Ver Planck. Likely given to Antonina by Julia herself.}
2. {"Super Flumina Babilonis," *Songs before Sunrise*, Algernon Charles Swinburne.}

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*The Path* – April 1891, Vol. 6, pp. 26-28.

## TEA TABLE TALK.

JULIUS

"Opal" was a guest at the Tea Table, and told us the following tale. "A curious incident occurred to me recently. I left my room, on the highest floor of the hotel, to go down stairs. I touched the elevator bell, and then, while waiting for the elevator to ascend, I walked down a corridor to a window to see the fast-fading sunset. Returning, my course was a straight diagonal (if a diagonal line can be called straight) to the door of

the elevator. The corridor was very dusky and the gas not yet lighted. I was rushing somewhat precipitately towards the door, when my progress was checked by the sight of a gentleman standing immediately in front of the door. I naturally supposed it a boarder in the house, who had approached from the other side while I had been momentarily absent exploring the sunset, and did not notice him particularly till — suddenly, as the elevator came up, lighted, I saw to my horror that the elevator door had been left open, and that *no man was standing there!* Had I not been checked in a rather heedless progress by the sight of the man, I should almost inevitably have plunged into the elevator well, a depth of 100 or more feet. The apparition saved me. I did not recognize the form, save that it was a man and not a woman.”

The Professor gave it as his opinion that this warning form was the inner self of Opal, or a messenger of that self, in which opinion some of us concurred. Others thought it might have been a picture of some person who had stood there at another time, said picture in the astral light being made visible by the heightened vibration of her inner self on feeling a sense of danger as yet unrecognized by her brain consciousness. At such moments the magnetic body becomes agitated, vibrates in unison with the astral plane, and a consciousness of that plane is temporarily induced. Thus, by the action of nerve auric forces, the picture was seen and served as a warning.

Some of us began guying the Professor good humoredly upon his being what one lady called a “demi-semi-occultist,” when he was, at the same time, a scientist of good standing. He bore our attacks imperturbably while he sipped his tea. Urged to reply, he said, stroking his beard, “My friends, it would ill become a *modest* man like myself —” (soft cries of “Hear! Hear!” and applause) — “to be more exclusive, more careful of evidence, than is Professor Tyndall, yet hear what he writes: ‘All our philosophy, all our science, and all our art — all are the potential fires of the sun. What are the core and essence of this hypothesis (evolution)? Strip it naked, and you stand face to face with the notion that, not alone the more ignoble forms of animalcular and animal life; not alone the exquisite and wonderful mechanism of the human body; but that the human mind itself, emotion, intellect will, and all their phenomena were once latent in a fiery cloud.’ That sounds to me much like some talk I have heard in this room about ‘the flames,’ the ‘fiery breaths,’ and other occult agents.”

We assured our friend that the jury acquitted him without leaving the room. “But, Professor,” said one of the ladies, “tell me this. Why do we so often see students of theosophy, honest workers in its ranks, persons of high aspiration, even, breaking down physically?”

“Permit me to answer you by telling a little tale,” he replied. The ladies murmured assent, and a very small person climbed with alacrity upon his knee, where she deftly balanced her dainty person, after preening her plumes. He looked down upon her with a kindly smile.

“Little one,” said he, “a stream ran furiously down for many miles and grew into a river from many tributary accessions until it pressed hard upon its banks. The bank requested it to go a little slowly, but the river said: ‘I am full of energy now; I have come very far, and, though so full of energy I am tired, and you press upon me, and I’ll overflow and run all over the country. I cannot stand it, and just now that young river rushed into me.’

“Why!” said the bank, ‘you do not reflect that there is another way to do what you ought to do.’

“What’s it? I can’t imagine.”

“Are you not rolling on the bed you have?”

“Yes; what of it?”

“Why, my dear river, just crowd down in that bed, and you will soon get deep, you will not overflow, and you will not crowd me in the dangerous way you now do.”

“Well, well! I never thought of that. Let me see.” A great change then came. The river seemed to lie down under its weight of water, and grew still for awhile, and the lower lands had less water. But soon there came a time when a long stretch of river was very deep, though very still, and then much water, running large mills, flowed out at the end of the place where the river took the bank’s advice and stayed awhile, resting in its bed and making a deeper place.”

“Then you mean, Professor —?”

“That if students who begin to feel the great pressure and flow of the higher forces from within outward would consider the body, the banks bound to contain those forces temporarily in order that these may have use and manifestation among men, they would lie calmly back upon the inner nature, doing sufficient work in quiet wisdom and storing all surplus of force, until the bed of the stream grew deeper and could do more work from that deep plane, while less draught was made upon the physical frame. It is not all who need to do this; on the contrary, there are many who do not give their emotional aspiration sufficient expression through bodily action and work in this cause. Some of them say they would do so, if only they could feel that they were helped.”

“Unlike those who grumble at not being ‘helped,’ ” said J. the Student, “I think there is more danger of our being ‘helped’ too much than too little. Machines break from over speeding, not from being run too slowly — save in exceptional cases.”

“Yet how difficult it is,” said E., “to analyze our feeling with regard to action and result of action. We shall never be able to avoid contrary consequences growing out of actions done even from the purest motives, because of the Karma with which these actions may be bound up, and which affect others. While I admit that Pity is a virtue, and good for discipline, it becomes a weakness when it overpowers Love. To do anything of consequence at all, we must be aggressive, and aggressiveness entails wide-spread consequences; but there is the *Motive* which saves both the doer and the consequences. Our own *power* is measured by the great or small effect of our actions; hence the greater the good and the evil resulting therefrom, the greater the power to lift or redeem the evil. The pure motive springs from the highest plane, and by the time it comes down to our present consciousness (ignorance), it is tinged with enough dross to distort it out of recognition; therefore, owing to our limitations, we cannot avoid doing wrong; *i.e.*, right tinged with wrong. Therefore ‘let there be peace in you, and faith too;’ we cannot be perfect, but we can help one another to become better.”

It seems to me that I had never heard the teachings of the *Bhagavad Gîtâ* more fully assimilated, or more clearly and practically put into words — as they are also in deeds.

A small person, named heretofore in this chat, but who shall to-day (owing to the somewhat painful nature of the revelation) be nameless, gave recently a quaint illustration of the fact that theosophists “cannot be perfect.”

A—— (ahem!) — the nameless person, had been naughty, so the dickie bird said. He’s a shocking gossip, the dickie bird, you know. So the culprit was left in seclusion and, presumptively, to sad repentance. But presently my lady, with whom anger is ever a flash in the pan, comes tripping along, her usual smiles all beaming in her eyes. “Mamma,” says she, “you know there isn’t ever *anybody* that’s always good, except God. *Even those theosophicals*, they can’t *always* be good. For they’re only men, after all, you know.” Where A—— had ever heard of the theosophists no one knows, but her ingenious promptitude to screen her faults behind the deity and his perfection was quite worthy of her quick intuitions. One day she asserted something concerning her

“Pillikatuka.” Said some one present;— “You mean your *spirit*.” “No; I don’t,” answered A. quickly, “my spirit is in my heart.”

Impossible, at four years, to be more of a philosopher. And just consider the time and energy wasted by most parents in confining and restraining these true, childish intuitions. “The pity of it, Iago; the pity of it!”<sup>1</sup>

JULIUS.

## NOTE

1. {*Othello*, William Shakespeare, Act 4, Scene 1.}

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## TEA TABLE TALK.

JULIUS

A visitor to the Tea Table, in conversation with the Professor, said that he had dreamed of seeing a friend — D. — on fire over his stomach, and had poured water on him and quenched the blaze. This dream had occurred the previous Sunday night. A day or so after this conversation, D. wrote that he had been sick that Sunday night, and was much troubled by waves of heat that rolled up from his hips over his body. He had a severe cold and had been sick for many days, but on Monday morning was much better, just as the dreamer dreamed that the fire was extinguished.

Another sends the following about community of dreams between herself and a friend. “I have been engaged in the prosaic occupation of making a dress, and yesterday discussed with a relative whether to use ‘yellow piping’ or not, and decided on the ‘piping.’ I then wrote a widowed friend to come and assist in the making of the dress. She got the letter that night, but I said in it nothing about the material or style of costume, I dreamed that I conversed with her about the dress that night, telling her about the ‘yellow piping.’ She dreamed the same night that she was with me talking over the dress, and that I told her we would use ‘yellow piping.’ I consider this a communication through dream state. But are we justified in assuming that we did meet each other, in fact, while our bodies were asleep?”

“No, there is no reason for being sure that there was any conscious communication. There was community of dream relating to facts happening to one, and the current establishing the community was carried by the letter making the dress-making engagement.”

It is more than probable that each dreamer did her dream picturing independently of the other. But this was due, of course, to the fact that in the astral light the pictures of actual facts and conversations are preserved, enabling the other dreamer to automatically pick them out and retain a memory of them upon awaking.

The student was prevailed on the other night to say something about dreams and dreaming.

“Yes, although the greater number of dreams are foolish, we must not despise them utterly, but should discriminate. If we rely on dreams we shall at last become verily superstitious and amenable to punishment by our friends. The fact that nearly all people dream is an enormous fact. For in these dreams, foolish, sad, grave, or prophetic, there is some ego or person or individual who experiences the feelings that we note in dreams and remember afterwards. The same sort of cognitions and sensations is perceived in dreams as when we are awake. *Who* feels, *who* suffers and enjoys? is the question. That is what we should consider. But it is true that one may

learn the meaning of his own dreams; rare is the man who can say what, if any, meaning the dreaming of another has.”

Another correspondent says: “A few evenings ago, after all of the family had retired, I took up *The Theosophist* and my eye fell on the article, ‘The Practice of Pranayama in Yoga.’ After reading the article and the note made upon it by a ‘practical student,’ I thought I would try it, as at this time I am in proper condition, having since the beginning of Lent abstained from meat, fish, and nearly every kind of food except bread, rice, milk, and sugar. In the year 1880 I learned from an old lady certain rules by which to regulate the breath. She had been taught by a man in her early youth, sixty-five years ago, and by practicing it she saved her life when given up by the doctors. I began now to apply these rules, and after a short time there appeared before my open eyes a curiously linked chain composed of geometrical figures of the most beautiful colors. At first it was nearly the shape of a large U; then it changed to an S; then to a true lover’s knot with triangles for loops. Then there were several other figures constantly growing larger and smaller, and with great difficulty could I read the page before me through them. This chain grew brighter and more radiant, and finally changed to a pure white light, in which I could see shadowy forms moving. The light was in constant motion, but when I stopped my breath and made a supreme effort to keep every muscle of my body still, it moved but little. I could not put out the light by any effort of will. At last it occurred to me to try hot water compresses on my head and eyes. This extinguished the light and I saw darkness once more, which was a comfort, so that now I understand how ‘men may prefer darkness rather than light.’ I would recommend this simple remedy of a hot water compress to ‘practical students’ as being a more agreeable and convenient remedy than ‘pure castor oil with food,’ as K.N. suggests. Will you tell me if this was the Astral Light I saw, and if there are other than external means to stop one’s seeing it?”

This practice disturbed the small nerves of the eye, and the chain was an accentuation of those lights which are remarked by physicians and nearly always take that shape. They are in the fluid in the eye. It was a physiological disturbance caused by abnormal practice. Better than hot compresses or castor oil is to stop all such efforts. Stopping meat and fish, or taking or leaving one or another food, does not put the student in “proper condition” to try psychic practices. The proper condition is described in the *Voice of the Silence*, p. 16.

“Kill thy desires, Lanoo, make thy vices impotent, ere the first step is taken on the solemn journey. Strangle thy sins and make them dumb forever, before thou dost lift one foot to mount the ladder.”

Possibly when this fact has been reiterated a few hundred — or thousand — times more, students will begin to get a glimmer of the fact that psychic practices of all kinds are most injurious for the unready man or woman. The condition of being ready or fit is described above. Who can claim to have attained it? When *spiritual* enlightenment has been attained, then the illuminated disciple, purified, may begin such practice, for he does so *from above*. Without an adept guide, they are otherwise absolutely injurious to body and mind. “Psychic practice” refers to efforts to enter abnormal conditions, astral or other. There is a method of voice culture now in vogue in certain Schools of Oratory and in Health Resorts which is a branch of physical culture. It is intended to teach right breathing and speaking, and to restore circulatory and assimilative processes through right use of breath and vocal cords, establishing deep breathing also. This, of course, is not a psychic practice, nor is its motive such. It has a purely physiological *rationale*, and helps the brain through the oxygenation which it brings about.

JULIUS.

## TEA TABLE TALK.

JULIUS

It was a large, sunny parlor, and Psyche flitted about it, touching here a rose and there a drapery; now re-adjusting, now contemplating. In her yellow gown, pendent fringes waving and shoulder-puffs raised, she looked like some light butterfly, skimming all the attractiveness of the room. As she hovered above the tea cups, I told her as much.

“Antonina calls them ‘flutter-byes’; perhaps that is a still better — because a still more trifling name” — she said, with a provoking little *moue*.

There are women whom you never can please, do what you will. Praise is gross. Silence wounds. Everything seems to brush the bloom from their wings. I told her this. She laughed in my face. Surely the women of our mothers’ era had more tact and suavity. I made bold to suggest as much, and she only remarked:

“For the matter of that, so had the women of your grandmother’s time. Should you wish me to be your grandmother? I am glad I am not. I should not like to be in the least responsible for you.”

This personality seemed to call for a severe reply, but her fluttering about in that manner unsettled me. You cannot crush a small person who is darting hither and thither among the mazes of the modern *salon*, more absorbed in bric-a-brac than in yourself. Hence I concluded to waive the subject, and to make a cool, dignified inquiry about a work on architecture which lay before me, in the hope of bringing her to a standstill. I succeeded only too well. Poised in front of me, audaciously ignoring my question, she said:

“Butterflies! Light, trifling, flippant things. I suppose you think they have no souls. Pray do remember that Psyche — whose emblem is the butterfly — *is* the soul.”

“I’m not up in symbology,” I answered, “but aren’t you rather breaking a butterfly?”

“You think they are mere evanescent creatures of the hour,” she continued, oh so scornfully.

“My dear young lady, when the theosophical butterfly typifies Buddhi-Manas — —” but I might as well have attempted to arrest the flight of a butterfly.

“That’s all very pretty; but you, I know you do not believe it one bit. Pray, did you ever see the birth of a butterfly? Did you ever see the throbs, the quivers of anguish, the shuddering agony, the blood drops of the chrysalis before the winged life comes forth? In that mimic sphere there is a purpose, an heroic struggle necessary to existence. If you entered the butterfly world you might find yourself a coward there, where every purposeless life is stillborn.”

I hastily answered that I thought this very probable, and indeed her dark eyes were glancing and all her silken fringes quivering and shining in a way that caused me to remember a pressing engagement with a man from Nowhere: But I never voiced it, for, hovering near a huge satin chair fluted and perfumed like a flower, she suddenly sank into its depths, saying softly: “Shall I tell you a story?”

My engagement dissolved back into No-Man’s-Land. Psyche is an unrivalled story-teller, and I have often envied the small hearers above whose downy heads she murmured gently.

Reflecting, she folded her feathery plumage about her.

"My tale is called 'The birth of a soul,' " she said.

"There was once a butterfly, a Psyche, a creature of sunshine and color, of light aims, contented with evanescent and trifling joys, consorting mainly with creatures like herself. Yet, such as she was, she attracted a being of a higher order, a poet-artist, who thought he saw within her nature the gleam of wider possibilities. She believed him, because it was so delicious to believe. That is the butterfly's best reason for doing a thing,— that summer airs blow softly and the nectar is so sweet. The homage he offered her, was a flower rare indeed; she tasted its brimming cup, then drank again, and again. This gave him hope. He went away to work for her, to dream of her, to become worthy of her. Fancy! 'Worthy' — of a butterfly! And while he aspired, labored, and achieved, she found, another summer day, flowers of praise full as sweet and fresher, newer than his own, and classified him with forgotten joys, remembering only those of the bright moment, those of the rainbow-hued gardens of life where she found herself now.

In distant lands he, dreaming, worked as well, and worked for pure love of Art and of Love itself. Who works thus works well. His hour of achievement came. He too was wooed by softer airs, by a more radiant day. In his self-imposed exile he had painted her portrait. It was his dream life and brought him the first award of a lasting fame. He returned, elate, yet sobered by the nearness of a great hope, a happiness once as far removed from his grasp as Heaven itself is — still as far, perhaps, for think of grasping happiness in butterfly form! This he knew not. By a light memory, a graceful touch, a swift reply now and then, she had given him cause to think that she still loved him, she, who threw encouragement to all because the day was fair and her own wings light; she, who sunned herself in every pleasing nature, and sipped the sweets, and fled! She who, butterfly-like, gave no thought to the morrow, counted no cost. He saw her, girt with the chaste aureole of his own ideal. Landing one evening in their native city, unable to wait until the next day to see her, though the conventions of frivolity compelled him to wait until then for a call, he concluded to go to the opera, where he was sure she was to be found. He was right, she was there. He raised his glass, he drank in her image. He stared, removed his *lorgnon*,<sup>1</sup> wiped its clear surface as if it were beclouded, then looked again; a long look, an ardent look that hardened and cooled into despair. What did he see? Only a butterfly. To alight everywhere, to rest nowhere, that is the life of these souls of air. This fact in Nature, and in butterflies, was none the less hard to him because it *was* a fact, and he resisted it. Though he saw her flirting, fluttering, evading, pert and airy, nonchalant and unconstrained, though he read the shallowness of her nature in her roving glance and futile actions, still he sought her out. Still he hoped to snatch the fragile creature to his heart. Had he succeeded, he might have clasped only a handful of dust, who knows? But he failed. Not knowing what manner of thing a heart was, how could she take his, or give him her own?"

"What a fool he must have been," I ejaculated.

"He was a *man*," she replied.

I did not quite like to ask her what she meant by this, so I remained silent. She sat upon her daffodil-colored chair, quivering a little, as if about to take flight, subdued somewhat and less blithe of manner, a butterfly drenched with dew. In her eyes the dawn of emotion, in her voice the ghost of sorrow.

"He went to the opera-box," she continued, "to be received with a touch of coolness, a hint of disdain. His homage was that of an intellect, a soul; it was less sugared and spiced than before. She gave him clearly to see that he wearied her; she had become used to less healthy food. He saw a shallow nature, revealed in a shallow face, a careless bearing, an idle voluptuousness, a love of the trifles of life. So when she turned impatiently from him weary and scornful, he took his leave as an honest man

would, who saw his ideal overthrown. He made no reproach, no outcry. As he passed out of the opera he heard her name spoken amid light laughter, and understood more than ever that he had placed his whole stake upon a butterfly's nature, and had lost it. If he suffered I do not know. But one may guess it. He was silent. Then presently, when his name was upon every lip, her caprice returned and she sent for him. He did not come. She wrote, and asked the reason why. It was then that he sent her portrait to her: upon a card in its corner were written these words, "*In Memoriam.*" So she unveiled the portrait and looked upon the face of his dead love. It was herself, and yet not herself. A mirror stood opposite. Upon the canvass, dignity, a gracious equipoise, power tempered by mercy, love subordinate to reason, all the graces of a gentle womanhood, all the earnestness of high ideals. Herself as she should have been; as she might have been. In the mirror, a shallow puerile face, a fanciful wandering disposition, the absence of all aspiration, the ignorance of all true love. She grew pitifully small in her own eyes as she gazed, discrowned, at the image of herself crowned by Love. She comprehended what she had destroyed and what she had missed. She saw before her an unending panorama of idle days, wasted hours, brief pleasures snatched upon the wing, as it were. Slowly all this filtered into her consciousness; gradually she realized the pity of it, until at last her noble image looked down upon a woman sobbing, prone before it, and under the eyes of the portrait a soul was born.

It was born too late for greater use. It was only the soul of a butterfly. Yet the tiny thing lived. It essayed a higher flight. There are laws, even of butterfly life, and it endeavored to know them. Perhaps it learned to carry from place to place the golden germs of a sweetness not its own, to sow the seed of a life it could only serve and could not share. Perhaps to know its puny nature for what it was, and still to strive, still to aspire; to be alone, unaccompanied in the airy flight; to lift the body of the worm upon the psyche wing; is courage, of a minor kind indeed, but courage still. For if, perchance, the butterfly knows all its weakness, and still endeavors to be all it can be, may not the tiny shallow thing, in time, win higher grace?"

Was it moisture she brushed from her eyes? I could not say. On the wall hung a most loveable portrait, like her, yet curiously unlike. Her glance followed mine. "It is an ancestress of mine," she laughed, and evading the question of my look, she darted away to the window. Presently I saw her flitting about among the lilacs on the lawn. As I watched her, a mystery rose before me, the mystery of woman's nature! Can she feel, or does she only simulate emotion? Was it of herself she spoke, or did she weave an artful tale? Has Psyche a soul, or has she only a psychic something, animated by a love of sensation, of pleasure? Is the butterfly a freak of nature, or has it indeed a soul?

JULIUS.

## NOTE

1. {Monocle or eyeglass; opera glasses.}

## TEA TABLE TALK.

JULIUS



So much interest has been aroused by the anecdotes and charming personality of little Antonina that the Editor, yielding to requests from all parts, publishes her portrait in this number of the *PATH*. Some of the anecdotes given below have never been published before, while others have been gathered from earlier numbers of the *PATH*, the whole making an Antonina number, where the pretty sayings of her third to her fifth year combine, as a whole, to show her natural leaning towards the occult. Only one of her relatives is an F.T.S. To her kindness we owe these suggestive records, and she assures us that she never talks of Theosophy to the child, feeling it honor bound not to do so.

On one occasion this auntie had been reading to Antonina an account of a boy who had been much injured. It impressed Antonina so much that, climbing into the aunt's lap, she said:

"Where did they carry that little boy?"

"I don't know. I suppose they carried him to the hospital."

"Well; why didn't they carry him to God's house?"

"Why," was the somewhat startled response; "I think they just took him to the hospital, where they could make him well again."

"Oh!" said Antonina, "they ought to have taken him to God's house. I've been there; I've been all through the skies; it's very nice there; he needn't have been afraid. It isn't dark there; that is, it isn't *very* dark; it's very nice."

"What do you mean?" said Auntie.

"I was there once, and nothing happened to me at all, and I saw a beautiful great Light coming towards me, and it was God himself, and he asked me what I was doing there. And I told him that I was getting made into a girl. It had to be made into something, you know, and it was a girl."

"When was that?"

"That was before I came here. I used to be old, and then I was made young again." After a short pause, she added, "Why doesn't Grandpa get made young again, like Uncle S.?"

Antonina often makes up little songs, both words and air, of her own, and sings them. These, she says, are taught to her by her *Pillikatuka*. Asked what this *Pillikatuka* is, she replies, laying her small hand upon her breast: "The Pillikatuka is in here. When you see, Auntie, it is not you that sees, it is the Pillikatuka. You don't hear anything;

you think you do, but it is the Pillikatuka that hears. When you go to sleep, the Pillikatuka gets out and goes to heaven for a little while. If the Pillikatuka didn't come back, you would never wake up; you would be dead. My Pillikatuka knows everything."

This small philosopher had been shut up in the city all winter, and her first spring day in the country gave unbounded joy. She ran about with all the alertness of her four years. Coming into the house at dusk, she sat down in a corner, apparently meditating on the day's pleasures. At last she spoke.

"Auntie, I shall sing you a song. It's a pretty song, about the spring birds in the air." She gave one of her little improvisations, rhymed, the song and air her own. A brief thoughtful pause followed. "Now, Auntie, I shall sing another song, it is much prettier. It is the song of the winds in the pines." A more finished air and song followed. "And now," she cried, "I shall sing the most beautiful one; the prettiest of all. This is *the joy of ripe fruit*." And it was beautiful. When asked where she gets these songs, she says the Pillikatuka gave them to her. This word, too, is her own. "The Pillikatuka is my Pillikatuka in *here*; you have one, Auntie, don't you feel it? Everybody has a Pillikatuka." Some time later she spoke of her "spirit" and was asked; "Is that your Pillikatuka?" "Oh no!" she replies with quick scorn, "the *spirit* is in my heart." One morning she lay in bed with her mother, talking about the Pillikatuka, its uses, and so on, and finally worked up to this: "And when you are asleep, you know, it goes up to Heaven, and then you seem as if you were dead, but you aren't, you know."

"What does it go there for?" asks Mamma.

"To get something to eat; of course it can't eat what we do. And when we *really* die, the Pillikatuka goes to Heaven and stays there."

"And what does it do there?"

"Well, you know, it doesn't stay there very long, because your Pillikatuka has to keep working all the time; so in a little while it comes down to earth again, and goes into another human being, and then it just goes on working here again. And Jack" (the dog) "has a *kind* of a Pillikatuka too. And when Jack dies his Pillikatuka goes to heaven too, and perhaps, *perhaps*, next time he'll be a *man*!"

Another time Antonina remarks: "I like to go to bed, because of my *superstitious monkey*." It was thought that she meant a supposititious monkey, but, when this was suggested to her and the word explained to mean "make believe," she insisted that her monkey was not that, he was a real monkey, and came when she went to bed. "He comes when I'm in bed and sits on the footboard; then he drums, drums his heels on it; he drums them at me. (She rather likes the drumming.) Then he talks to me about the flowers, and the butterflies, and — and all out of doors, and a great many things you wouldn't understand, Auntie. I understand, only I couldn't explain them to you." Later on she says, "Do you know what my superstitious monkey is? It is the Darkness. It's not *really* a monkey. It's the Darkness that speaks. It isn't everybody that can hear the Darkness speaking. You have to listen very, very carefully. And everybody doesn't understand what the Darkness says. You have to listen so. It's not dark like that," pointing to the next room where a half light just makes darkness visible, "but it's the black, black Darkness, when you can't see, you only hear it."

Another day she had been naughty. But anger with her is only a flash in the pan. Presently she came along all smiles. "Mamma," says she, by way of excuse, "you know there isn't ever *anybody* that's *always* good, except God. *Even those theosophicals*, they can't *always* be good. For they're only men, after all, you know." Where she had heard of the theosophists is not known, but the idea of screening her imperfections behind the Deity could only come from her ingenious self.

One day as Auntie was dressing, Antonina floated into her room with the little fixed expression in her face which always shows she has something particular to say. Standing by her Auntie's dressing-table, she said, after waiting a few minutes:

"You don't seem to be very much 'innerested' in my superstitious monkey."

"Oh, but I am." was the reply, "only you told me I couldn't understand what it said, and I didn't want to trouble you with questions, but if you will tell me about it I shall be very glad to listen."

So Auntie and Baby sat down on the bed together, and Antonina began, with complete gravity.

"I'll 'esplain' it to you, and then I think you'll understand. You know it tells me about things — about the flowers."

"Oh I thought it was the Pillikatuka that did that," said Auntie, who had determined to take advantage of this occasion to try and straighten out the ideas of the little one for her own satisfaction.

"Oh no," was the ready response, "the Pillikatuka tells me about God and the Angels;" — then suddenly — "Shall I tell you what my Pillikatuka told me yesterday?"

"Yes, dear."

"Well it said, and told me I must not tell anybody outside the family, that when I died I would *seem* to stay away a long time, but it would be really only a little while; for you know to die is only to sleep for a long time."

This with — oh such a rapt expression in the dear little face that Auntie finds it almost impossible to go on, but she finally says (as a test, for Antonina has lately explained that she has a Spirit which lives in her heart), "So your Spirit told you that?"

"No; that was my Pillikatuka."

"Well — but Baby, aren't your Pillikatuka and your Spirit the same thing?"

"Oh no — there's a great deal of difference between them."

"What difference?"

"Why, a great deal; they don't do the same kind of work; they do very different work."

"How different?" breathlessly.

"Why the Pillikatuka tells you about God and the Angels and all about how things are made, and lots of things, while the Spirit tells you what to do, tells you when you are naughty; only when I get into a temper" (musingly) "I *don't* listen to it;" (you see baby is *very* human). After a moment's quiet she added — "You know I don't really know what my Spirit is, but my Pillikatuka told me that when I got to Heaven God would tell me."

"Which of the two knows the most, dear?"

"Oh the Spirit," half disdainfully at my ignorance — then slowly and almost solemnly — "God put a great deal of Wisdom into the Pillikatuka, but the Spirit knows more than that. You know," she adds, hastily, "Pillikatuka isn't the right name, but I can't learn the right name till I go to Heaven." Auntie gathers herself up and asks (rather timidly), "How did the Pillikatuka learn so much, that's what I want to know, Antonina."

"Well, you see it's very old, and before I was made it was up in Heaven learning these things to teach to me — oh, and it knows a great many things, more things than it can teach me in a long time."

"Oh! then it's older than the Spirit?" (with seeming confidence).

"Oh no; it's very old, but the Spirit's very much older than that."

After a moment's pause to watch the rapt little face, Auntie says:

"Well, Baby, where does the superstitious monkey come in? is *he* the same as the Pillikatuka?"

"Oh no," — with a little giggle of amusement.

"Why, but you said it told you about flowers and about" —

Almost severely Antonina interrupts.

"The monkey doesn't know anything about any *godly* things; it just knows — well just about things we know ourselves, but the Pillikatuka tells us things we *ought* to know." Then — suddenly — "You know we have bells."

"Bells!" (with amazement) "what for?"

"Why to talk to the Angels with, of course. When we want to talk to them we just strike it" — with a little gesture — "and they come right to us."

"And what are the bells like?"

"Just golden and silvery. I'll show you," slipping down and running to pick up a child's painting book on the outside of which is depicted a palette spread with colors; "there," settling down again, "these are all the colors; there are red and blue and 'inigo,' and there's violet — you see we have just these colors, and when the Angels are so far off they can't hear our bells they just see our colors and then they can come right to us."

"Why don't I ever *hear* the bells, dear?"

"Well, you see our bells are up in Heaven and we have a sort of a magic bell here," pressing her hand against her little breast, "and when we strike this, it strikes our bell in Heaven and the Angels hear that."

Cautiously Auntie tries to draw her back to Earth — "Does the monkey disturb you when he drums on the foot board?"

"No indeed. He just does that to amuse me, and I make him stop when he goes too loud, for he disturbs Mamma and makes her jump when she's asleep because she doesn't know he is there, but '*genally*' " (we are always pleased when she does use a baby word) "he just dances about to amuse me. Come," (sliding down to the floor) "that's the dinner-bell," and the Sage disappears and the hungry earthly child sits down to meat and potatoes with as much zest as if Spiritual and Astral Planes (for surely the monkey must belong in the latter) were simply dreams in the heads of musty Pundits.<sup>1</sup>

Antonina sitting on the floor playing with her dolls tells them a long story of which Mamma only hears the ending, which runs this way:—

"And it rained and rained" (it was on a rainy day, by the way) "till everything was just spoiled; all the flowers and everything, and the people got so tired of it they just all went to bed, and when they got up the next morning they found it was still raining, and when he saw how badly the people felt and how everything was spoiled, *God himself* was *mortified* to think how much rain he had let fall; so he stopped it."

Mamma picked up a paper from the floor which was so evidently a picture of some importance that she called upon Baby to explain it. As soon as Antonina saw it she began to giggle as if thoroughly amused at the remembrance. "Well; what is it about?" said Mamma. "Why, don't you see?" said Baby, "that's my superstitious monkey; he's up in Heaven chasing the Angels all about with a stick, and God himself is laughing to see him do it!"

Antonina had received a doll's carriage as a parting present from W. who was soon to go away, but Baby did not seem to know just why it had been given to her, so Auntie said, while she was washing baby's hands, "Don't you know W. gave you that because she is going away?"

"Oh! is that the reason?" said Antonina.

“Yes,” was the reply followed by the idle question, “Do you know when W. is going?”

“Yes; the last of next week,” said Antonina.

“No,” replied Auntie;” she’s going the last of *this* week.”

“I didn’t know it was this week:” — then like a flash after a second’s pause, “Why there isn’t any next week, is there?”

Auntie divined the thought, but wishing to hear it explained said inquiringly; “What do you mean by that?”

“Why, because when it gets here” — a moment’s pause here, evidently to think up some explanation that Auntie could understand — “well you see it’s like this — If I should say I was going to a party to-morrow, people might think I meant some other day, but it wouldn’t be, because when I went to it it would be *to-day* — There isn’t ever anything but just to-day, is there?” Pythagoras and Plato rolled into one couldn’t have explained it better. In fact, one of the most remarkable things about Antonina is her power of expressing her thoughts always in the most beautiful language, and she is always able to express one thought in several ways, use several images, if she wishes to do so, to make her meaning clearer.

Withal she is so absolutely a happy child, gay and bright, flitting about like a butterfly, dancing like a fairy, and is in no way morbid or unnatural. When saying some of her occult ideas, however, her gaze is fixed far away, momentarily.

The other day a lady who lives next door to Antonina’s Grandmother in the country said to the little girl, “Do you live in the city, Antonina?” “Well, yes;” she said, “I am supposed to live in the city, but I am out here visiting so much of the time that I couldn’t say I lived continuously anywhere.”

JULIUS.

## NOTE

1. This is, as nearly as I can remember it, an actual conversation, word for word at one time, except the very last sentence which was said a few days later. — March 5th, 1891.

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*The Path* – September 1891, Vol. 6, pp. 187-191.

## TEA TABLE TALK.

JULIUS

The Professor sat, cigar in hand, watching the upward curl of its blue smoke-filament, his eyes darkened by the intensity of his thought. I knew he had just seen X., an “advanced” theosophist of the occult wing, and I lay in wait for any information which might percolate through upon my humble self. Presently the Professor remarked, dreamily, and as if speaking from cloudland:

“We have had many a crisis, but assuredly this was the greatest.”

“To what do you refer, Professor?”

“To the departure of H.P.B. from her physical body. It might have been supposed, in advance, that this sudden taking-off would result to our disadvantage. But the fact is, disasters work upon the T.S. in inverse proportion. The greater the (apparent) disaster, the greater the resultant good. The stronger the blow, too, the stronger our reaction. All attacks, all so-called exposures and losses have merely cleared away the impedimenta of weak and uncertain followers. The apparent loss of our

leader did not, for one instant even, paralyze the activities of the working staff in India, England, or America. Now, day by day, we have evidence of growth in every direction. The Press is opening its jealously-guarded doors. The Practical Work of the Theosophic Leagues has won public sympathy for us. Everywhere there is a sudden outburst of energy and new life. X spoke of it to-day."

"What had he to say of it?"

"We were talking about H.P.B., and he said that, so far as he understood, she (the Adept) expended an immense amount of energy — *vis viva*, you know — in holding together a body whose every molecule tended to disruption. In effect, just think of the cohesive force thus employed! of the immense friction in brain-centers already worn by disease. X says they were so impaired that senility must soon have resulted, so that it seemed to *her* (?) better to let that body go to pieces so soon as a good opportunity should occur."

"That last phrase is very suggestive."

"It is. And he believes that H.P.B. will be for some time occupied in training a new instrument, and one not so young as to be useless at the present cyclic crisis. He does not pretend to speak with authority, but certain sayings of hers — and perhaps what I might call *post-mortem* facts — bear him out. Certainly she left everything in order. All things were planned out, and evidence was abundantly had to the effect that she knew her departure was near. Moreover, X said that, looking upon her as an Adept, whose chief work was done outside of the objective body, it was reasonable to suppose that she is now enabled to use, upon higher (or inner) planes of being, the power previously expended in the maintenance of that body."

"Did he think that the present theosophic increase should be attributed to that fact?"

"Only in part. You see, he believes her attention to be largely engaged with the new instrument. But, from his point of view, her co-adjutors and associates would naturally lend a helping hand in her absence, especially if the T.S., as a body, called down their help."

"What do you mean by calling down help?"

"I mean that the united impulse of a large body of truth seekers — more especially if they work for Humanity — attracts the help needed for its spiritual efforts. Imagine it as a great stream of energy going out into space and returning freighted with all that it had attracted to itself — all similars — on its passage. That in itself would be a source of power. Again, the increase is largely due to what H.P.B. foresaw. Theosophists are now able to stand alone, are all the gainers by being left to do so. (Take the words '*alone*' and '*left*' in a relative sense, please.) In the same way an infant is benefitted when left to learn to walk, even at the cost of its tumbles; it is the course of normal, healthy growth in every department of Nature."

"All that sounds rational enough."

"My dear Sir! Nothing is more rational, more sane than Theo-sophy. It is like the fairy wand which was used upon the ten billion feathers of ten thousand different kinds; all the facts of life fly out into well-ordered heaps."

"Just fancy how the public would receive that statement!"

"The public is well described by Carlyle's estimate of population: so many '*millions* — *mostly fools*.'<sup>1</sup> Yet tell me what truth, what invention, has not been rejected by their scorn. Let us not be trite. All the truths of Theosophy, all the axioms of occultism are, if I may so put it, the apotheosis of common sense. When you see a lack of that — beware! You may be sure that their knowledge is defective, erratic, ill-digested; every psychic, every seer, every hearer to the contrary. What are their gifts if not

supplemented by an understanding of the thing heard or seen? ‘My son, get knowledge; but, above all, get understanding.’ That power to interpret must be supplied. How?”

“I cannot possibly say. Did you not ask X?”

“I did. His answer was: ‘*By study of the Ethics*. The *Bhagavad Gîtâ* shows the way.’ In this science, he declared, spirit and nature, or the pure and the true, or ethics and law, are one and the same thing. The inner man may be looked upon as a congeries of powers. Every power is ‘the opener of the Door’ to the plane from which it springs in Nature. A power of the lower astral, or psycho-physiological, plane opens the door to that plane alone. It does so partly through action and interaction in the cells and molecules of the body. It acts upon its corresponding principle in every cell.”

“Can’t you enlarge upon that, Professor?”

“Suppose I were able to induce in the optic nerve that vibratory ratio which enables it to perceive the yellow color. How do I do it? I act as Nature does. She presents a given numerical vibration to the nerves, and forthwith they telegraph to the brain the sense impression of yellow. Which do you call the real thing in itself; the sense impression? or the vibratory ratio? I induce (if I can!) that same ratio in the nervous fluid, and the brain again registers yellow. Soon, if I were to continue this action, that nerve aura of the inner man would be in synchronous action and interaction with a whole plane of Being — call it the lower plane of the yellow ray, and all the things of that plane which are related to that vibration are perceived. Those parts of specific things which are not in relation to the vibration are not seen, and thus partial knowledge arises. It is literally true that you see that which you are.”

“I begin to understand.”

“Again, note that every plane has its active and its passive aspects; its principles; its sub-divisions and theirs. It is only the higher plane forces that open the upper doors. What determines this difference in power?”

“Ah! That must be the *crux*.”

“Thought determines it. Motive determines it, for motive determines the quality of Thought. Through motive, Thought becomes contractive or expansive. It is well known that Thought affects the assimilative processes of the body. It has always been a recognized factor in therapeutics. The introduction of the higher, more spiritualized vibrations into the *secret* brain centers not only opens them to the influence of higher spheres, but also it influences the selective action of the whole sphere. As the body exhales and inhales air, so the inner nervous body dilates and contracts with the motion of the etheric or astral Medium. Its vibration is quickened by the action of Thought, and this more rapid vibration prevents the entrance of the grosser particles of etheric substance, causing also a draught upon the infinitely finer currents of that World Soul. In this way the higher intelligence of every atom is opened, ‘wooded from out the bud like leaves upon the branch.’<sup>2</sup> Keely gives us a hint of one method in which this is done.”

“You mean by his discovery that the production of the chord of any given mass ruptures the molecular association of that mass and liberates finer energies, which energies are infinitely more dynamic?”

“Precisely so. The lesson can be carried still further. You say he produces the chord of a given mass, a chord which represents the vibratory total of that mass. So, too, we must use that force which is harmonious to the plane which we desire to enter. It’s easy to talk about it, but who amongst us can do it? And when the psychic does it fortuitously, he sees only partial results, only that which he is fitted to see, and no more. This is why it is so often said: ‘A man must live what he knows.’ Until he has lived it, he cannot know it; he must *be* that higher vibration; he himself must become that ‘lost Word.’ By long training in the production of forces within himself — forces

which must be absolutely pure if they are to reveal the pure — the student may approximate an understanding of what he sees. Otherwise, psychic experiences are a great disadvantage. They pre-empt thought; they detain the mind, as thorns upon the bushes detain the sheep. This is why the *Voice of the Silence* advises the student to flee from that 'Hall of Learning' where, under every flower, the astral serpent coils."

"Then it is well to be able to show these things by the light of common sense."

"Certainly, if you wish to benefit the sensible. I always go to Nature for an explanation of occultism."

"In that case, drawing a parallel, we may say that the so-called death of Madame Blavatsky brought theosophic minds to a common focus; that was, the determination to continue her work. This unity of effort on higher lines induced a great volume of energy, all pouring into and from a common center."

"Yes — and results of this action are now seen in a two-fold manner. Firstly; in the increased activity we spoke of. Secondly; in the partial unclosing of the doors into higher planes."

"How do you infer that?"

"From what X went on to tell me. It appears that the Leaders of the Society have made themselves objectively felt. Say, for example, in the way of letters. It is affirmed that some such have been received, and that their burden is *'Work.'* In one, a laborer is told to *'not ask for detailed commands, for H.P.B. has the PATH hewed out. FOLLOW in WORK and leave us to manage results.'* Again, work is referred to thus:— *'You go on with other work in a field as wide as humanity.'* The worker here referred to had been previously working in purely ethical ways. Another student is told: *'Be careful then so to act that your life shall not hurt the Society, now having so few. ... Make no profession a lie. Remember your responsibility and your oath.'* The burden of all such letters is devotion to and work for the present organization, as a duly-created center through which work is to be done. See also parts of the address of Col. Olcott to the British Convention."<sup>3</sup>

"It must be very encouraging to receive such letters."

"Precisely my remark to X, who gave me one of his sudden shrewd looks, and then said quickly, 'My dear boy; when a plant is mildewed, devoured, broken, growing awry, the head gardener or some one of his authorized assistants comes to its aid, or some few especial plants, doing especial service in the garden, may receive especial stimulus, such as would injure others. But when a plant is following all the natural laws of growth, it requires no re-adjustment, it does not hear from the gardener, who knows it is doing well. In the East, the Guru or Teacher is called the Re-adjuster. And He may communicate with some sub-center already established, which sub-center is to give out the help thus extended to those working in the same line.' "

"Then those workers who do not hear in some specific manner may still feel that they are seen and are doing well?"

"That is what X said; also that with closer relations to The Lodge comes also a greater, a terrible responsibility."

"It often seems to me hard to know just how to work."

"That is so. The best advice I ever found was: 1st. Use your predominant gifts to the best advantage. 2nd. Do not impede your fellow in so using his. 3rd. Follow the methods of Nature. Find a current or a nucleus, and work in it. No matter whether it seems perfect to you or not. Leave results to the Law. But if no nucleus is found, become yourself a center. The Divine will enter and work through you."

Our talk ended here, and I soon found myself in a waking dream, wherein I strove to become a center of life and energy. I did not wait for perfect conditions, nor for ideal leaders and helpers. It seemed as if I plunged all at once, aflame with will, into the universal field, and began to move and to work. I attracted other atoms, and

through an aggregate the Divine soon acted. It was then that I realized the folly of thinking, "I am too weak. I am too poor. I do not know enough." This is looking for results. This is omitting the Divine Powers, the Leaders of the World. All we need to do is to ground ourselves in the chief teachings, and then to get to work on the thing nearest to us. The work is ours; the results are in the Great Brahm.

JULIUS.

## NOTES

1. {*History of the French Revolution*, Thomas Carlyle, Vol. 3, Bk. 7, Ch. 7.}
2. {From "The Lotos (Lotus) Eaters" Alfred, Lord Tennyson, 1833. As found: "The folded leaf is wooed from out the bud with winds upon the branch..."} }
3. Published elsewhere in this number of the PATH. {pp. 184-185.}

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*The Path* – October 1891, Vol. 6, pp. 217-221.

## TEA TABLE TALK.

JULIUS

A correspondent writes as follows:

"Antonina reminded me so much of a little friend of mine that I sent the PATH to her Aunt, asking her to write me a little sketch of M—— for me to send to you. I knew M—— well, and have known her Mamma and Aunts since they were her age. They have all read a great deal of my Theosophical literature, but they find M—— a living study, and her Mamma recently told me they should be at a loss to understand her, but for Theosophy. When she was six years old she said to me one day, 'Do you understand spirits?' (Her Aunt explained, saying that they cautioned her about speaking to everyone, as many do not understand.) I told her that I understood. Drooping her head and placing her hand on her breast she said, 'Well; sometimes I hear a voice right in here.' "

It would be interesting to know exactly what the child meant by "a voice." When mystics use the term they do not, as a rule, mean that they hear an objective voice, whose sounds reach the tympanum, proceeding from and sounding or reverberating in the breast. They mean that they feel therein the stir of a power, *an essential motion* which is reflected upon the brain, either in the form of a very vivid picture or words of authority and power. The vibratory process is the same as that of an objective voice, but it strikes the brain directly without passing to that center *viâ* the tympanum, and it proceeds from within — often from the heart. The outward, subjectively-objective voices, heard by clairaudients and mystics, may proceed from a number of sources, desirable and (mainly) undesirable, and have not, generally speaking, the weight and authority which attaches to what is known as the "inner voice." This voice must not be confounded with the various fancies and impulses arising from various physical centers and organs in reality, and which flit through the brain. The "inner voice" has a deeper seat than such physiological ones; it comes from the heart center of the inner man; its conclusions are irresistible.

To proceed with the sketch of M——.

"M—— is a very interesting child, ten years of age, with brown eyes that sometimes have a far-away look in them as if she beheld things invisible to ordinary mortals. Her Grandfather died before she was born. No more has been said to her of him than has been said to the other children, yet she seems as well acquainted with him

as with her living relatives, and frequently declares that she sees him as plainly as she sees me. When I try to reason with her and say, 'I cannot see him; where is he?' she replies, 'Why — right there; sitting in that chair. Good, kind Grandpa'; and she leans forward, apparently kissing some person. Then, with a puzzled expression on her face, she will say:

'Why is it, when you are older than me, that you cannot see Grandpa?'

At other times she will look up from her school-work or games, and say; 'Why don't you answer? Someone is talking to you and I should think you would be ashamed not to answer.' When I ask who it is, she will reply, with a touch of scorn at my stupidity; 'Why, Grandpa asked you if you were going to some place.'

One day I entered her chamber, where she sat alone with seven empty chairs grouped about her, and her spoolwork, of which she is very fond, having a huge ball ready to carpet her house, which she says is to 'be built high up to the clouds.' Seeing her thus, I said; 'You poor child! You're all alone, aren't you?' She arose with great dignity and replied:

'I am *not* poor, and I am *not* alone. God takes care of everyone, and I have plenty of things, and I'm not alone, for God and Grandpa and a great many spirits are with me.'

When she was seven years old, if anything grieved her she would retire to a corner and 'talk it over with God,' ending her appeal with the words:

'Now, God; please do this, *very sure*. Me. I. M——,' the latter as if signing the petition. She would reveal nothing of her interview, and often opened an umbrella to protect herself from sight or hearing, but she always emerged with an expression of peace upon her face which argued well for her visit to the corner. This she did voluntarily, never having been sent into a corner for reflection. She would also shut herself into a room alone and color pictures that one would never believe a child could have done if we did not see them come from her hands when she at last allowed us entrance to her sanctuary. If any one tried to stay very near her when she painted or to offer a word of suggestion, she instantly refused to allow it, saying her 'spirit told' her 'what colors to use and how to make the picture.' She learned to write page after page of words in the same way, saying, 'God told me how to spell the words.'

One of her greatest delights — to use her words — is 'to go to the good of the Heaven.' She seats herself in a chair, clasps her hands in her lap, and, fixing her eyes on some one point, sits perfectly immovable, keeping her eyes open all of the time. Softly she says: 'God; will you please take me up to the good of the Heaven?' Then in a few seconds her face brightens, and she nods to someone invisible, saying to us, 'Now God has come, and I am going with Him.' She remains motionless for a short time, then she nods again, seems to kiss someone, saying, 'Thank you, God;' then, smilingly, she returns to her game. If asked where she went, she says, 'Oh! away up beyond the sun and the stars, and I saw all how it looked up there, and it's very strange.' Sitting beside her Mamma on the beach, she suddenly looked up and said, 'My very own heart stays with me always, and it sits beside me on the beach; but my spirit goes away sometimes.' I have taken only a few of her original doings, and they are word for word, and *strictly true*, without the least vestige of story embellishment. — P."

By the above anecdotes it is evident that we have here one of those sensitive and refined organisms so prone to become mediums if not rightly understood. The pre-occupation with spirits, the love of entering into the state of *passive* meditation, give evidence of this. A new race is predicted for America, one in which the psychic faculties will be more developed than is at present the case, and precisely for this reason it is that the Eastern Teachers are giving out both the scientific data for the comprehension of the great variety and graduation of such sights, conditions, and

beings, as well as endeavoring to inculcate such ethics as may govern persons who would otherwise be governed by just such experiences. Persons are apt to be mentally intoxicated on finding that they see what is invisible to Others. It ought to be well understood (and, to children, explained) that many of these things are “thought forms” or pictures made by the action of mental electricity in the ether, as lightning oftentimes stamps pictures of adjacent objects upon the bodies of persons struck by it. The fact that pictures are made upon objects by etheric action, or by what modern science called “latent light,” which pictures may be perceived by persons whose optic nerve is capable of receiving higher or lower rates of vibration than the average optic nerve perceives, ought to be made known. Also that this heightened perception is a thing of no value in itself, is becoming every day more common, and is not to be desired. An earnest endeavor to make its nature clear to a child who has this perception, is the only wise course to be taken, if it is wished that she should not become mediumistic. Any tendency to enter a *passive* condition of meditation ought to be discouraged. This passive condition, in which the mind is emptied of all thought and becomes a blank, is a source of great danger. It depolarizes all the cells, renders the body negative, and admits all manner of influence into the sphere. To render oneself thus negative is to open a door. The temptation is great, for a delightful thrill oftentimes pervades the body; this thrill, or bodily sensation, is in itself proof of the *psycho-physiological* nature of the experience, and that it proceeds from no higher source or plane. Strange and vivid pictures are also projected upon the brain; he who slows down his own bodily vibrations receives those of an order of matter more gross than any known to the physical senses, and often has experience of the Rûpa lokas (plane of forms). In the same way, when the nervous fluid is excited and passivity suddenly ensues, higher vibrations are sensed, but they are only those of the lower astral world, of the gross magnetic spheres of men and things. In either case, all self-control is lost. Such conditions are precedent to trance, but trance which is, as before said, only psycho-physiological, deceptive, and of no value. Gradually the person enters such conditions without his own volition and is a slave to forces outside himself. The fact that the child M—— selects some spot upon which her gaze is fixed, shows self-hypnotization. This fixing of the gaze temporarily paralyzes the optic nerve. It is the method adopted by all hypnotizers and by many mediums. When the optic nerve is thus paralyzed, the lower astral world is apperceived. Thought which has a fixed object, a meditation upon some idea which is selected and then fixed in the mind firmly and to the exclusion of all other thought, renders the body magnetically positive. Thought has a self-reproductive power which then becomes manifest, or say that the current of force thus engendered attracts and develops all similar germs of thought. This is what Patanjali calls “meditation with a seed.” Advanced students then go on to “meditation without a seed,” but not until they have learned so to paralyze the double, or inner, nervous body that it cannot report or receive the vibrations of that astral plane to which it corresponds.

An inquirer asks: “Do you ever have a conscious feeling that you have a Master somewhere? Lately, I have caught myself thinking of one — but what one, I know not. Do you understand me?”

The Great Master or Teacher is the Higher Self. The Soul knows this, and at times transmits that knowledge to the lower consciousness, which causes the feeling that someone is teaching us, or that we knew some Teacher. Then, of course, there are other recollections, yet these are, at root, one, for the Higher Self of one is that of all and is universal, “a divine state, not a body or form.”

The same inquirer gives the following, which happened at the age of four or five years.

“I was playing with some little cousins in the borders of the Green that surrounded the County Jail. Suddenly two policemen came along leading a prisoner. They mounted the jail steps, and one of the officers seemed to let go, so as to unlock the door: the prisoner made a dash for liberty and escaped. He ran across the lawn, somewhat in our direction. Childlike, we had all stopped playing to watch. Then, as the man was running, all at once I saw a group of forms clad in white appear on the green grass back of him, and then, swiftly advancing, they joined hands and made a ring around him, moving forward as the man ran. He began to stumble and falter, as if dizzy, and the police, who were in hot pursuit, caught him and took him back to the jail. My curiosity was greatly roused by what I had seen, especially by the men in white robes. I watched to see where they would go; but they just seemed to fade away from before my sight, against the blue sky, and so disappeared. I went home full of the wonder; but no one had seen them save myself and a cousin still younger. Naturally no one believed us, and said we had been dreaming. But how could a child of four or five dream such a thing out in open air, in broad daylight?”

What these children saw were denizens of the astral world, probably made visible to them through excitation of the nervous fluid consequent upon the excitement of the scene. Varying states or conditions of this fluid, the fluidic or inner man, relate it to the various planes of nature. Whatever we see or know is so perceived by synchronous vibration, whether mental, psychic, physical, or even spiritual. In fact, vibration is the key to it all, and no one source can be assigned to all phenomena, of which the variety is endless. Children, whose inner and outer senses are alike fresh and sensitive, receive vibrations from all planes more readily than we do. As they grow older, the physiological senses, being the most active because most used, supersede the psychic ones — less trained — to a great extent. As is said in *Isis Unveiled*, it is the activity of the physiological senses which prevents us from perceiving the psychic and other worlds. That their activity becomes automatic in time, can be doubted by no one who has tried to prevent the open eye from seeing, the unclosed ear from hearing. This only occurs in states of profound mental abstraction. Then the Manasic vibrations overpower the lower ones (those of the physiological organs), and they fail to report.

JULIUS.

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*The Path* – November 1891, Vol. 6, pp. 248-251.

*The Vow of Poverty, and Other Essays* – April 1904, pp. 35-42.

## TEA TABLE TALK. {THE DEEP HEART. —

TITLE OF THIS ARTICLE IN *THE VOW OF POVERTY*.}

JULIUS

A short time ago the Observer walked along a quiet street approaching one of the great thoroughfares of the city. All at once the droning air was stirred, grew tense, concentrated and broke into a cry, a cry repeated by a score of voices, and all about him, from all parts, suddenly appeared an excited mass of human beings, bearing towards one point where they gathered, intent and swarming. One moment — an empty street: the next — a great human drama: sidewalks, doorsteps, balconies, the very roofs, were alive with humanity. The clamor of the fire engine, the clang of the fire bell and trample of eager hoofs had not evoked this multitude; their advent was

simultaneous. Whence, then, the summons? A dread silence falls over the crowd, and shrill above the city's drone a woman's shriek is heard. And then the crowd, before the great mansion whose every window and doorway belch smoke and flame, before the delayed ladder-wagon and the anguish of the poor creature leaning from the upper windows, the crowd utters a hoarse growl of rage, surges towards the firemen, thinks better of it, and sullenly mutters at them; then falls to cursing as the shrieks again besiege the gates of the sky.

The Observer looked from face to face and shuddered. Bitter black faces, wolfish, angry, the teeth showing behind the parted lips as they gazed upwards; hands clenched and nostrils dilated; eyes burning; throats emitting that hoarse growl. One of their kind was in peril — and each took that peril as an image of the strait himself might be in, and hated those who failed — My God! — who *failed* to snatch himself from the flames. And again the cry of rage broke as the smoke swirled and parted, showing the woman about to leap to the street, upright and quivering against a background of flame. Then — oh! delirium! — the wagons — the ladder-wagons; and cheers arise; and a hundred hands, a multitude of eyes and voices point out the oncoming hope to her and stay her on the very brink of the mad leap. And yet, she cannot stay. The fire snatches at her; she stoops — and the crowd shudders; she gathers herself together — and a loud moan of anguish goes up and “The ladders! Stop! Stop! the ladders,” and women cling together in an agony of dread, fearing to see, fearing not to see, as the crowd parts and surges backward to make way for that which shall fall amongst them pursued by the fire. But no! She has turned about, has lowered herself from the window to the broad cornice of the window below, and crouches there upon the narrow ledge, hunted, pursued, smoke-luminated, but, for the moment, safe upon the giddy perch.

A gasp of relief goes up. The firemen have not been idle. Driven back from the doorways they forced open, they hurl themselves upon the ladders; these are raised — and a fusillade of cheers, like scattered shot, breaks from those panting throats. A moan, a snarl, follow. The ladders are too short. Flames, darting from the window above which she crouches, leap upward and backward at the woman; her cries are cries of pain and madden the crowd.

A new hope appears. But see! she moves restlessly — she rises — is she going to leap now, *now*? Ah-h-h-h-h. A great cry — as from a single Titan's throat, goes up in the word “Stop! stop!” Gestures of command, of warning, of entreaty, lift every arm. The critical moment! One scaling pole is set against the house. The firemen run up it. Another is lifted — and the fire is unendurable; for one moment more it cannot be endured; the woman — the woman — she is leaping — she has leaped? A burst of thick, evil-smelling smoke conceals the place where she stood. A thud — an engine horse has stamped his hoof, and hysterical sobs are heard in the swaying crowd. Is it — ? No! No! The smoke lifts, and the foremost firemen snatches the poor creature who leans, shrieking, out of the fiery jaws, grasps her at the very instant when she launches herself upon the air. She hangs from his stalwart right arm, a dangling, charred burden. In mid-air she is passed to another man below, and still another, reaches a ladder, stumbles down its rungs, is safe, is here, is here, falling blindly into the arms that reach out for her, is here, on the hither side of Life still. What a cry goes up. She is saved! Oh my Sisters! Oh my Brothers! We are saved. We are returned to the simple daily life wherein we think ourselves so safe till the Unknown seizes us. Women break into loud weeping. One faints and is born away. A girl flings herself upon the neck of the engine horse and convulsively kisses his broad grey brows. The *gamins* dance and race. Men embrace one another who never met before; others stand smiling broadly, the tears running down their cheeks; one breaks into a frenzy of cursing, his eyes radiant with joy. The crowd, the great, fused, self-magnetized crowd, one with itself and with all

other selves, sends out ringing cheer after cheer. And the proud steeds, who have done it all, curvet as they draw their dazzling towers away.

And why — why all this emotion, this joy? asks the Observer. Is it because a fellow-creature, doomed to a horrid death, bodying forth to each the image of himself or herself in like peril, was saved before their very eyes? Is it possible? A fellow-creature — whose fellowship was denied an hour before and will be denied in many an hour hereafter. A mere serving-maid, one of thousands of souls passed by, ignored. One to spurn in any moment wherein she might ask alms or obtrude an unpleasant self upon our sybaritic selves. One of the many to be used, cheated, betrayed, pursued, trampled upon in the competition for gain, power, pleasure, livelihood, or life. One who a moment ago was Another, but who became all at once to each himself, myself, when set on high, the quivering prey of Danger. One who is nothing, and less than nothing, to us, until the human heart feels the “Open Sesame!” of the human cry. That electric force runs from heart to heart and makes them one. He who has not seen the crowd fused to one single heart, focused to one single mind, a sole thought or aim, does not know the potent charm of humanity for humanity; he does not know the deep roots of the Identity of Souls.

The terrible irony of it! Our fellows are nothing to us but the sources of our power. Then in a moment anyone may become ourself — a cherished self to us — and then he drops back again into the vast seething ocean of souls. He is indistinguishable amid the general pain that is remote from us until it fastens upon our own vitals and we too sink into that bitter wave.

The Observer went his way with bent head. His heart was moved within him, for all his watchful and impassive aspect. That heart spoke.

In every man there is a Great Deep. If he listens it speaks to him. Its melodious voice interprets Life. It repeats the riddles of pain and death and confusion, and makes them over into a song — the song which is universal. The Deep Heart spoke thus to that thoughtful mind.

“Humanity is one and indivisible. Individual acts and lives deny this truth. They deride it. A moment of human peril, or enthusiasm, or inspiration arrives. Life — Life itself is threatened: or it is invaded; or exalted. It has a voice. It cries out — a mighty, silent, all-pervading cry. An impulse, more swift than the light, more subtle than the ether; more fiery than the sun, darts through the oversoul. It has a station in every mind, a register in every heart; by its possession men are unified, as separate breakers are beaten into one wild wall of storm. Man recognizes himself in man; the common identity is seen. That image of Danger or of Hope is himself; with it he weeps, with it rejoices. In moments of great excitement there are no longer men, or men and women; there is only Mankind, only the Brotherhood of Humanity.

“This sentiment is the source of sympathy, that sympathy which is the only vicarious atonement, for by it alone, and in its exercise, man puts himself in the place of another with whose pulse his pulses beat. This sympathy is the great interpreter, the world opener. It penetrates all barriers. It is identity of consciousness. He who can identify himself with the consciousness of one other self, of one other thing, is upon the occult path of adeptship. From this sympathetic identification of self with all things, and all things with self, not even the creatures are shut out. Universal Brotherhood does not stand for humanity only. It stands for the ‘identity of all souls with the Oversoul’ where every atomic life is a soul.”

So mused the man. The Deep Heart of him spoke again.

“But why wait for the sharp sudden moments to know our brother? Often we know him only when he has gone from our eyes; when his abandoned husk lies before us. Then we mourn for the winged soul — thing of air and fire — which we behold

not, but which was hidden from us in the heart we so often wounded, so often denied. Ah! wait not for these crises in which to be kind to one another. See how often remorse attends the dead. Let not compassion come up tardily to the brink of the grave. Be wise, be merciful, know the brother heart now; *now*, while it lives, suffers, needs, and hungers at your side. These lightning moments of storm reveal men to one another as each traveler sees the face of his fellow in the lurid breaks of the tempest. In that tempest who can work? Know one another in the broad light of the common day. Feel with one another now. Work each for the other now. Hope in one another now. Wait not for flame and despair to fuse your hearts. Let brotherly sympathy anneal them now, before it is too late for useful action, before it is too late for that sublime hope which lies in the conquest of self for the evolution of all higher selves. There is but one moment for brotherly love. That moment is the eternal NOW.

JULIUS.

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The true Master is felt; He is not seen.  
When He who was unseen is seen, He disappears.  
Then the Spiritual Presences are gathered into the unity; they know not one  
another, but they are the One Self.  
In that darkness there is but One.  
In that silence there is no knowledge, but Being — which is all — is fulfilled.  
This is the path of the true disciple.<sup>1</sup>

## NOTE

1. {This verse is not in *The Path* article, but *is* in the book following the chapter. In its entirety (from *The Path of Attainment*, Daniel Nicol Dunlop, p. 16.):

### THE TRUE MASTER.

The true Master is felt; He is not seen.  
When He who was unseen is seen, He disappears.  
Then the Spiritual Presences are gathered into the unity; they know not one  
another, but they are the One Self.  
In that darkness there is but One.  
In that silence there is no knowledge, but Being — which is all — is fulfilled.  
This is the path of the true disciple.  
Before man can find the true Master, he must lose Him. That loss is pure gain; to  
lose Him thus is to find Him indeed.  
This should be known: the disciple who finds Him on the plane of the senses has  
objectivized his Karma; he loses the Master after a higher fashion.  
Know that there is only the One Self, the Master, and lose thyself also to find  
Him who is never found until He has been lost.  
When He is lost to every sense then the One Flame arises, pure as before the  
beginning of worlds.  
Thou shalt never *know* it: thou *art* It.}

## TEA TABLE TALK.

JULIUS

Many theosophists have asked how they could teach the first principles of Theosophy to their children. Theosophy in the family has come to be a subject which, soon or late, engages thoughtful minds. The Tea Table has heard many discussions upon it. These arise from the fact that it is not always clear what these first principles are. Some persons take them to be the septenary division, or Reincarnation, or some such point, and say that these are too difficult of understanding for the child. An obvious reply is that it depends upon the child. It, in fact, depends upon Evolution. Some children are born with an instinctive — not to say intuitive — belief in and knowledge about their things. Again, they can be simply taught. Mr. Judge, addressing the theosophical Sunday School in San Francisco, found that the children well understood the main theosophical teachings and prettily acted a series of tableaux representing scenes in the lives of Buddha, Jesus, and other ethical Reformers. This fact brings me to my point, viz., that the main teaching of Theosophy is Altruism, and that this is the outcome of Karma, of Reincarnation, of the universality of the oversoul and of the Life principle. If these teachings be true, Altruism becomes the law of life.

There is a family known to the Tea Table where the children, as yet very young, are trained from birth in this law of love and do beautifully and naturally exhibit its effects. In response to requests from many mothers, this mother was asked to give her thoughts upon this point, inasmuch as those thoughts are, with her, the results of daily deeds and experience. I give her own words.

“Mothers, awaken to the responsibility that you hold over your child, and lose not one moment in your everyday life to teach to that child a lesson of good which can come from each little act or word in its new life of experiences. The child is never too young to learn its lesson, e’en as it lay in the cradle, seemingly unconscious of all that goes on around it. The first lesson can be taught when the little impatient cry for the cradle to be moved is heard. Do not hasten to quiet every sound; let it cry and learn to wait and be patient.”

Most children are taught selfishness from the start; let it know it cannot have that which it cries for. Later on in life, when old enough to reason and talk to, teach it pretty lessons, by taking an act or expression of its own and weaving from it a story wherein it may see how to hold back the bad or selfish thought or act, and by so doing make its playmate happy, feeling glad to know it can give happiness and help to others. Teach it, as it were, in play, how to make its own little bed, or to put to rights its toys which lay in all disorder on the floor.

Let it think that it is helping Mamma keep house, thereby giving it the feeling that it is doing good for some one else. Teach it also to destroy nothing, for while its toys may seem like old and worn playthings, because it has tired of them, let it care for them carefully, so they may be in good condition to make some poor little one happy, and, as Christmas and other anniversaries come around, let it select from its store all that it feels it can do without and with its little hands pack them in a box, always keeping uppermost in its little mind the delight and pleasure of doing something to fill another heart with joy and cheer. Train the mind to good and higher thoughts by your help, in like manner. When the morning comes around and the child awakes irritable and peevish, tell it to drive away that naughty boy and bring back the good one; cast off the

scowling cross looks and only let the sun shine in; try hard to be a good boy and thereby help Mamma and his little brother and sister to feel happy. By such little talks and encouragements you will soon find the childish face brighten and fill with interest and wonder, and right desire springs up with the start of the day. The child has become lost in its own self, forgotten its trouble, and is now happy with the feeling that it wants to be good and do what is right, because it is helping Mamma and sister and brother. Again, never fail each day to invent some means whereby you may give a new example to your child of its usefulness in this world, that it is here to help make others happy and good, and that there is no better road to success than that of truthfulness and good acts and deeds, bright and happy faces, kind and loving words. However, to expect such results, mothers must be practical in all things regarding the health of the child, and first see that the little one's stomach is in a healthful condition and all its functions acting according to natural laws, thereby giving a firm foundation to start its upward progress of both body and soul." — E.S.

Another Christmas Season has come around to us, typical of the birth of that Divine Principle of Light in human souls, whereby these expand to Eros, the One Ray of Light and Love. Not love as we know it. But that Love dimly foreshadowed in all the lives of the universe, that Love which is the sum of lives, whereby each responds to each and is in each, itself its core and cause. There is no better time for that deed for which all times are good, the deed of beginning to make altruism the motor and center of the child's life. Even souls as yet unborn into the house of flesh can have the way prepared for them in this respect. May we awaken to a fuller sense of our responsibilities, and inaugurate this Christmas tide the new reign of Brotherhood in child life, the reign of selflessness and peace.

JULIUS.

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*The Path* — January 1892, Vol. 6, pp. 319-322.

## TEA TABLE TALK.

JULIUS

In a conversation far more weighty than any which the Tea Table has recorded, and which took place between the two editors of *Lucifer*, this question — or its equivalent — was asked by the sub-editor:

"What is the first step in occultism?"

It was H. P. Blavatsky herself who answered:

"To adapt your thoughts to your plastic potency."<sup>1</sup>

This reply, quoted here from memory, might be developed into a volume of no mean size. It is an epitome of the science of thought. The many persons — and their number grows daily greater — who desire to study practical occultism, would do well to approach it by this, the only safe gate, which is also the gate of power. It is not sufficiently well understood that every one of those energetic emissions or processes which we call "a thought" does mold the subtle matter of the ether into etheric form. Such forms are condensed ether, and are held together by the formative power, or plastic potency of the soul substance, just so long as the thought energy inheres in them. The more intense the thought — or the greater the thought tension, to put it

differently — the longer does that etheric form cohere as such. The same fact has been otherwise expressed when it has been said that life-elementals at once coalesce with such thought pictures and remain in them so long as they cohere. The atomic substance of the ether is, every atom of it, a life. Some of these lives are the microbes of modern science, elementals of a low grade. They are the fiery lives, the devourers of the *Secret Doctrine*. They are also the builders. Anon they go to form a body or parts of a body; they sustain it awhile and then destroy it, often by fermentative or putrefactive processes: thus they are seen in the triad of Brahmâ, Vishnu, and Śiva; each function expressed by these names, creative, preservative, and destructive, being in turn manifested by each microbe or germ. See, for example, the giant cells of the bone, which at first go to form bone and afterward to absorb it.

The energetic pictures thus formed by the mental action of men are sensed by the inner man of each. Sometimes, even, the vibration thus sensed gets impressed upon the brain centers and enters the lower consciousness by avenues of which we have now but a feeble idea. The pictures inhere in the mental sphere of each of us, and the sphere is dense, turbid, contractive, or shows all the brightness of the higher vibration, according to the nature of these thought forms, which not only act outwardly but which also re-act upon their creators.

The importance of regulating our thoughts, in view of the plastic potency of the soul and its imaginative power, hence becomes apparent. As thought is dynamic, these pictures, often themselves an agglomeration of lives, are felt far and wide. It has frequently been said that a man could be shut between prison walls and could yet work for Humanity, by the simple means of right thinking.

The reason why such adaptation is the first step in occultism must now be found.

Occultism has been defined by H. P. Blavatsky to be “the study of the workings of the Universal Mind.” Our primary study of that Mind is at first confined to its reflection in ourselves. We must endeavor to find some trace of it within our own consciousness or in one of the modes of that consciousness. What is called the sub-conscious mind is a near approach to the Universal Mind. But how can we find that? We are inclined to say it is too difficult a task.

It is difficult, but not too much so. The very effort involved in the search is in itself helpful, for the greater emission of mental energy creates powerful centers or pictures in our sphere. It is through their constant reaction upon us, perhaps, that we at last discover a trace of the sub-conscious mind.

If we examine ourselves critically we see that there is, lying back of ceaseless mental change, of all the continual going to and fro of Thought, a power to observe, sum up, analyze, and dissect the whole process. We find ourselves possessed of another mode of consciousness, above or behind the fluctuations of thought, which calmly observes the whole panorama moving before it. Through this power even the sinner who knows his sin still feels that sin not to be representative of his entire nature, feels himself, at the core, to be better than that vile outward seeming. It is Patanjali who says of the soul that it is the Spectator, and when the question is asked, where is the soul at the time of concentration — or when the mental energy is at rest — he replies, “At the time of concentration the soul abides in the state of a spectator without a spectacle.”

Before the student reaches this state of concentration, he makes a preliminary step towards it when he discovers this center, place, mode, or state of consciousness in which he surveys his whole mental field as something not himself, and feels that self to be the perceptive power *per se*. For he has then only to enter that mental plane as often as possible, and to realize it as vividly as possible, and he has evolved a rudiment — if I may so call it — of the Universal Mind. That mind, that state of consciousness,

observes the mâÿâvic panorama spread before it as something apart from itself; the person who realizes that state of consciousness is nearer the Universal Mind; he has entered one of its phases or states; it is not a state of trance.

The best method to pursue is that of analysis along the line of the seven principles. So long as I look upon myself as a homogeneous whole, I contract my mental sphere into one dense and slowly vibrating mass. It is the picture of himself as uniform — as opposed to duality — which fetters the soul of man. The image he has made of himself is the prison house of his soul. When analysis comes into play he no longer says “I crave,” “I win,” “I desire,” “I sin.” No longer, intoxicated by the fumes of his own passions, does he plunge into the ocean of sensuality. He says, as one aspect of desire comes before him, “In this the Kamic principle is active;” another he ascribes to undue stimulus of the linga-sarira; here he sees the lower manas prevailing, and here the flash of intuitive perception. He ascribes each act to its parent principle; each becomes to him a result of one of these principles; they are no longer himself, but he is the judge of them all, and analysis destroys the heady fumes of desire. *For desire ceases to attract us when we no longer identify it with ourself.*

John Stuart Mill once said that he lost, for a long time, the power of emotional feeling, the loss being caused by constant self-analysis which finally deadened all mental enjoyment. It is not probable that this deadness would have resulted had his methods of thoughts permitted him to ascribe his actions to their real sources, the principles in which they have their rise. When the action of the seven principles is realized, we at the same time realize ourself to be that which observes the said action, or the center which the principles are modes or functions; that center is conscious itself.

If any person desires to rid himself of a bad mental or physical habit, sincere and constant trial of the method above described must cause the habit to loosen its grip upon his mind. It is not a form of mind-cure, for that acts by denial, while in this case there are analysis and the tracing of effects to their true source, or, at least, somewhat further upstream. By means of this cold analysis the personal mental image is broken up into a series of thought forms true in themselves, each one an image of the Universal, each instinct with a life of its own. The prison house is rent asunder, and man, the prisoner of himself, dazed, startled, but unbound, finds himself slowly emerging into the large fields of Universal Thought.

JULIUS.

## NOTE

1. {See Tea Table Talk, *The Path* — June 1889, Vol. 4, pp. 91-94, including footnote 1.}

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*The Path* — February 1892, Vol. 6, pp. 359-361.

## TEA TABLE TALK.

JULIUS

A friend distant — so far as space and objectivity have anything to say to it — yet one of those who are never at any real distance from us, writes:

“I think I can furnish you with two or three remarkable sayings of children I have known, of sufficient interest to add to those recorded in your September number.

In reply to some precocious remark (I forget now its purport) I said to a child: 'Why, Freddy; how do you know that?' With a broad grin upon his chubby face, Freddy, aged three, replied:

'Why, don't you know? I've lived before.'

A boy of four, learning to read, when told to spell a word, always began at the end and spelled backwards, and after that, forwards. He was asked, 'Why do you spell like that, H.?' 'Because I like to see all round things,' was his ready reply. The same boy, when out walking and holding his governess by the hand, had a habit of turning his head and looking behind him, because, as he said, he wanted to 'see things.' When told that in so doing he missed the things in front of him, he replied:

'Yes; but you can never see things *properly* till they are gone past you.'

Some of our news writers might take a lesson from this.

As a rule, I have noticed that, after seven or eight years of age, children leave off saying strange spiritual things; they are introduced to the world of books, to the treadmill of the commonplace, and they forget

'That celestial glory whence they came.'<sup>1</sup>

As Wordsworth so truly says:—

Shades of the prison house begin to close  
Upon the growing boy.  
The youth, who daily farther from the east  
Must travel, still is Nature's priest,  
And by the vision splendid  
Is on his way attended;  
At length the man perceives it die away.  
And fade into the light of common day.<sup>2</sup>

May it be a part of the mission of Theosophy to keep men to recover and retain possession of the lost vision?" (E.K.)

The loss, by the youth, of the "vision splendid" is largely due to present methods of education, assisted by the rapid development of the physiological senses. Such development is natural, is right and proper in its place, but other senses have also their proportionate value and rightful place. The *resumé* of such inner senses is the intuition, the perceptive faculty of the Soul. We turn out our children according to a cut-and-dried process, a system, right enough in itself, so far as it has to do with the objective world, yet injurious in so much as it teaches the child to rely upon the *dixi* of others in all things, and does *not* teach him to think for himself. In the very case above given, we have a child whose philosophy governed his daily walk, and yet, in most cases, such natural perception and right Thought would have been discouraged, reprimanded, at the behest of conventional training. The whole science of Life consists in a knowledge of the *relative* value of things. To crush a budding philosophy in order to conform to the propriety of the promenade, is sacrificing the diamond for the lump of cheese. Were it not better to encourage habits of right Thought in the child, trusting to later years for such conventional training as might at first interfere with the natural growth of the germ of perception? Not every child has this rare gift. And how precious it is! Antonina, coming down stairs one summer morning, found her elders bewailing a heavy mist which threatened to spoil the day's pleasure. She surveyed the scene and then remarked, in her dear little voice of patience, that she had often seen a great thick mist hiding and wetting everything, and afterwards this had lifted, letting the sunshine

through, "and now I think a mist always *means* to say to me, 'It will be clear *bye-and-bye*.' " Thus the child taught herself hopefulness and resignation from the very face of Nature. Her remark, applied to Sorrow's Mists, is a truth which is based on the action and reaction of all Nature.

It might appear that the Tea Table too often insists upon the above points. It confesses to an urgency born of the wish to see about us, now and here, those who will carry the theosophic movement well on into the next century. Where are they, the banner-bearers of 1900? They must now exist as children amongst us. Right Thought will be their guiding star. Their appearance is longed for. It is time.

An occultist recently said: "Man is a thinker; his food is thoughts." This again shows the incalculable importance of right Thought, and the right use of Thought becomes plain even to the careless eye. A system of Thought which is illogical, or based upon wrong conceptions or philosophy, or which ignores relativity, systems, for example, like many of the forms of so-called mental healing, may defer but cannot withhold pernicious results. Want of co-ordination is far more fatal in the mental sphere than in that of the body. We deeply need to arouse ourselves to the importance of these things. As a student once said:

"I understand the duty to make the most of self in order to be more to others. *We don't escape by remaining out if we are capable of being in.*"

The same student also said: "To be resigned is to *be* Philosophy. With resignation and devotion we enable the gods to help us because we are no longer antagonistic. After resignation is attained, if we are wise and just, we help the gods." (S.M.)

Still another friend sent this fact.

"If a diamond of considerable size, and one which is cut in the exact proportions, is exposed to the direct rays of the sun for many hours in succession, it becomes saturated with light. If it is then immediately placed in an envelope of density sufficient to obstruct the passage of light through its folds, the diamond will retain, for a time, a certain quantity of that light. If then the envelope be taken into a very dark room and there opened, exposing the diamond, it will be seen that from the stone exude the rays of light which it has soaked in and stored during the exposure to the sun. Its traces will be seen upon the paper. This fact is one not generally known, and it proves that by nature of its composite material the diamond, unlike any other known material substance, is capable of attracting, retaining, reflecting, and exuding light. It is not so constituted with regard to heat, for it is nearly always cold, and perhaps, like glass, a non-conductor." (E.)

How fine the analogy between this gem and the "diamond Soul." The latter also must be of "correct proportions" (its qualities justly balanced); it must be "exposed to the direct rays of the (central) sun for many hours in succession" or for a period of *consecutive* time. It too can "reflect" and "exude" this higher light down to an inferior substance — to the lower mind; and it also is differently constituted with regard to "heat" (or the Kamic principle), conducting nought of that terrestrial fire.

"Make hard thy Soul against the snares of *Self*; deserve for it the name of 'diamond Soul.'

For as the diamond buried deep within the throbbing heart of earth can never mirror back the earthly lights; so are thy Mind and Soul....

A thought as fleeting as the lightning flash will make thee thy three prizes forfeit — the prizes thou hast won." (*Voice of the Silence*.)

Let us then first cultivate right Thought.

JULIUS.

## NOTES

1. {"Ode on Intimations of Immortality from Recollections of Early Childhood," (1804) William Wordsworth. As found:

But trailing clouds of glory do we come...}

2. {"Ode on Intimations of Immortality from Recollections of Early Childhood," (1804) William Wordsworth. As found:

Shades of the prison-house begin to close  
Upon the growing Boy,

. . . . .  
The Youth, who daily farther from the east  
Must travel, still is Nature's priest,  
And by the vision splendid  
Is on his way attended;  
At length the Man perceives it die away,  
And fade into the light of common day.}

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*The Path* – March 1892, Vol. 6, pp. 400-402.

## TEA TABLE TALK.

### JULIUS

"Professor," said the Bishop of A. the other day, "is this dream just related to me of any sort of consequence? It seems not to be of any value." "Oh," replied the Professor, "ask the student about that; I am not up in dreams." The Bishop of A., who had been calling of late, then read the dream and the student gave close attention. It ran thus:

While at my morning devotions, which consist in earnestly reviewing my record of the previous day's imperfections, and in seeking to know all the truth possible for me, and thus to learn my true relations to self, family, and the world, I found myself in a vision on a lofty and far-reaching mountain range. An unknown woman guided me until I reached a broad plateau on the summit of the highest mountain, but I was only half conscious of her presence till she spoke, just below me, saying — "There are inestimable treasures hidden in this mountain, enough to enrich seven worlds such as this. I will show you." Suiting action to word, she opened a small panel of rock just below my feet, and thrusting in her hand withdrew it, full of flashing rubies of great value, which for a moment blinded my eyes with their magical color, casting a radiant glory all about. When my eyes were free from the fascination of the color-pictures, the woman and jewels were gone.

My first impulse was to follow her and compel the replacement of the wealth; but below me, as far as the eye could pierce, were peak after peak of lesser mountains covered with a dense jungle of underbrush and trees, and to hunt for any being in such a vast solitude was at least unpromising.

My desire to trace the woman was born of a great fear lest the master of the domain might appear, and finding me alone, and some of his valuables gone, suspect me of taking them; and I was without any means of proving my innocence.

The chief glory and beauty of the height upon which I stood was its wonderful light, in which the inner nature of man could bathe, with as visible results as the body receives from a plunge in the ocean.

I sat down in the vibrating light and tried to think what to do.

Must I denounce the woman, or quietly suffer the penalty of having been in bad company?

I shrank from either course. The blessedness of the light-baptism seemed to penetrate my being, but not enough to give me a clear understanding. I began to reason (not from the center of light, but from the plane of darkness I had left behind me) that, if the master was divine in knowledge, as this light indicated, he would know that the gems were not taken by me, and would not question me concerning the woman, for I knew neither her abiding-place nor name; and surely he would not feel the loss of the few precious stones, or wish to punish the woman. But somehow I felt that a terrible thing was behind the woman's act, and this heavy, sin-stricken feeling would not leave me, even in this glory-lighted region. While seeking to fathom the mystery of this load at my heart, I saw a mass of huge shadows, seemingly endowed with a fearful, living force, coming directly towards me. I rose, trembling, and ran, feeling that not only my present life but *my eternal existence* was at stake.

These shadows were more dreadful than wild beasts, and my only safety was to keep in the light; but the terrible monsters gained upon me.

In my headlong speed I staggered and fell, and the frightful shadows mockingly laughed — "We are swifter than mortal feet; none *can* escape us."

Simultaneously with the diabolical laugh, like an electric flash from beyond the cloud-host, came this command—

"*Bravely endure* what you cannot help." I was a coward no longer, but rose and faced the on-coming sea of demons.

With the command came perfect faith in the ruling spirit which governed the voice, and obedience of course followed.

The monsters came very near me, so near that my hand could touch them. They jeered at me, but were powerless to lay hold of me, now that fear was gone.

After hearing the masterly voice, I had strong hope that a teacher would appear. A form did rise before me, but not the owner of that voice, or yet a guru. The form spoke and said — "Life is a great riddle."

"No," I replied; "life, from the least atom up to a God, can be traced as clearly as a burning brand."

"Ah," sighed the form, "the fire-spark is for a brief moment only, and then its life goes out in blackness."

"True," I answered, "but it loses itself because it tries to live away from its parent source. So, with us, life becomes an unsolvable riddle only when we separate ourselves from the divine flame (Truth) within us."

Ere I had ceased speaking, the same commanding voice which gave me strength to face the shadows said:—

"Why did you wish to follow the woman, and the senseless stones she carried with her? Why did you seek to flee from the shadows? 'Kill thy desires. Strangle thy sins, and make them dumb forever.' Look well to *thyself*. Sin attracts evil and unclean things. Purity will attract its own. Purify *thyself*."

Oh bitterness of grief! The woman I did not fully wish to give up to justice was — *self*.

The great voice drove home the truth to me, and I dare not doubt. I confess it with great shame and sorrow. *Avarice* was her name. In my self-righteousness I had

thought myself entirely free from that particular vice. Indeed I had often said I was born without it. The lesson had been hard, but I trust it may help unbind the fetters of self, not alone for me, but for others also.

The Monster-Shadows were my own children —born of sin and fear.  
“Let him who thinketh he standeth, take heed lest he fall.”<sup>1</sup> SANTI.

“That’s a good dream and well explained,” the Student remarked. “Dreams are not understood generally, and most of those we have are forgotten in five minutes after waking up. Job truly said that in the visions of the night man is instructed. That this was a day-dream does not alter the case. Bulwer Lytton shows that the first initiations come in dreams. They are nearly always in symbols, for the inner man has no such language as ours. He sees and speaks by pictures. He throws out a thought as a picture. It is for us to grasp it and remember. Each picture is modified by the changing methods of our waking hours of thought. Your friend has well dreamed and well interpreted, and if we were to act upon our dream-teaching when it gives high motive, then we could encourage, as it were, the inner dreamer so that oftener we might get instruction. The Bishop’s impulse is to slightly sniff at his relative because he is so practical. Yet he even dreams and a great fact is therefore present in his experience — the fact of dreaming. Our dreams present an opportunity to us as waking men and women to so live that the Inner Self may more easily speak to us. For as with new acquaintances and strange languages it is necessary to become accustomed to the new forms of speech and thought, so that out of great confusion reigning at first we may bring order with instruction. The lesson of this dream is for all; it is to throw off the hold of self upon us each in his own way — for all differ — and to abandon all fear. But we cannot do either while we remain impure; as we purify, so we succeed.”

JULIUS.

## NOTE

1. {1 Corinthians 10:12.}

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*The Path* – April 1892, Vol. 7, pp. 23-26.

## TEA TABLE TALK.

JULIUS

At the Tea-Table we have an occasional visitor whom we have named Ajax — in a Pickwickian sense of course — in recognition of his constant defiance of all the explanations which occultism may have to give of the facts and phenomena of the planes one or more stages finer than our own. In especial Ajax defies these lightnings of occultism; he will have it that their flashings cannot reveal any truths, *i.e.*, scientific truths. There is nothing, so far, unusual in this attitude. But when it is accompanied with a certain amount of research into these matters, when we find him denying that occultism can offer any explanation of phenomena, while at the same time he admits the existence of phenomena, then indeed we are justified in smiling the smile of pure humor at his (to us) enjoyable attitude. He says:

“I don’t believe in your spooks, in your astral bodies, in your mental currents, and all your paraphernalia.”

So far, so good. And then he adds:

"Last night at the house of M. I saw some wonderful materializations; wonderful. They are not spooks."

"Spirits? The medium's astral form? Hypnotism?" To these suggestions he gave but a scornful shake of the head.

"Pray give us your ideas on what you saw, then."

"I have no ideas. I saw things, misty, wraith-like forms. They had apparently features, voices, garments, thoughts even. They came and went in bright light. They rose out of the floor. They expanded until they touched the ceiling, where they vanished. They dissolved. They said they were spirits. I call that bosh, as you know. The medium sat among us. There was no cabinet. I saw nothing oozing from him. The explanations you offer do not appeal to my senses. Hence, to my mind, they have no force. They postulate things I never saw. I saw those materializations, so called, and so I believe them to be real. Show me the astral double of a man in process of oozing out of him and let it speak and say that it is that, let me see for myself it is that, and I will accept the fact."

"Then you accept these 'materializations as spirits of the dead,' on their own statement that it is so?"

"What! in the nineteenth century? I am not a man of superstitions. Show me your doubles, currents, and magnetizers in actual working existence, and I may assent. Who ever saw a psychic current, I would ask?"

The day came when he had himself some experience of such a current. He had been looking a trifle seedy of late, complained of not sleeping, and hinted that he should perhaps change his lodgings. As I knew him to be well satisfied with these, after long occupancy, I began to suspect his landlady, or some female adherent of hers, of "setting her cap," as the women call it, for my friend. I hinted as much. While he evidently enjoyed the idea, he still scouted it.

"No, no," he sighed, "it is not that. But I am abundantly perplexed. My pleasant rooms — you know how few such rooms there are, and with a bath attached, too — are becoming uninhabitable. You know I am not superstitious. There is no nonsense of the Dark Ages about me. At the same time I am liberal. I yield to evidence. You remember the materializations I saw last winter. You all warned me not to continue attendance at séances. Of course that was mere prejudice on your part. For what rational explanation can you give of the harmfulness of mere wraiths, whose own account of themselves makes them out to be peaceful spirits, while yours shows them to be nothing worse than impossible elementals, astrals, or currents. Pray what harm can be done by a form of nervous force, by a current in space, or by microbes and living germs in etheric vortices?"

"May I ask why you go to séances?"

"I go in order to find out what these things are."

"And how do you expect to find out?"

"In the usual way; by my senses, of course. To continue: there was one tall personage there who called himself the 'guide' of the medium. George Jackson was his name, — odd name for a spirit-guide. He invariably appeared draped in flowing white linen — apparently — and I am bound to admit that I always saw a line as of light stretching from him to the medium. I set the fact down in your favor, you know, as in a measure confirming your ideas about astral bodies; I am nothing if not strictly just. George Jackson exhibited the greatest interest in me. He said he had things of vast import to convey to me. They appeared to be vague as well as vast, and I did not grant him the desired private interview. Finally he went so far as to offer me a daylight materializing séance, in private and 'for nothing,' in a financial sense — 'because the

spirits have great thing to say to you' (me). This offer was enticing. I remained outwardly firm, but mentally concluded to return next day, to accept, and to 'tip' my friend George (through his medium) at the close of the séance. One cannot exactly treat those forms as gentlemen, of course. That night I was awakened by a very loud report, apparently in the head-board of my bed. I sat up, and heard two reports. They were not like the cracking of furniture, but were as if a powerful fist had struck the head-board. In the bright moonlight at the foot of the bed stood my friend George Jackson. We eyed one another. 'Do not come again,' he said in vehement tones, and vanished. I always take these things at their word in such matters, and I did not go again. I went instead to Chicago, forgetting George Jackson completely. One night I awoke to find him by my bedside. His air was menacing, but he did nothing. This occurred again. Without superstitions, a man may dislike push and intrusion. A third time I awoke — and for this I cannot really account — to see and feel him fall upon me, clutching my throat. There was a horrid struggle. I gripped him — he vanished. All the while I thought myself awake. If I had been asleep, I assuredly did not know when the transition from waking to sleeping occurred. I saw him in the daytime also. This was six months after our first meeting, and in another city. Then I returned to New York. Scoring another point in your favor, I admitted the possibility that attendance at séances might be prejudicial (though I confess I cannot see how) and gave them up completely. It is now fourteen months since I attended one, and it never was a habit with me. Now, my dear boy what really annoys me is this: at night I hear persons walking up and down at the foot of my bed. They grasp the bed-post. I feel all the vibrations and hear the sounds. They feel my feet and legs. They pass a hand over my face. Once or twice I have seen a man with a most malignant face bending over me. Even a caller, a friend of mine, has felt slaps upon his shoulders when sitting in my room. I am doing nothing to bring this nuisance about. If it were anything — if it were something — but to be persecuted by *nothing* — dash it all! It is positively unendurable. I have had my rooms for years. The previous occupants were a couple of orthodox spinsters, and the rooms were freshly done up for me when they left. I was asking Newly what it could possibly be."

A sudden light broke in upon me.

"Do you mean John R. Newly, the spiritualist?" Ajax assented.

"Ah! and do you see him often?"

"I take my meals there. But no séances are held at his house. His wife objects."

"No matter. Newly goes daily to séances, and that is enough to cook your goose."

"Do explain yourself."

"My dear Ajax! I positively thirst to do so. You allow it so rarely, you know. To explain, then. When you went to the *rencontre* of your friend George Jackson, you developed certain latent forces in yourself. You opened to some degree the rudimentary psychic powers, the inner hearing, the inner eye, by means of the psychic vortex to which your nerve currents were exposed. These powers are only those of the grosser etheric plane, one stage finer than that of our earth perhaps. The forces thus attracted to you remained for a time in your sphere. They became visible to you whenever psycho-physiological changes in yourself enabled them to manifest and you to see. It is such changes in your psycho-physiological state which act like a door into your nature. Through that door these influences pass. Call it a vibratory condition in the etheric field which raises or lowers the vibratory state of the optic and auditory nerves above or below the rate normal to those nerves. The eye then sees rays below the red or above the violet in the latent light. These rays and this light are admitted by modern orthodox science. The auditory nerve follows the same law. This state of abnormal vibration in you might have altered gradually after you ceased to attend

séances and when no longer subjected to the vibratory currents from them, which act upon the inner man. But Newly is a man of great vitality. These influences, additionally vitalized by him, exist in force in his magnetic sphere and are attracted thence to yours by what they find there, *e.g.* by conditions favorable to them. Day by day their influence is thus renewed; they are like seeds unconsciously dropped by Newly into favoring soil, the soil of your nature.”

Ajax pondered deeply. Then he said, “Of course I utterly reject an explanation so unpractical and superstitious. I have an impartial mind, far above all such childish folly. But I shall not eat at Newly’s hereafter. He might bore me with spiritualistic nonsense; I will not submit to being bored.”

JULIUS.

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*The Path* – May 1892, Vol. 7, pp. 55-56.

## TEA TABLE TALK.

JULIUS

MY DEAR JULIUS:— A short time ago some friends and myself were together at the studio of one of our number. Amongst others was my friend Tom Blank, who was quite ill, having a severe cold accompanied by a headache and an old-fashioned stiff neck. Noticing that he was rather chilly, I threw over him my ulster overcoat, and as his position was not very comfortable I had him lean his head on my shoulder. No sooner had he done this than I felt a sudden chill through my entire body. About an hour afterwards when our party separated, as he was living alone I asked him to go with me to supper, so that my people could give him the benefit of a cheerful family atmosphere. When we reached my home supper was immediately served, and I then noticed that my neck was becoming stiff, my head was beginning to ache and that I was beginning to have a general chill. *En passant* I would say that on my way home I had worn the overcoat that had been wrapped around my friend during the afternoon. After supper, feeling more miserable, al-though the room was quite warm, I wrapped a large blanket shawl round me, but in about half an hour was so ill that I had to go to bed. There I soon fell asleep and in the morning woke up well. I would say that before I met my friend I had been feeling in unusually good condition.

Am I correct in supposing that in some way the overcoat carried the conditions from him to me? This, to me, does not seem incredible, for it is generally recognized that the walls of a room in which there has been a contagious disease are often so impregnated that it is unwise to use it until it is thoroughly disinfected; and if the walls of a room can act in this way, why not an overcoat?”

It is probable that the writer of the above is, or was at the time, very sensitive to vibratory forces, and consequently the discordant vibrations within the disorganized sphere of his friend very easily overpowered his own and set up the same condition in his sphere. To say that “the overcoat carried the conditions” is to express the same idea in terms more vague, as there would be about the overcoat a magnetic vibratory current of the same kind — but weaker far — as that about the friend. This automatic suggestion through vibratory force is the same thing, on a lower plane, as the procedure called mental suggestion. A person may be very sensitive to, and may quickly cognize, an etheric (or astral) vibration, and yet be so positive upon the mental plane as to render it impossible for any magnetic operator short of an adept to hypnotize him. And the adept would not do it unless he were of the Black order.

An instance of this sensitiveness to the etheric vibrations is the following:

“Last October I was registering letters. A clerk who, like myself, spent the years of early youth amid the beech and sugar woods of Ohio, handed me the letters one by one. When I had placed all but one in their jackets I leaned back in my chair and said laughingly to the clerk: ‘Do you remember how the old beech and sugar woods look at this time of the year? I wish we were in Ohio to see the glory of the autumn woods.’

‘Yes, indeed,’ he replied, and handed me the last of the letters. It was addressed to Columbus, Ohio.”

The thoughts of this person also seem to be dynamic in their swift action, as in the following instances.

“I have two brothers living on the Pacific slope. I had lost the address of the elder, and, discovering a matter of great importance to him, I determined to write to the younger for it. Before I found time to write, the younger brother sent me the address, which seemed strange, as he much dislikes letters and seldom writes me oftener than once a year. In the same way I fell to wondering about the particulars of the death of an uncle who had died many years before, and resolved to write to my aunt for them. In a few days I received from her a letter written on the day I had the thought, and in which she said: ‘Your uncle died very suddenly and without premonition, just sitting in his chair.’ This was twenty years after his death, and she had often written to me without mention of his death-hour or the circumstances attending it.”

Unless one could closely compare data in this last case, one could not say whether the thought suggested the letter or *vice versa*. The ideal condition is, of course, that in which all these things are sensed by that very fine instrument, the internal body, through its outer shell, while the mental sphere is so positive as to be able to refuse all suggestions to action, and also to de-sensitize those bodies at will, just as we switch off a current.

We do not sufficiently realize the great part played by “vibrations” upon the stage of life. Take protoplasm, the matter of that life. I might call it the “cosmic dust” of the form (*rûpa*)-plane of organisms. It is mobile and relatively formless, jelly-fish like, and ready to evolve into a higher form. The action and reaction between the light latent in and absorbed by the protoplasm, and the light of the sun, beget a certain vibration, *i.e.*, the vibration characteristic of light. The actinic, chemical, and acoustic vibrations are also playing upon the soft mass. As these are synchronous and not antagonistic, the life-force preserves the chord of the mass, or key of the whole. Thus there arises a definite area upon which these vibrations act with increased power, and this action increases with each new impulse (as by added momentum) and the substance becomes more and more sensitive to the light. Exercise perfects the function; increasing perfection of function renders exercise more easy and structure more perfect. It is thus that light builds the eye and the eye responds to light. So also, when the embryo occultist begins to aspire toward knowledge, the process is initiated upon an inner plane and the functions of the inner plastic body are gradually evolved under the action and reaction of that light which is Thought.

JULIUS.

## TEA TABLE TALK.

JULIUS

“What good are dreams, anyway?” said the Professor the other day. “Is there any use in our paying the slightest attention to them? I have been dreaming that the duck we ate at dinner the other day had grown to the size of an elephant and threatened me with a wave of his web foot. It was really terrifying.”

“Oh!” said the student, who had been looking steadily at the Professor, “then it terrified? Do you see nothing in the fact that someone was appalled by this imaginary duck?”

“It was only an image in my brain,” responded the Professor.

“Yes, very true, it was an image produced by bad digestion; but you ignore an immense fact connected with the image. That great point is that this unexisting duck gave a shock to the perceiver within. The person and faculties that cause your body to shrink from what you call real danger in waking life are the same person and faculties which were terrified by the duck of your dream.”

“Really,” said the Professor, I never regarded it in that light. You mean that even in this foolish instance I had an introspective experience, showing, by means of the dream state, the actual existence and functioning of myself as a real person within?”

Here the widow, who had stopped in town *en route* for a new seaside, interrupted with, “Ah, Professor, you are at last learning something. Perhaps you will not be so ready hereafter to laugh at my dream of my new bonnet.”

“Why, what was that?”

“Well, I dreamed I was trying on a new one before the glass and thinking what a lucky person I was in getting the first of the new style, when I walked Lady Eleanor, who appeared at once to grow green with envy at my success.”

“Yes,” remarked the student, “it was just the opposite of his elephantine duck. Yours was not caused by indigestion. It was pleasant. It gratified your love of personal decoration, not unmixed with a desire to stand ahead of the others, unmarried or not. But the person within perceived the event which your mind brought up, and was thereupon pleased. That inner person never sees material objects. It only cognizes the idea of the objects, whether presented by the waking senses or by the mind in dreams. It is a thinker who looks on these ideas. And whether the dream be folly or not in itself, the great fact remains that someone perceived it. In our waking moments we run after folly just as much as we do in dreams. We call it experience, whether it be wise or unwise, whether it be the pursuit of great things or their opposite. Why should we refuse to use our dreams as experience appropriate to that state? For the thinker the experience is the same, whether obtained from what the waking eye sees or from the mind’s own motions in a dream.”

The Professor looked serious a moment and then said, “You have thrown some light on the matter, but what about dreams of other sorts? Are they all equally foolish, and all only for the use you mention?”

“No, they are not all alike. But there are dreamers and dreamers. Not every person is a real dreamer in the old sense of that term. Some dreams are visions of the night. The real man then sees many facts of life, of history, of family, of nations. He is not bound by the body then, and so makes immediate conclusions. He may see a war

that is to come, because he sees all the facts that must lead to a war; and so he impresses on the brain the pictures of battles, of armies, of standards. He can also perceive the coming of single events connected with himself or others. This is because no fact can come without an antecedent cause. He looks on the causes, instantly calculates results down to exact dates even, and then throws the picture upon the receptive brain. If he be a king, and at the same time a good dreamer of this class, his dream-visions have relation to the kingdom, and so may be of more importance than those of the peasant. And yet sometimes such dreamers are obscure men, and often dream that which relates to the whole kingdom. Every idea except those of purest mathematics is presented as a picture or drama to the mind and not in words. Hence often the brain distorts the picture, with confusion as a consequence.

“Sometimes, too, we dream of people we do not know to be alive or dead, or that they ever were. These sometimes are caused by our inner self in dream meeting the self of another whom we had known in a prior life, and then we are unable to identify them with our present brain experience. But they are not nonsense or imagination.

“Then, again, there is the dream that often comes to those who are striving to live the higher life and to develop their inner faculties. In this one is often apparently attacked and pursued. It is the struggle between the higher and the lower nature in which sometimes terror supervenes in consequence of old passions and tendencies seeming to get the upper hand. That fear produces a picture of pursuit or battle, and the dreamer wakes up in the condition brought on by an ordinary nightmare. If the aspiration towards a higher life is kept up but a corresponding change in daily thought and act does not take place, the dream will be repeated, varying perhaps in detail, and will only cease to come when the fight is given up and one re-plunges into the lower sort of conduct, or when the battle is won by the opposite course of life and thought.”

The Professor thanked the student, promising more questions some other evening. We all then gathered in another room to discuss the Theosophical prophesies so often made, that our selfish civilization is sure to bring on very serious struggles in society.

JULIUS.

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*The Path* – October 1892, Vol. 7, pp. 228-230.

## TEA TABLE TALK.

JULIUS

I had just finished reading aloud a letter from one of our circle sent from the West the other day, when the Professor arrived, and seeing the student sitting at the end of the table cried, “Oh, my dear fellow, you are just the man I wanted. Your talk about dreams the other day gave me so many new ideas I think I have hit on a poser for you this time.”

We all became at once very much interested at the prospect of the student’s being posed. He is seldom put to flight, for he has a way of waiting until you have said all you wish, and then gives the matter such a turn that his expected defeat is your own Sedan day. This time he looked at the Professor quite straight and laconically ejaculated, “Letters and their forerunners, I presume.”

A sort of falling of the jaw came to the Professor, and then I knew that again our dear student had posed the other man, and at the same time the voice of the Widow whispered in my ear “I saw a blue light go out of his eyes when old ‘Prof.’ first spoke.”

"Why," exclaimed the Professor, "that's it exactly, though I don't quite give it just that title. But how did you know? Pshaw, it was only a guess! It is this way. When I am thinking of a man, and the same day or the same hour receive a letter from him, is there any necessary connection between my thoughts and the getting of the letter?"

"There may be and there may not. It all depends. Perhaps as much connection as between our listening here to a letter being read, your coming in just then, and my putting your query for you, 'by guess' as you say. A close connection is quite possible, and exists in the greater number of such cases. You have heard of the so-called superstition of the 'forerunner' in Scotland and other countries? No, you paid no attention to that? Well, they think that some people have what they call a 'forerunner.' This is often a fleeting image of the person which comes to the house or place to which the original is actually travelling, as if to give warning of the approaching person, but which does not speak. In other cases it is a knock or number of knocks sent on ahead as a kind of courier in advance. It does not forebode death, but is simply a forerunner, the person's own familiar herald. Well, it is the same thing with letters. They have their forerunners which travel on in advance, some at a long distance, others not far before. It is a sort of pressure of aura, an aura full of the characteristics of the writer, and given impulse and direction from the very definite thoughts and ideas of the correspondent toward the person written to. But really this is preaching; I don't wish to monopolize the evening."

We all drew in our breaths, for this was exactly what we had been talking about one day in the student's absence, and now he provokingly proposed to cut off the explanation at the beginning. So there was a chorus of "Go on! Don't do like that. This is not a tea in Society. You can have the evening."

"Do you mean," questioned the Professor, with an I'll-draw-him-out expression, "that certain objects — such, for instance, as letters — have spheres of their own, of an extensible nature, which can and do travel on ahead, where, impinging on the sensorium of the person to whom they are written, they produce an impression or image or thought of the writer in the brain of the individual against whom this sphere impinges?"

"That is exactly it," — and I caught a flying look from the student which telegraphed that he was the one who had paused so as to draw the Professor out and on into the web of his own words, which being in his own style, might the more quickly be accepted by his brain.

"The existence of an aura around objects, and especially those belonging to man, has been proved. Letters not only have it on general principles, but also in a specialized state due to the concentration by the writer upon thought, words, and person. It remains with the epistle somewhat in the way a mass of compressed air travels along with a bullet or a cannon ball. This latter is now well known, for by an instantaneous photograph the cushion of compressed air and the bullet have been distinctly reproduced on the plate. What obtains in physics obtains also in the realm of actual physics, to coin a term.

"In some cases I have measured the time this forerunner will reach me, and found it often to be one day, which meant in one case five-hundred miles distance and in another one-thousand miles."

"Then of course," I said, "each mass of this aura, which must be personal to the writer, carries with it the idea or picture of the friend?"

"Yes, this is so with all our thoughts, and we fix them firmly in the letter during the writing. Then the aura is all permeated with our image, and when the brain receives it that image produces an idea about the writer. In some sensitive persons a partial knowledge of the contents of the coming letter is gained, though in most cases only in

the vaguest manner. I think we have cumulative proof of this in telepathy and mind-reading.”

Just here, in the most annoying way the door-bell announcing visitors not in the charmed circle began to ring, and both the Professor and the Student pleaded engagements — with each other, I suppose, to continue the conversation as they walked along.

JULIUS.

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*The Path* – December 1892, Vol. 7, pp. 293-295.

## TEA TABLE TALK.

JULIUS

If there is a quality valued by this world and seeming title its possessor to the rewards of the next, it is that of Sympathy. How many cruel misfortunes has it not assuaged? The sympathy of a friend! Is not its praise chorused by the public and infinitely relished by the private individual? Does it not provide a bed of mental — and moral — down for the sufferer? And in all this tribute to the delightful quality, who thinks of the cost to the donor?

For it costs. Often the prize is heavy. The sympathizer is what he is by virtue of a highly evolved nervous organization and a plastic imagination. The former mirrors the image of the sufferer upon the latter and enables the sympathizer to put himself, literally, in his friend's place. He feels as feels the sufferer, but more so, for the image of suffering he reflects upon his nerve aura is plus himself, is plus the power of his own plastic potency. The exquisite refinement of the nature which can thus experience the pain of another is in itself a pain. It is a species of moral torture. It is also an instrument of progress, used by the underlying soul as a means of evolutionary advance, and hence needs not our pity, since this is experience of and in the mind, which counts to the full in evolution. Below this mental plane, however, are some curious manifestations of sympathy, quite devoid of mental or moral bearing, species of chemical sympathy, so to say, physiologically expressed, and evidently due to a sensitiveness to vibration. Take, for example, the phenomena of nausea, or other light illness, felt by one of a married couple the moment it is undergone by the other. Or, as a widely different example, consider the recent experiments made by Dr. Luys at the Charité Hospital in Paris, as well as by Col. Roche, administrator of the Ecole Polytechnique. These gentlemen found that “it was possible to transfer the sensibility of a hypnotized person to the negative of a photograph of the subject, and that the subject not only felt but showed signs of any mark made on the negative,” such as a mark made with a pin on the hands on the negative, which the living subject would not only feel with pain, but which would also appear on his hands. We have here what may be called — for want of a better name — sympathetic astral vibration.

A young lady wrote me that the household in which she lived was thrown into a state of commotion and anxiety, following upon which its various members began to see astral forms — shadowy figures of persons — about the house. The inquiry followed, whether these were the astral forms of persons who had experienced a like trouble and were sympathetically attached to the place. It seems more probable that the etheric tension produced throughout the etheric field of the house by the nervous excitement of the residents, added to the heightened vibratory ratio of their nerve

auras, had made visible to them those pictures always existing in the “latent light” of which even the late Professor Draper took note.

A correspondent writes:

“Not long ago a married sister spent a week at my house, where there was no one excepting our two selves and servants. One morning I woke up shortly before daylight with a pain in my stomach, so severe as to cause me to rise and walk the floor. It soon passed away and I slept again. As I went to breakfast later, my sister called to me that she had become ill with stomach pains and asked me to send for a doctor. This I did, and after breakfasting went to my office. Shortly after two o’clock, as I was about taking my lunch, I felt the pain of the previous hours returning, so that I was obliged to ask the hotel clerk to give me a room. I was in such distress that I found it difficult to speak. Once in the room, I yielded to an impulse to go and look into the mirror of the dressing bureau to see how I appeared, and I thought it strange that I should look so well while feeling so ill, and then it struck me as being odd that there were no symptoms of illness except the excruciating stomach pain. I threw myself on the bed, fell into a quiet sleep, awoke perfectly well, and, going to my office, finished my work in comfort, after which I returned home. I went at once to my sister’s room and asked her how she had passed the day. She replied that she had done nicely until between two and three o’clock, when she tried to eat and experienced the most agonizing stomach pains. She added that, when the pain was the greatest, she had yielded to a whim, and had risen to look at herself in the mirror, in order to see if she looked as ill as she felt. This experience was followed, on her part, by a two weeks’ illness, but I remained perfectly well thereafter.”

My correspondent is a person of great sensitiveness; physiologically speaking, he possesses a body of negative polarity. His family ties are unusually close and strong. He was thus well fitted to feel, in his aura, that vibratory and nervous contagion transmitted by tension, that nervous effluvium thrown out by all persons at all times, but only felt by sensitives or sympathetics.

JULIUS.

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*The Path* – January 1893, Vol. 7, pp. 324-325.

## TEA TABLE TALK.

JULIUS

Another child has spoken. This time a lady was walking with two children in New York and passed a graveyard. The boy, a small child, said to her:

“What about this of people dying and coming to life again?”

“I do not know,” she replied.

“Oh,” said he, “I can tell you all about it. God keeps making bodies all the time, and the same souls come back and live in them again.”

If we add this to the many sayings of children on this very point reported in these pages during the last few years — and every one is actual fact — we have a body of testimony from children, who are not so far away from “heaven” as we are. Those who have watched the little ones closely are convinced that the hackneyed terms “coincidence” and “imagination” will not account for what children say about reincarnation. Coincidence explains nothing, and imagination cannot work upon a lack of previous experience. But the moment we know that the child brain is not yet able to

overcome all old reminiscence, it is clear that they speak of prior lives because the old recollection is yet in them. Every day, too, it is likely that more children will arrive on the scene with bright memories of previous lives.

After tea the other night the Student showed us an article in *Frank Leslie's Weekly* written by one of the PATH contributors and illustrated with pictures of many Theosophists, including Col. Olcott, Mrs. Besant, and members on the Pacific as well as the Atlantic Coast. The Professor then called our attention to a report of a sermon by a New York minister, in which the Theosophical movement was commended as an ally and not as a foe to Christianity. The Student declared that all this showed a strong current working in the minds of all men at the present time, extending around the world and not confined to Christian lands. For in India there is also much talk of reform, and the efforts of Col. Olcott among the Buddhists indicated the presence of the same current. It was due, he said, to the pressure of the principle of *Manas* from above endeavoring to force itself into the lower nature. Even the peculiar notion of the Red Indians that their Messiah was coming was due to the same force. And it all tended to confirm what had long been taught, that a cycle is dawning which will lead to deeper and wider enquiry into the higher life of Man.

"But how," broke in the Professor, "has this anything to do with what newspapers print? They only work for sales and profits."

"Very true they work for profits," said the Student, "but they are an index of the current of public thought. Seventeen years ago no such articles would have been printed simply because no demand existed. Newspapers rely on demand; they never make public opinion. Seeing that an interest has arisen in Theosophy, they become the indicator because their managers are bound to give readers what those readers want. And just as the morning papers show the actual state of society by the columns of gossip, murder, theft, divorce, scandal, and what not, so by other columns in which different themes are treated they are an index of the national thought both good and bad. And as an illustrated paper like *Leslie's* gives the pictures of six Theosophists besides one of the Society's Headquarters and of the urn containing H.P.B.'s ashes, this shows that our movement has lasted long enough to have six prominent persons and also a headquarters. And recollecting that *Harper's Weekly* not long ago gave a similar article, we have proof positive of the existence of the germ, at least, of the body of thought which the T.S. was organized to foster and develop. Then, too, looking at the field of the mountebanks and even improper advertisements, we see the words 'Theosophy' and 'psychic' attached to the devices of those who trade upon the superstitious part of the community. They would not use these words were it not that the current had started to flow toward such investigations as these words designate."

JULIUS.

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*The Path* – March 1893, Vol. 7, pp. 387-388.

## TEA TABLE TALK.

JULIUS

Many persons think that the children are not good witnesses to such doctrines as Reincarnation. The Tea Table has recorded many true cases of children knowing that they had lived before, and now another was sent the other evening.

A lady writes about her own boy, aged 12. — "A lady friend told me last week that Harold had made a morning call on her, and in the course of conversation said

that he intended some day to be an author and to write a book. Indeed, and upon what subject? Oh! upon Theosophy; I am convinced that it is the most natural thing; in fact. I never really believed anything else.

‘Who told you anything about it?’

‘Oh! I have heard father and mother say a little, but no one really told me; I knew it was so always; even when almost a baby I used to lie and think in my cradle.

‘Reincarnation! of course, it stands to reason! Suppose two good people such as you and I were to die, and two bad people at the same time. Well! the bad ones could not be put quite with us, nor would it be just to punish them and keep them out for ever. *Of course* they must be sent back to try again.’

My friend has read no Theosophy, and told me this with a mixed feeling of horror and amusement.”

The great Wordsworth was right when he said:

Heaven lies about us in our infancy;  
Shades of the prison-house begin to close  
Upon the growing boy;  
But he beholds the light, and whence it flows,  
He sees it in his joy.  
The youth who daily farther from the East  
Must travel, still is nature’s priest,  
And by the vision splendid  
Is on his way attended.  
At length the man perceives it die away  
And fade into the light of common day.<sup>1</sup>

And what a common day it is, hard, dry, rough, and in the West full of negation of all that is high and holy. This is why so much good evidence of prior lives is not easy to get. Children soon feel that the grown-up ones do not want to hear these things, so we do not get from them the knowledge they have, but ourselves slowly, relentlessly, and surely stamp it out until the “light of common day” overpowers the silvery shining of the radiance from the blissful state the child has but just left. I have often found children who were amazed that I wanted to know what they thought about such matters, for they had supposed their elders did not like to hear and were very sure to accuse them of lying or imagination. But those who have examined into the faculty of imagination know that no child could invent what had no basis at all in experience, and therefore are ready to accept the evidence of such when they, without any hint from parent or associate, hold the view quite natural and inherent that they always existed and must exist for ever. But the thorough man of the day not only crushes out the truth from children, but also refuses to admit that he has himself thoughts of soul and of the life before birth and the one to succeed death.

JULIUS.

## NOTE

1. {“Ode: Intimations of Immortality from Recollections of Early Childhood,” (1804), William Wordsworth.}

## TEA TABLE TALK.

JULIUS

The editor let me see the sketch of Dr. Anderson, and in that the incident of his having never learned spelling is noteworthy. He gave this in detail to the editor, who tells me. He was but four years of age and had not up to that time studied anything, and his parents were thinking of how to go about his education. They found him reading, and he himself could never explain how it had come to him except that he just knew. This is a very interesting fact, and one of many of the same sort which could be gathered if we only looked for them. I told the story at the table, and the Student said he had had a similar experience in the same line. He said,

“I was not a precocious boy nor a dull one; simply ordinary. Sent to school very early, the spelling book was a terror to me and occupied most of my thoughts. I could not get on and was low in the class. One day I was especially annoyed by this, and after thinking of it all day went to bed full of grief and trouble on the matter. A very sound sleep came and I waked in the morning with the first and prominent thought, ‘Oh I can spell now and will not look in the miserable book again.’ I was then about seven. Without taking the book I went to school and rose through the class. Never again did I study the speller, and am now able to spell all words except the very rare and peculiar.”

“What was that?” said the widow. “Was it your astral, or the *mâyâvi-rûpa*, or what?”

The Student smiled at her utter disregard of terms, and said that he had not the slightest doubt about its being the taking up of old knowledge from another life, for he declared it had always been a most distinct experience and one he could not forget nor be in the least confused about. Such incidents had happened to him before. In one case he was given as a small boy a missionary book that depicted the Hindus as a lot of miserable black men who were very near savages. This he took home, looked over, and then growing suddenly angry threw it on the floor saying it was a lie. He found in after life he was right, although at the time he had no means of knowing the facts about India or the Hindus, but had to rely on prejudiced tales and interested persons.

All this while the Professor was looking very grave. The old ridicule was not on his face, and the Student and I were beginning to think some inroads had been made on his skeptical mind. We asked him what he thought of it all.

“Well,” said he, “I am bound to accept the evidence offered, and it certainly gives much extraordinary introspective experience. I can hardly put it down to imagination, as there was no basis, and besides, imagination will not confer knowledge. In the Student’s case there was a slight beginning, as he had been studying, but in that of the Doctor there was absolutely no basis. Could it be that the cells of the body have a power of transmitting forms of knowledge such as spelling?”

At this all of us, even the widow, had to laugh, for we saw the Professor was, like so many of his brethren, in a very small corner and hardly knew how to get out. The Student came to his relief to our astonishment, telling us we must not ridicule the Professor, for he had hit on the explanation, provided he went just a little farther. The physical cells have such a power, but it is latent and can never come out until the Ego, the inner man, draws out the latent impression. And this is not possible unless the Ego in the body has been through a similar set of impressions as those tried to be brought out. That is, there must be an interaction and interrelation between the physical

collection of atoms and man inside. If the inner man has been, say, a speller of English, and the mass of atoms composing the body has been also used by those who have been good spellers, then it will be possible for the person to pick up old knowledge. But this goes to show that it is in any case the remembering of what we once learned, and that always depending on the physical instrument we are using at the time. The Professor looked relieved, as we were all so interested in the solution of the matter that we forgot the person who brought it out.

The very cases that seem against this are really supports to it. Take that of the family of the great musician Bach. His descendants were, indeed, good musicians but not such as he, and little by little his great abilities faded from the family. At first this seems to negative the idea, but if you will remember that the Ego must have the power in itself you will see that though Bach may have left atoms with musical impression the new Egos coming to the family line were not able to draw out the power of the instrument, and so it sounded no more. This is a great lesson in karma and universal brotherhood if looked at in the right way. It was the karma of that family to draw Egos to it of indifferent capacity, and those using the atoms of the family gave them new and other impressions and tendencies until at last Ego after Ego was attracted to the family devoid of talent. The same may and does happen in respect to virtue. Hence as we act and live we raise up or pull down the general standard. This is also beyond doubt the real reason for the ancient insistence on the purity of the family line; it is at the same time the cause for the amalgamation of many races to produce a new one, as we see here in our own land.

JULIUS.

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*The Path* – June 1893, Vol. 8, pp. 82-84.

## TEA TABLE TALK.<sup>1</sup>

JULIUS

A curious circumstance was told to me recently, the actors in which shall tell their story here precisely as it was reported to me.

These actors were a doctor and his patient, the latter having suddenly fallen into an apparent faint. But as their tales vary so much, each must be separately told.

### THE DOCTOR'S TALE.

I was standing near my patient, who all at once said in a quick, suppressed kind of voice: "I am going to faint." I felt the pulse: it was as strong as I had ever felt it, the patient having usually a strong, steady pulse. While I so held it, all at once there was a drop, a flicker; the pulse wavered indescribably, and to my horror the patient seemed to be dying. The pulse disappeared; the body straightened and stiffened itself; the jaw dropped; the breath was forcibly expelled; the features became set; the pulse was now extinct; the body continued cold as death; all signs of life had disappeared. Strangest of all, perhaps, my patient, who was outwardly a woman of the most feminine type, now in death seemed to wear the guise of a man, and one much younger than she actually was. I tried in vain means of resuscitation; life had quitted the form. So I said to myself on the evidence before me. Yet a sense above and beyond such proof made me still stand there watching, waiting for I knew not what. Great was my surprise soon to see an imperceptible tremor, a shadow, flit over the face. Quickly I placed my hand again

upon the heart. At first it gave no response; what lay there was a dead thing. Then I had a genuine shock: the heart quivered, stirred, leaped under my hand. All the torrents of life came pouring back. My feelings of relief are not to be described; at the same time I must confess to a decided feeling of curiosity. The patient opened her eyes and tried to speak, but her effort was in vain. I found the reason for this later on; her tongue was swollen and black, filling her mouth. In about an hour's time large black circles surrounded her eyes. These were black with the blackness of a bruise, and so remained for some days, fading gradually out through all the various shades of violet known to be distinctive of bruises. Altogether a most peculiar incident. What had happened to my patient, and how?

## THE PATIENT'S TALE

Like the doctor, I do not know what happened to my body. I know what happened to ME!

I ought to premise by saying that, all my life, the fact of life itself has been represented to me by a small purplish flame burning at the very center of my heart. By this I mean that I always saw this flame there, as if with internal eyes. I have thus watched it burning more or less brightly; now lower, as in ill health, now brighter as my form regained and retained more life. On this occasion therefore, as I said, I felt faint, and not only all at once, but also my inner sense shared the faintness of my body and the heart throes were exquisitely painful. I therefore at once reverted to my usual custom of regarding my heart, and quickly saw that something was wrong there. The purple flame burned low. It then set up a process of paling and flickering at the same time. And now a strange thing took place. Call it a change in consciousness. For the sense of personality, which is usually in the brain, I had received, as it were in exchange, a similar sense, but one situate in the breath within. That is to say, I seemed to identify myself with an inner breath. This breath gathered itself round about the heart and watched that heart's central flame. The breath saw the flame wax dim; saw it disappear (do not ask me with what eyes). From this point of my tale I must speak of the breath as "I"; my consciousness was wholly situate in this breath. "I," then, began to vibrate rapidly, to surge about, and soon felt myself floating upward (as *conscious* breath, remember) through a passage up the middle of my spine. I went up in a spiral; just as I arrived at a point opposite the mouth I felt another breath pass me on its outward way, and it rushed out of a cavity which I now know for the mouth with a loud rushing sound, as of a breath violently expelled. I — that other and conscious breath — went up into a circular space (the head?) and issued forth from thence — after one tremendous throb of separation, of rending — with a joy, an elation not to be conceived by those who have never experienced the same. For I was free, and with a freedom not before known. As the conscious breath leaped from the head it took form, a form of radiant light, and in this guise I shot forth into the open air. Above the buildings I soared, and soon no longer observed them; how could I? I was met up there by one I knew and know well, one who began to give certain messages to me. About us were many sleeping spheres, and he bade me observe these. There were other forms and messengers coming and going; the atmosphere was all luminous; orbs of electricity sped about in all directions. There was, too, an ordered movement as of departing and returning rays. The sense of freedom, knowledge, and power was magnificent. Then I felt a slight pull upon me, and saw that a shadowy thread (one of less radiant matter) extended from me down through the air and into an open aperture. It was as if this pull had altered all my vibrations and changed my state of consciousness, for I now ceased to see the wonders about me, and saw instead the

buildings and sunshine on the snow far beneath me. Yes, I had returned to a lower order of matter (as I now reason on what then occurred), for I felt myself drawn rapidly downward and backward, always by the ethereal thread, until I was drawn through a window and into a room. All I noticed there was a young man, lying stiff, cold, and half-naked on a couch. He seemed to be dead. A vortex of air (?) sucked me in towards him. Again that deep rending throb, and I was drawn into the head of this horrible object; oh how thin and fine I was drawn, my radiant form spun out into a smoky thread, a breath! Yes, I was again a conscious breath, traveling rapidly down a long, narrow, spiral descent on the right of the body. Again I gathered myself about a center, a dark but pulsing ocean, in whose depths I looked for a light, a glow. There was nothing. The breath that was I concentrated itself and waited. A something scintillated below those moving waves. So soon as it appeared, another sudden change of consciousness occurred. For now the feeling of identity with that inner heart disappeared. The brain consciousness was again mine. It was plain that the dark ocean was my heart, and the brain thought came at once: "I am dead, for I see no light." An emotion, as of terror, was superseded by the thought: "I must send a message to X. of my death." I tried to speak, but the brain consciousness had no tongue. I was not yet coördinated with the body. Calming myself, I watched the heart closely and saw the scintillant point was rising out of the dark center, slowly, gradually, to burn at last a violet flame. When this lamp burned clear at last, I felt myself all at once to be coördinate with the body, identical with my everyday self. I opened my eyes, to see my doctor bending over me with a most singular expression, half wonder, half pain, on his face. I tried to speak, but could not. He has told you why. It only remains for me to say that what I was told when out of the body has since all been fulfilled. Also it seems that I was removed (*I myself*) from a crisis of the physical heart.

Especially note, in this last narrative, the various changes and states of consciousness and the sense of "I" in each. This proves that the universal, the state of the Higher Self, was not reached. Note also the two states of Prana, and other hints. I can vouch for these narratives as fact.

JULIUS.

## NOTE

1. {This is certainly Julia describing her own experience.}

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*The Path* – July 1893, Vol. 8, pp. 117-118.

## TEA TABLE TALK.

JULIUS

### THE TALE OF THE FIRST COMPANION.

There is a land but little known to men. There, at a point where several roads crossed, three travelers, all journeying to the same goal but by different roads, met and sat down to rest. They were companions, though they had never met before.

After a time, the youngest of these travelers said to the eldest: "Brother, have you ought to tell us of the place where the unseen is seen?"

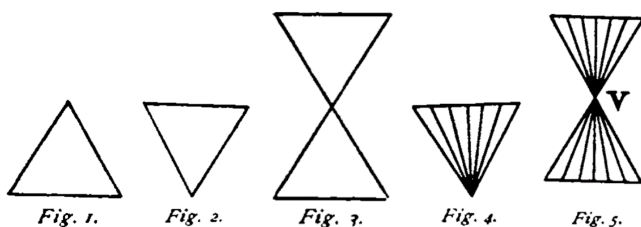
The old man lifted his head, his eyes burning brightly under his shaggy eyebrows.

"It is the place of darkness where things are made visible," he replied. "Last night I saw there the Angel of the Flames."

"Who is he?" asked the others.

"He is one who stands where the upper heavens divide from the lower heavens, at the point where the manifested world begins. Above all is the one Dark, the Triangle of which, the point only is from time to time seen. Then comes the great Triangle of the Upper World (fig. 1): below that the lower, the earth triangle, opens out (fig. 2): and the two together make one (fig. 3); but they disappear, one into the other (fig. 1) when they meet the Dark (fig. 2); for then the two manifested Triangles, the upper and the lower, become one. The earth one glides over and becomes the outer face; the heaven one passes beneath and becomes the inner side. But that is in the Hereafter. Meantime there are the two, thus" — and he drew the figure (fig. 3) again in the sand. "Here the upper and lower manifested touch. Down from the upper heaven come the flames, the lines, surging down along the rays. Thus is the real figure (fig. 4). At the point there is a vortex, and there stands the Angel of the Flames, with drawn sword. As the flames come down to enter into manifestation, it is through the vortex they must pass before coming where the lower Triangle opens out — the lower world. This is as it is then." He drew again, making this figure (fig. 5). "At the point marked 'V' the Angel of the Flames is seen to stand. As the flames, the souls, come downwards, some shudder at sight of the vortex and would turn back. Others would fly off into the further boundaries, undeterred by "The Ring Pass-Not," which flames, indeed, may overpass. But there is the Angel. He stretches forth his sword, he guides the flames into the vortex; they must descend, and, descending, they become creatures and beings in the lower manifested world, according to their nature and according to their power. Whence, O Companions, have they that nature and that power?"

"From Karma," answered the others. Then all these Companions saluted the name of the Law.



The aged one continued:

"Thus pass the flames downward; some tremblingly; some slowly but surely; others with hesitation and wavering; and a few with a fierce swift splendor. All must travel the ways of the lower world, all must enter the vortex and, emerging therefrom, must pass through every form of Life, conquering all, ere they mount the further side — the unseen side — of the lower triangle and return to the upper heavens as gods. The Angel is the agent of the Law. The descending flames are given over to his guidance; they must obey. But those who ascend are greater than he; they are the conquerors; he salutes them as they pass; he is blown backwards by the velocity of their upward flight. The passage to the upper heavens is the right of the Flame-Souls who have become men and have achieved perfection."

"How looked this Angel?" the youngest Companion asked.

"Like a column of white fire, stately and glorious; his sword was a seven-tongued, seven-colored flame, shooting forth like an Aurora of the North. His countenance was

not a face at all; it was an Eye of deep, dark glory; he was not as men are, but as flaming souls are seen to be in the world of souls.”

The third Companion spoke:

“Why was this power given unto him? Is not Karma enough?” Saluting, the aged traveler answered:

“The Law is All. But manifested agents must be had as its vehicles in manifested worlds. There must be a focus. As there is a vortex, whereby momentum is attained, so there is a guide, by whom direction is maintained. Understand this, however, if you can: the vortex and the guide are one thing. At that point there is but one power, in two forms, to be understood of men. One form is the vortex, the other form is the Angel of the Flames; both are symbols of the one unseen force residing at that point and reigning within the Ring.”

The Companions said no more, but all meditated together.

JULIUS.

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*The Lamp* – May 1896, Vol. 2, pp. 145-147.

## THEIR COMMANDMENT.

JASPER NIEMAND

But we know that They have left us a commandment.  
That we keep, although now and then objects, senses, men,  
and time conspire to show that Masters laugh at us.

— *Letters That Have Helped Me*, page 29.

Some who know the magic use of faith and devotion, have asked what this commandment is, of which the teacher spoke. That commandment is one of service, of work for the world. Not alone the world of humanity, but also the world of creatures and the world of elements; all three worlds ensouled should have that service of ours, whether in objective work or in that power of thought which evolves the atoms of substance.

There is one clause of such Service, however, on which especial stress was laid from the first; it may indeed be called the primary stipulation of Their Commandment. It was said when this century's work began, and since then repetitions are numerous, that we, the workers, if we were to be true servitors in the least, must form a barrier against the oncoming tide of a psychism sure to develop with the development of the new race. Under the law of action and reaction, whenever there is a spiritual efflux sent forth, a reaction on the lower planes inevitably tends toward psychism, may be called the effect of polar reversion. Hence the necessity of Their warning. This warning should have marked attention whenever a fresh spiritual impulse has been given to our work under cyclic law. Just as Masters in Their place form the guardian wall about humanity, so the workers here on this plane must form a barrier to protect all those who will avail themselves of that barrier against the insidious effects of the nascent psychic senses which evolving men are sure to feel: to such the philosophy we spread must serve as a guide, and in this fact inheres the need of teaching altruism among children.

In the recent Convention of the Theosophical Society held at New York, we have had a great object lesson. It showed what The Lodge can accomplish through our

harmonious and united action. The spiritual forces generated by the human heart can be multiplied infinitely by Masters, can be used to lift a nation or to save a world. These spiritual forces are quiet; the evident is not the real. Their working is silent, is not a phenomenon but is a benediction. In harmony they inhere; unity is their great first cause. If we look back in thought upon that Convention, we will remember that there was not one dissenting voice, not a single argument; we will understand that we saw The Lodge visibly working, that this was a Masterpiece of Masters, and that the coming year will bring forth daily results from this great melodious moment of our lives.

Yet there is one proviso. Each one of us can still make or mar the increase of this work. It was done in and by unity. By and in unity it must be maintained. Each one lit a torch at that flame. Let each keep that torch alight. Every act and every thought of our diurnal lives will either increase or disrupt the harmony, the unity. Let each heart-note ring clear and true. The most earnest worker can become a center of disintegration in five minutes if separative thoughts are indulged in, and it is easier far to lose ground than to regain it, when discords are loosed to play through the sphere of man.

A reaction is what we must provide against. If each one provides against that *in his own heart and mind* there will be no need for us to go forth to save others, for the spiritual forces in their benign impersonality, work more wisely than do mankind. If each tends with vigilant care that light which burns in the soul, protecting it above all from the unsteady airs playing to and fro in the restless mind, then other lights will be kindled, other souls quickened, by the pulsations coming from those undetached sparks of the one Flame which are our vibrant souls.

It should be understood that the words "psychic forces" do not merely refer to the phenomena of the astral senses. They refer as well to idle gossip, to curiosity, to psychic intrusion and to what H.P.B. called psychic burglary, and to doubt, suspicion, jealousy, and all the other parasites preying upon the human heart. Comrades, on guard! Your lights are increased, attracting kindred lights from afar, attracting also the creatures of the darkness, the tribes of error, who find in our thoughts a life, a form, a fatal power not their own but from us derived. Close your minds to these. Listen to the Song of the Soul. You will hear its declaration of Peace. In the small things unobserved by most people both the hosts of the Sun and those of the Night chiefly work. Instead of looking for signs, marvels, astral pictures and the like, we would do well to observe the small events of daily life; the duties brought to our door by the law are the expression, in time, of that law: the tendency of our thought also reveals to us that lower self which must be grasped and understood. Our minds feel the ungoverned psychic currents in their doubts and fears. How often have we not seen comrades indulging in speculation upon some psychic thought or image, when before every eye and plain to the sight was something apparently small which was a pointer of great importance to the thinker, of deep meaning to the true seer. Once I remember hearing a number of persons complaining of an alteration in the seats of a hall; this change tended to their physical inconvenience, and yet it was a searchlight revealing the operation of a mystic law.

There is a false and a true reaction. The false tends away from the lines laid down, to another grade and species of action. The true reaction is that interior silence which occurs after a period of intense activity; in that silence the truths received are assimilated and the soul adjusts itself anew in preparation for the next period of receptivity. Meanwhile, every truth taken up into the heart is having its effect upon the daily life. All about us the divine powers are playing, not visible to any eye, but plain to the insight of the heart. That heart knows well that Peace, Harmony, Trust are the keynotes of the divine Song of the Logos, for in these states of the Soul are generated

the forces, the “voice in the spiritual sound,” which enable man to attain his divinity. Those lights of many colors are the garments of the soul.

“The coming year is big with Destiny; may Unity be our password,” Trust, our guide. Oh! for the power to generate a trustfulness as mighty as that of little children, for of such indeed are the kingdom. Trust! It is a spiritual power so vast, when rising from the human heart, that the highest acts of spiritual regeneration may be performed through it. Trust, I do beseech you, and you shall know the radiance that only shines from spirit. Standing each upon his own duty, may each meet every moment as a moment of choice. When such a moment comes, take the key of the philosophy, and, guided by your own light, unlock the door. No soul ever looked to that light in vain. A great trust has been placed in our hands, a great power given us to wield. It is the power of united action, and great Karma will demand account of the use or misuse of it by each one who has seen what that power can accomplish. The responsibility of that knowledge is ours. On guard, then, Comrades all, each on guard for each and for all, and may our lights shine clear!

JASPER NIEMAND.

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## THEIR FIRST CHRISTMAS.

J. CAMPBELL VER PLANCK

The sparkling Christmas morning of 1889 saw a strange and early commotion in a suburban corner of the city of X. During the night a heavy snow had fallen as though to obliterate the dark traces of sin from the earth, freshly preparing for a new life, a new light, a nobler day. But man had already frustrated the purpose of nature; the black tracks crossing in every direction seemed like highways of crime. In one instance, at least, they were so, if the whispers of groups gathered about the villa of Joseph Hollister were to be believed. These groups were composed of all species of humanity, from the squalid undersized girl bearing an oversized baby with big, pasty face, to the tramps furtively watching the knot of prominent citizens discussing the revelations of the night. Two policemen paced to and fro at the front and side of the villa. Inside its open door a third officer could be seen, submissively listening to an authoritative soldierly man in plain clothes. Grave gentlemen conversed in the dining room. Maids with scared faces flitted up and down the stairs. When distant doors were softly opened the deep sobbing of a woman could be momentarily heard, and a strange, labored sound, as if some fine mechanism were slowly running down. Both were sounds to make men shudder.

Two hours earlier, the authority in plain clothes, hastily summoned, had gathered these facts. Joseph Hollister, a respected merchant, had been wakened in the night by unusual sounds outside his door. Springing up to investigate, he found the gas brightly burning in the entry, some figures going, catlike, down the stairs, and a masked man confronting him, covering the retreat of others with their booty. Towards this man Hollister sprang, unarmed. In the tussle which ensued the burglar lost his mask. Freeing an arm, he shot his antagonist in the side. As Hollister fell, a second shot was sent to ensure his silence, but he still lived, though the moments of his life were briefly numbered, to the regret of every one who knew the upright, honorable gentleman. The only fault found with him in this practical age was thus expressed by his close friend,

Dr. Grant. "Hollister is a grain too fine for rough use, but what can you expect of a theosophist who believes that even brutes — and human brutes — have souls?"

Dr. Grant presently came down stairs with that exaggerated creaking which attends the efforts of well-meaning persons to walk with unwonted quiet. To him Captain Scofield of the detective force addressed himself.

"How is he, Doctor?"

"Sinking fast."

"Conscious?"

"Yes. Mind clear as a bell."

"Good!" Scofield twirled his hat with satisfaction.

"Why?"

"I think we've got one of the crowd."

"The man who shot him?"

"Perhaps."

"In God's name be quick then. Hollister could still identify him."

"He's here. Prepare *your* man." With a complacent sense of being beforehand with the Doctor, Scofield pointed towards the walk. Two detectives with a hand-cuffed man between them had alighted from a close carriage and were coming towards the house, accompanied by the noise of the eager crowd and the taps of their fellow officers' clubs upon too obtrusive bodies. "It's Jim Hogan; I suspected his gang and found Jim at his lodgings, quiet enough, but a bit too sleepy for a professional thief abed in wet boots. That mask about fits him and the job was worked in his style, but Mr. Hollister can settle the question."

"Of course," said the Doctor. "You've done sharp work, Scofield. I'd better be as quick with mine." He retraced his steps. It was a melancholy scene which met his eyes on opening a bedroom door. Accustomed as he was to such, he was sharply impressed by the opened windows courting every breath of the cold heavens for laboring lungs; the heavy stagnant odors of drugs, liniments, and dried blood; the injured man propped high in pillows, ghastly, drained of life, but meeting his questioning look with eyes as steady as his own. The deep gentleness, the calm serenity of those eyes, the firmness of lips drawn by pain, the hand lovingly laid upon the head of a young and beautiful woman who knelt by the bedside in all the abandonment of grief, were all so many witnesses, to Hollister's friend, of the magnitude of the coming loss. At the foot of the bed a woman held a fresh, cooing babe in her arms. The little one gurgled at its father, reached out and struggled to go to him. A second child, a splendid boy of four, his eyes still heavy with sleep, broke from the nurse's restraining hand and ran to the bedside.

"It smells nasty here, Papa," he said, clambering up. "Why's mamma cryin? Didn't Santa Claus bring her anything?" Impressed by the silence, his eyes grew big with a sudden idea. "Didn't Santa Claus come *at all*," he said, with quivering lips. "Didn't *anything* come in the night?"

At the recollection of what had come in the night the mother's form trembled convulsively. Hollister stopped his little son with a warning gesture, a faint smile. "Go, my son," whispered he, "to the play room, and see if Santa Claus has forgotten a good boy. Stop! kiss Father first; and, Robbie, remember this." He looked impressively into the radiant face of his son. "Be good; try always for that." Smiling at the child's haste to be gone, he kissed him again, motioned the nurse to bring the lively baby to his last embrace, then firmly signed them from the room. As they went, without one backward glance, their mother's heart hardened to them for an instant. Hollister saw it in her face. "Let them be glad while they can, Dear," he whispered.

The Doctor spoke. "You are exerting yourself too much, Hollister."

"What can it matter now?" replied the sick man with patient gentleness. "But you Doctors will be obeyed till the last."

"It does matter, my dear fellow. Mrs. Hollister, I want your husband to save his strength. Will you not leave him to me for a time?"

She sprang to her feet "Oh, Doctor! Doctor! You have hope?" she cried. The two men exchanged glances of pity. She paused, then bent her head in acceptance of the Doctor's silence. "Then why should I leave him?"

"Will you not do so for a few moments?" "A few moments? *Now.*" A change, a grey veil creeping up Hollister's face emphasized her words. "What can you be going to do?"

The Doctor too saw there was no time to lose. He felt the patient's pulse and gave him a reviving drink. "Scofield wants to speak to him," he said rapidly.

"He can do so in my presence." The Doctor hesitated. "You are hiding something from me." At her feverish vehemence Hollister unclosed his eyes and took her hand. She kissed his, holding it in both her own.

"Tell her," the husband whispered to his friend.

The latter obeyed him. "Scofield has a man who he thinks ——" The wife sprang up as if a bullet had struck her. "It is the man who shot my husband," she cried.

"It is a man who *may* have been one of the gang and ——"

"Bring him; bring him quick. Don't lose a moment. Joe can identify the wretch, can't you, my Darling? Oh, hurry; hurry!" She made as if to push the Doctor from the room.

Hollister too was energized by the news. The grey veil slipped away from mouth and chin. A commanding gesture stopped both wife and Doctor. Clearly, his low voice said:

"Do not bring him here."

Dismayed, the wife ejaculated:

"My dearest one! You are able. For my sake, try. The wretch must not escape. He shall not." She stepped towards the door, an eager messenger of Fate.

"Kate! Come here." She flew to him. He laid his chill hand again in hers. "I wish to die at peace with all the world," he said.

"No! No! Do not sacrifice me. When you are gone my only comfort will be in ——" sobs choked her throat.

"In revenge, dear Love?" he questioned.

"In Justice. Oh! Call it what you will, but send for him. You are not fit to judge now." She felt the deep reproach, the pain of his look. "Husband, forgive me. But send for him. Could I breathe with your murderer at large? Send quickly." She encircled the sick man with her glowing arms. She pillowed his head upon the loved fragrance of her breast. Large with entreaty, lustrous with determination, her eyes fastened upon his to draw consent from them. All her rich beauty came about the dying man. She pressed him closer. The husband to whom her wishes had been a delight yielded now, at the repetition of the formula of her will. He gave a sign of assent. The Doctor left the room. A few moments were consecrated to their love and grief. Then quick steps were heard in the hall. The wife, erect, listening, watching the door as if to snatch something from it, forgot him who observed her with pitying, pardoning gaze. Hogan, entering between two constables, met the blazing passion of her face and dropped his hardened eyes.

"It is the man. I know it," she exclaimed. She advanced one step, as if to tear him from his keepers, to thrust him beneath the eyes of his accuser.

"Can you swear to him, Madame?" asked Scofield.

No. I hardly saw him as he ran down stairs. But Mr. Hollister will know. Doctor, raise all the blinds. Bring the man nearer. Now" — as the bright light poured full upon the prisoner — "look at him, Joe; do you recognize him? And you" — to Hogan, "look at Mr. Hollister."

All obeyed as if they were the automata of her will. Even Hogan, stealing looks about the room, made an effort, and met those eyes fast growing dim upon the blood-streaked pillow. He sought his death warrant upon that ghastly face. His guilty heart questioned it savagely for recognition. He saw mild eyes beneath a brow that was calm, unfurrowed, but damp with the death agony, the crowning shadow of the hair above, the wistful, patient lips of one who bore his cross, and a look he had never seen before on human face and could not therefore know for a look of love. The wife's passion blinded her to it. The Doctor, trained to nice observation, saw and understood it, with an oath caught under his breath. For one full minute Hollister studied Hogan; then he spoke.

"Turn his face a little more to the light." The constables moved their man. Everyone seemed to stop breathing. Hogan, encircled by eyes of hatred and scorn, deliberately returned that hate to each and all with slowly-travelling glance, then returned it to the implacably gentle face of his victim, who at that instant said distinctly, slowly: "I do not recognize this man."

Hogan flung him a scathing look and said in his heart: "Curse him for a fool." A hissing sound as of pent-up breath escaping came from each person in the room. Kate Hollister broke into a hoarse and baffled cry.

"Look again, Dear. Look once more. Can't we have more light? Doctor, you see he doesn't know what he is saying. I am sure it is the man. Oh, my Darling! Look again, again."

He did look again. Then he visited every face in the room with that look of majesty, reassuring them all.

"Hush, Kate. I do not recognize the man." He held out his hand to Hogan, dissipating the doubts of every looker on except one. She tried to intervene, then fell fainting against the Doctor.

"Shake hands, man. There's no ill will between us." The constables pushed Hogan towards him. Their hands met. Instantly a something, a change, swept over Hogan's face, mastered by the steady warning of peaceful eyes.

"Try to do some good with your life, lad. When a man lies *here*, he wishes he'd made better use of his time." His grasp relapsed; Hogan walked from the room with clenched hands, pursued by a long rattle, a gasp, a woman's shriek — and silence.

Down on the river bank, amid ooze and mists and all the deadly miasms of swamp lands and sluggish water, stood a reeking, shattered tenement house full to the maw with shattered lives. Hogan climbed its stairs to the roof, savagely cursing constables, crowd, associates, all who had shrunk from him as he shambled away. He flung himself upon a filthy bed, burying his head in his arm, his hand clinched. Out of one end of the bed, like a disturbed rat, scurried a weazened child who sought the next darkest corner of the room. A slatternly woman, her face bruised and swollen, came and stared at Hogan. "He won't hurt ye," she called to the child; then to Hogan; "the brat's just hiding here a bit from his boss. But I didn't look to see ye back here, Jim, curs't if I did." There was a rough tenderness in her tone.

He made no reply. She clattered about, shut the door, then returned to the bed with a rasping whisper of — "How'd ye get off?" Still no answer. She drew his arm away; his sleeve was wet. She gaped in recognition of this unlooked-for fact. "I never saw Jim Hogan cryin' drunk afore."

"An' I aint now," said he gruffly. "Curse ye, can't ye let a fellow be?"

Relieved, she muttered:

"That's more like himself." Then aloud. "Tell me how ye got off."

"The old — the man didn't recognise me."

"He didn't; the bloke. Wasn't he himself, then?"

Hogan sat up, bristling with anger. "Yes, he was. Look here, Moll, don't you say a word agin him. D'ye hear?" He shook his clinched hand in her face. "I seen he knowed me. I heard the gallows creakin' above me. An then — says he, 'I don't know the man,' says he, quiet as a lord."

"D'ye think he was feared on ye?"

"Feared? Him? Why, he was a lookin' straight at death. What was I to be 'feared on? That cuss *shook hands* with me,—d —n him." A volley of oaths in a meditative tone followed here.

"Must a been stunned, then."

"Stunned? You, Moll, look ahear. When us shook hands, he give me this." He opened his clinched hand, displaying a button attached to a bit of cloth torn from the coat he had on.

The woman gasped.

"He gin up th' evidence to ye? Was he a crank, Jim, or what?"

"An' says he to me: 'Try to do some good with your life, lad.' He was goin' fast, Moll, an' says he, holdin' *that* into my hand, an' his woman burnin' to tear my heart out, 'Shake hands, man,' says he, 'there's no ill will atween us.' Strike me dead but it made a babby of me, Moll. 'When a man comes to lie here,' says he, 'he wishes he'd made better use' — why Moll, what ails ye? I aint seed ye cry since *it* died."

"Never you mind me, Jim. I'm a d—d fool. It's because I thought you was done for, sure. I thought you'd swing this time."

"'Try to do some good with your life,' the man repeated. See here, Moll; you can say what you're a mind to, but you bet I'm goin' to *do it*."

"To do what, then?"

"Try to do some good, like he said, cuss him. I look like it, don't I? But it seems owin' to him. He'll hant me, mebby, if I don't. Anyhow — I'm in for a try. But it's a d—d hard thing to know how to try."

"Say, Jim." She moved uneasily, hesitated, then broke out. "If you was to begin with me." Woman-like, she had quickly grasped the situation.

"How?" He stared at her. With downcast look she mumbled, ashamed of being ashamed:

"With me — to make me — if I was more honest like — if you —." She cleared her throat; no more would come.

"Hold on, Moll. D'ye mean, to marry ye?" She nodded. "Lord, but ye're changed all to onct!"

"So are you, Jim."

"That's so. Well, of course I'll do it, soon as we kin. Here's my hand on't."

She flung her arms about his neck. Transfigured by a new humanity, it became evident that both were young and not ill-looking. Standing upright, with hope in their faces, did so much for them. They looked like blind people straining for a promised vision.

The weazened child crept out to their feet.

"Say, be you goin' som'eres? Ye might take me with ye. Th' boss 'll kill me soon. He's swore it."

“Yes. You kin come if you’re a mind to. But, I say, Moll, we’re fools. Where kin we go to? Who’ll have us?”

“Jim! Jim! Don’t ye go back on it. Don’t gin it up.”

“It’s goin’ back on me. What can I do? But I’ll try; if we starve, I’ll try.”

“And I will help you,” said a new comer. “Put down your fists, Jim Hogan. The first thing you’ve got to learn is not to get ready to hit every decent man that speaks to you.” Dr. Grant walked up and laid a hand on his shoulder, not unkindly. “I’ve known Joseph Hollister twenty years; better to-day than ever. If there’s a way out into a better life for you — and I believe there is — I’ll help you to find it — as a Christmas gift to Hollister.”

The starveling on the floor tugged at the Doctor’s coat. “Say; I know what Christmas means, now. It’s gettin’ a pappy an’ a mammy.”

Jim Hogan lifted him to his shoulder.

“First Christmas ever I see an’ I ain’t sayin’ as I like it so much, neither, but it’s owin’ to him, Doc an — well — you bet I’ll try.”

Thus it came about that the faith of the dead Hollister was justified. That the State gained three honest citizens in place of one. That Kate Hollister learned a lesson of peace, and Dr. Grant that a living germ lies hidden in every heart. Finally, that to the Hogan family, working its way slowly but surely up from the slough of humanity, Christmas became a sacred institution and dated first from 1889.

J. CAMPBELL VER PLANCK.

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## THEO-SOPHIA.

J. CAMPBELL VER PLANCK, F.T.S.

A LETTER TO A TRUTH SEEKER.

*Theo-Sophia*, by Nemo, is a “Letter to a Seeker”<sup>1</sup> which claims to proceed “from the Wisdom of the Wise,” and it is my intention to examine this claim, so far as I am capable of doing so.<sup>2</sup>

Wisdom is Truth. The evidence of Truth in a thing must be inherent in that thing, for Truth is her own witness and must be self-evident. To establish the claim of this Letter, the Spirit of Truth and Wisdom must prevail in it.

The Letter is written for the express purpose of making “the grave charge of selfishness” against a great Himalayan Brotherhood. This purpose would in itself appear too prejudiced and too personal to be of the “Wisdom of the Wise.” It prepares us at once to find error and ignorance, the companions of prejudice. We do find them. Ignorance is attested by mistakes which must be either (A) the outcome of ignorance of the subject, or (B) false statements deliberately made. We discard the second alternative (B), because, apart from this prejudice, Nemo appears to be a truth seeker, though one of contracted range. Also because of the various errors, literary and historical, which substantiate the charge of ignorance. For instance, *Aryarta* for Aryavarta; *Aryats* for Arhats; *Avichi* for Avitchi. Further, when Nemo calls the Himalayan Brotherhood “the Adepts of the Esoteric Buddhist cult,” he ignores the historical, oft-repeated fact that this Brotherhood does not profess the Buddhist creed. In a recent article in *Lucifer*, Madam Blavatsky also stated this fact, and in the *Secret*

*Doctrine* she repeats it continually. As Nemo states that *Isis Unveiled* is a production of these adepts, he cannot logically impugn Mme. Blavatsky's testimony there and elsewhere. In the report of the Second Annual Convention of the Theosophical Society {1888} is found a letter signed by Mme. Blavatsky, bearing the seal and sign thereafter of an Adept of the Great Brotherhood. This letter says: "Let no man set up a popery instead of Theosophy."

"Orthodoxy in Theosophy is neither possible nor desirable. It is diversity of opinion ... which keeps the T.S. a living and healthy body. ... The Society would degenerate into a sect, in which a narrow and stereotyped creed would take the place of the living and breathing spirit of Truth and an ever growing knowledge." These Adepts have ever refused to set forth any creed, knowing as They do, that Truth develops continually as Life does, for they are one.

Again Nemo says: "The high esoteric culture of which Indian Rishis boast." Where is this "boast" recorded? Who ever heard or read it? He does not even know what "Rishis" are, or he would know that Their constitution is composed of such principles as do not admit of "boasts" or earthly vanities. They are highly spiritual Beings; yet in the sacred books we find Them ever speaking with wisdom and humility.

The Brotherhood are next accused of holding their hand when "they might have shattered the deadly caste system of India like a glass bottle." Inferentially they are also referred to as supporters of the caste system. That they are not its supporters is shown; (A) By the reception in the Brotherhood of members of various castes and foreigners, (who under that system rank as low caste.) In *Isis Unveiled* it is stated that among other Adepts is a North American Indian. The *Secret Doctrine* speaks of Hungarian and South American Initiates. (B) The special work of the Theosophical Society (founded by the orders and under the direction of this Brotherhood) in India is the breaking down of the barriers of caste. A letter in *Lucifer* towards the close of Vol. I. is from a Japanese theosophist who visited Madras and describes the great and beneficial change worked in this respect by the T.S., so that persons of all castes mingled freely and children were being brought together for educational purposes. So much for the present. As to the past; does Nemo deny the working of Law? Or the free will of man under that Law? As the Adepts are the servants of Law, and not its selfish violators, as Nemo would have us believe, we may profitably read this statement of one of them.

"Imagine, then, that since we are all convinced that the degradation of India is largely due to the suffocation of her ancient spirituality, and that whatever helps to restore that higher standard of thought and morals must be regenerating in national force, every one of us would naturally and without urging be disposed to push forward the Society ... especially if it really is meant to become a Society untainted by selfish motive. ... But you know, as any man who has read history, that patriots may burst their hearts in vain if circumstances are against them. Sometimes it has happened that no human power, not even the fury and force of the loftiest patriotism, has been able to bend an iron destiny aside from its fixed course, and nations have gone out like torches dropped into the water in the engulfing blackness of ruin. Thus, we who have the sense of our country's fall, though not the power to lift her up at once, cannot do as we would, either as to general affairs or this particular one." (*Occult World*, p. 126.)

"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. Periods of mental and moral light and darkness succeed each other as day does night. The major and minor yugas must be accomplished according to the established order of things. And we, borne along the mighty tide, can only modify and direct some of its currents." (*Occult World*, p. 135.)

In other words, the Brotherhood, like all else in the manifested universe, comes under the Law of Periodicity and cannot alter it. It provides the rise and fall of races, which give birth to the “rare efflorescence” known as an Adept, who, by virtue of his spiritual development, belongs to no one nation but to all.

The late lamented Annandabai Joshee, a Brahmin lady and F.T.S., came to America for the express purpose of taking a medical diploma, with a view to female education in India and a breaking down of caste prejudice. The late Govinda Row Sattay also urged the same idea, and was doing what he could to help it. Hence we see Teachers and followers working on the same lines. It is a point of honor among *littérateurs* to inform themselves of facts before making public conclusions upon them: why did not Nemo do so? And have we no caste feeling in Europe and England, no social and racial prejudice in America towards, say, the African and native Indian, or the Chinese, practically and politically, if not theoretically? We ask this question because Nemo states that, “the truth of life is not far from any high and earnest man, but *none will find it in the Orient.*” Is Truth, then, confined to a geographical section, and has all the teeming Orient no high and earnest men? Nemo answers: “In this age the true East is found *only* in the farthest West.” Is Truth, then, no longer universal? Judging by the line of argument which Nemo deems sufficient, we might point to the effects of wild border and other extreme western life as an indictment against the altruism of the Adepts who, Nemo claims, are found there only. But we do not believe in this line of thought. We know the real Adept *is everywhere*, but as the ministrant of Law and not the arbiter.

We have then specific charges of selfishness made by Nemo. To these we oppose their constant teachings. An Adept writes: “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 bears 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.” (*Lucifer*, Nov. 1887).

“Perhaps you will better appreciate our meaning” (of the term “selfish”) “when told that in our view the highest aspirations for the welfare of humanity become tainted with selfishness, if in the mind of the philanthropist there lurks the shadow of a desire for self-benefit, *or a tendency to do injustice, even where these exist unconsciously to himself.*” (Letter from an Adept. *Occult World*, Page 104).

Judged by these standards, how does Nemo’s letter appear? Is its informing spirit either wise, true, or just? Consider Pledge No. 5 of \* Section: “I pledge myself to abstain from condemning others.” Evidently in the order Nemo praises no such charity is required, and we can hardly expect him to accept proofs which speak so loudly against his teaching and teachers.

The charge of selfishness is further based upon the seclusion of the Tibetan Adepts. What does either the charge or the seclusion of the mere body amount to? There is no complete seclusion, even of the body. Certain magnetic laws demand that these bodies, storehouses of magneto-electricity, should be invigorated by the pure atmosphere of high and isolated places. In the *Occult World*, we find an Adept demurring to the performance of certain phenomena on the ground that Simla is 7,000 ft. higher than Allahabad, and the difficulties to be surmounted at the latter” (because lower) “are tremendous.” Here we have a hint for the student. But that the Adepts do go bodily among Their fellow men to aid them, we know, for one visited Col. Olcott in this country, leaving His turban behind Him in proof of the actuality of the visit. In the *Occult World* we find another journeying on various errands of helpfulness, and History

records many such instances. Moreover, the Adept does not need to take his outer body with him; he can also see and aid without moving either body from its place. The Brothers have all lived and suffered among men. One wrote: "We have passed through far worse places than those you now imagine yourselves to be in." The rules of the Lodge exact from chelas (disciples) devoted service with and for humanity, each in turn, and each Adept was once a chela.

The awful sacrifice made for Humanity by the Greatest of all, He Who Himself is named "*The Great Sacrifice*," is beyond the comprehension of ordinary men. Given a certain spiritual attainment, the Adept works with far higher, wider, and more rapid results upon the spiritual plane, and by spiritual methods, but these take effect upon all planes, the material, diurnal one included.

There is abundant evidence, special and general, private and public, that the Brotherhood works incessantly and upon every plane, to deliver Humanity from the terrible evils caused by ignorance and materiality. I challenge the production of one word of *Theirs*, or the quotation of one verified deed of *Theirs*, which will support the charge of selfishness. Their adherents often err, verbally and otherwise, despite the wise counsel of the Teachers, Who are then misjudged for our faults, a lesson we may all take to heart.

One proof more. Nemo admits the antiquity of this hierarchy. *If based upon selfish motives, it could not in the very nature of things exist so long as a Hierarchy.* Universality alone coheres. A society based upon selfish motive contains within itself the elements of its own destruction. Each member is secretly for himself as against all. A selfish Adept is quite possible; a black magician. An egotistic, yet age-enduring, Hierarchy is not possible. Nemo himself goes on to say so, and to state, as a Law, the obligation to serve Humanity. "He who isolates himself from this law isolates himself with its penalty and its fate." He admits the duration of the Hierarchy. Does he then mean that it exists in defiance of the Law? No he is only illogical, unreasoning as those are *who are misled*, or who yield to their own prejudices.

This order is one of merit, of becoming. Men evolve to it and cannot then escape it, but enter by right of Being. Any man who perfects himself in devotion to the All may enter. Nemo himself expresses the idea: "He that is greatest among you, let him be the servant of the all." They say; "We are the servants of the Perfect Law."

Nemo calls these adepts "eaters of the people." It would not be safe to do so in India, where they are enshrined with fervid devotion in the hearts of the people, so often succored by them. He speaks of the miseries of their country. What can he tell us of Thibet, where the stranger is excluded, beyond what the statisticians say of there being neither prisons nor reformatories because none are needed, and that in the whole great country there were not so many crimes for the year 1887 as in the single State of New York for the year?

Even were these proofs less direct, we might ask if such fruits could come from organized selfishness. And we can at need multiply such incidents, such quotations, such teachings, and give deeds of devotion. We hope Vol. 4 of the *Secret Doctrine*,<sup>3</sup> on the lives of the Great Adepts, will set such foolish questions at rest. There are other charges in the Letter, but these points suffice. So many proven errors of necessity impugn the other statements. But I wish to say that I do not see any evidence that Nemo has intentionally misjudged the case. His heart appears in the right place. His mind has been warped. And it would appear that this has not been done through any ordinary agency. There are beings of great spirituality, just as there are others of powerful materiality. Some of these never have been, others never will be, men. Their counsels are not wise, *for Mankind*. "Beware of the Star Rishis; cling to our own human Teachers," writes an Adept in a private letter. High as they are, they envy the diviner

heritage of man. Wherever we find their teachings, there we find a discordant note. The deep full heart of *perfected man* does not beat there. It is my personal belief (of however little worth) that I see such traces upon this Letter. Those whom our Brother Nemo misjudges care not for misrepresentation. But we care; the loyal heart must care, and cannot keep silence. Our teachers would be the first to welcome Nemo, could he carry out the spirit evinced in his beautiful descriptions of what Brotherhood should be. We are all lacking in it; wherefore I wish that we may ignore all differences and work on in essentials in this true Brotherhood.

The Letter itself does not call for such extended notice, but being first published in a valued and useful contemporary, where many earnest thinkers may see it, I could not justly permit these reversed and misconceived facts to go unnoticed.

J. CAMPBELL VER PLANCK, F.T.S.

## NOTES

1. {"Theo-Sophia, Letter to a Seeker. — From the Wisdom of the Wise,," an article by 'Nemo,' a *nom-de-plume*, was published in *The Esoteric*, in two parts: May 1888, pp. 369-373, and May 1888, pp. 390-392.}
2. In six weeks the author has three times written the *Esoteric*, asking to be heard on the other side and enclosing stamps, but has no reply. This seems to denote partiality and a bitter animus,— perhaps infection from the Letter.— J.C.V.P.
3. {Volumes 3 and 4 of *The Secret Doctrine* as H. P. Blavatsky left them were never published. The Theosophical Society, Adyar, did publish a purported volume 3, but it contained only miscellaneous papers and not the volume intended by H.P.B. }

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*The Path* — October 1890, Vol. 5, pp. 213-217.

## A THEOSOPHICAL CATECHISM.

J. CAMPBELL VER PLANCK, F.T.S.

FOR THE USE OF CHILDREN.<sup>1</sup>

LESSON I.

1. Q. What is your belief?  
A. I believe in Theosophy.
2. Q. What is the meaning of the word Theosophy?  
A. It means godlike wisdom, or knowledge of divine things.
3. Q. Do you believe that you have this wisdom?  
A. No. I believe that there is such a divine knowledge, and that it can be attained.
4. Q. By whom can it be attained?  
A. By just men made perfect.
5. Q. With what help?  
A. By the help of the Spiritual soul.
6. Q. Is Theosophy a religion?  
A. No, it is not a religion. It is Religion itself.
7. Q. Explain the difference. What do we mean by a religion?

- A. We mean a fixed statement of belief about divine things, which men have made into a creed or articles of faith which all their followers must agree to.
8. Q. You say men have made these creeds. How?
- A. They have chosen a number of truths, or their interpretation of truths as they see them, and founded churches upon them. Each such church or creed is a religion.
9. Q. What is Religion itself?
- A. It is the whole body of Universal Truth.
10. Q. Into how many departments may Religion be divided?
- A. Two.
11. Q. What are they?
- A. Religion in the universe and Religion in man.
12. Q. What is Religion in the universe?
- A. It is Truth, or real Being, and obedience to divine, universal laws. The universe is founded on Truth, and its development, course, or evolution is guided by those spiritual laws which it always obeys.
13. Q. What is Religion in man?
- A. The desire to seek divine truths and the will to follow them when found.
14. Q. Name another difference between religions and Religion itself.
- A. Religions are made by men and perish like them. But the nature of Truth is divine and it can never die.
15. Q. What does Theosophy teach?
- A. Theosophy does not teach anything, for it is divine knowledge itself. But people who believe that there is such knowledge and that it can be found, learn first that Truth is all and in all, and that no religion is higher than Truth.
16. Q. If Theosophy has no creed, how can we know some of the truths of spiritual wisdom?
- A. That spirit instills the love of Truth into the hearts of men. In the world's long history many holy men, great spiritual teachers, have sought for and have found some of the divine truths.
17. Q. Are they known to any religion?
- A. All religions are built upon some portion of Truth, and all reject other portions of it.
18. Q. How many religions are known to us?
- A. There are said to be ten great religions,<sup>2</sup> and there are many smaller ones and sects.
19. Q. Which is the true one?
- A. Each one claims to be the true one and that all the others are wrong. Each one claims that by it only men can be saved.
20. Q. What do we believe that Theosophy would say of this?
- A. We believe the truth to be that every religion has some divine knowledge in it, and that all are founded upon the one Truth.
21. Q. What makes religions differ?
- A. The different minds of the various men who have seen different aspects or sides of the truth.
22. Q. Where do most theosophical students believe that most divine truths are to be found?
- A. In a body of teaching called The Secret Doctrine.
23. Q. Tell me more about this Secret Doctrine.

- A. It was known to wise men in the far East at an early period of time, long before the Christian era, and they have handed it down to our time.
24. Q. Why do you call it a Secret Doctrine?  
A. Because it was only known to few men at any one period of the world's history.
25. Q. Why was this?  
A. Because few men were sufficiently perfect to be taught by divine wisdom.
26. Q. What religions are most like the Secret Doctrine?  
A. The Buddhist religion and the religion of the Brahmins.
27. Q. Are they two of the great religions?  
A. Yes. They include more than two-thirds of all mankind.
28. Q. But you say other religions contain truths.  
A. Yes, they all do. And all the great teachers from Rama and Buddha to Jesus Christ have taught these things, and all the bibles of different religions contain some of them.
29. Q. Why, then, does each religion say that it alone has Truth?  
A. Because every religion has been taught in two different ways, esoterically, and exoterically.
30. Q. What does esoteric mean?  
A. It means secret. To teach esoterically is to teach the inner, hidden spiritual sense.
31. Q. What does exoteric mean?  
A. It means outwardly. To teach exoterically is to teach the external form or creed.
32. Q. Give me some natural example of this.  
A. If I show you an apple seed and say "Here is an apple seed," that is an exoteric teaching of the outer form and fact. But if I show the seed and say; "Here is a great green tree, with branches waving in the wind and all full of rosy fruit," then that is an esoteric teaching; it tells of the hidden power of the small brown seed to become so great. The first only tells of what we now see with the outer eye — a small brown seed. The second tells the secret truth of what power and beauty hides in the seed and is only seen by the eye of faith or knowledge.
33. Q. What was the reason for these differences in teaching?  
A. To each man was given only what he could understand. Only a very few were wise in hidden spiritual things. A child, or a man who had never seen a seed grow, would not believe you about its inner power. The great number of unwise people had to be taught in a simple way just as in a Kindergarten object-lessons are given to a child.
34. Q. Name some great teachers who said that they taught in both these ways.  
A. Rama, Buddha, Krishna; and the same is said about Jesus, now called Jesus Christ.<sup>3</sup>
35. Q. In what sense are the meanings of all religions the same?  
A. In the hidden or esoteric sense.
36. Q. How can this be proved?  
A. By comparing or examining all religions, when we find one Truth, like a thread of gold, running through all.
37. Q. Why do not the churches see this?

- A. Because they study the outward forms or object-lessons called creeds and because many men are selfishly interested in keeping churches in being.
38. Q. What should these things teach us?  
A. To pay as much respect to the religion of another as we wish to have shown to our own.
39. Q. What else?  
A. That Truth is above all religions, must be looked for within, and that the man who seeks Truth for himself and obeys it in himself, so far as he knows it, is truly religious, and not the man who only believes what he has heard from others without search or comparison.
40. Q. What, then, is the first action of the theosophist?  
A. To do his duty.
41. Q. What is his first duty?  
A. To seek Truth. To love it better than himself or any other thing.
42. Q. What next?  
A. To obey it; to live by its laws when found.
43. Q. And after that, what will he do?  
A. He will fulfill every duty belonging to that station in life where divine laws have placed him.
44. Q. Are you then a theosophist?  
A. That is too much to say. It is not easy to be a true theo-sophist, or follower of Truth, but I am trying to become one.

#### ANECDOTE TO LESSON I.

We are told an old story of a shield hanging at two cross roads. One side of this shield was silver; the other side was gold. Two knights came riding along, one on each road. The first cried out: "Oh! What a fine silver shield." The other knight, who was on the road where the gold side showed, laughed and said: "No, you mistake; the shield is gold." This made the first knight very angry. He cried out: "It is not gold, it is silver." "You are blind," said the other. "You are a fool," the first replied; and so they quarreled bitterly. Just as they were getting down from their horses to fight over it, a third knight rode up and asked what the trouble was. They told him. "That is very strange," he said. "I must look for myself." So he went to look for the truth for himself, when he found out that the sides were different but yet it was the same shield.

Just in this way persons who come to Truth by different religions see different sides of it, think there is no other side and quarrel. But the man who loves Truth enough to seek it for himself finds out that the two sides both exist and are parts of the same shield. So the peaceful search for Truth and the power to look on both sides are better than too great pride in self and belief in our own road.

Now this story is an example of esoteric and of exoteric teaching. The outer meaning is what I have just told you; it is exoteric. The esoteric or inner meaning is that what we call spirit and matter, or the divine and the natural, are not separate things. They are each a side of the same shield; they appear different, but it is only an appearance. The shield, the cause, is one and the same. Further on you will learn more about spirit and matter.

J. CAMPBELL VER PLANCK.

## NOTES

1. It is intended that one of these lessons shall be studied four successive Sundays, the pupil learning the answers either by rote, or, preferably, giving their gist in his own terms, while the teacher should explain and illustrate with anecdotes, tales, or scientific facts. In this way the lessons can be expanded to the needs of individuals. The teachings contained in them are mainly derived from the works of H. P. Blavatsky or from oriental sources, and no claim of originality is put forth by the author-compiler.
2. {*Ten Great Religions*, James Freeman Clarke, lists the ten great religions as: Brahminism, Buddhism, Zoroastrianism, Egyptian, Grecian, Roman, Teutonic/Scandinavian, Judaism, Islam, and Christianity.}
3. Read Biblical and Vedic parables here and explain them.

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*The Path* – November 1890, Vol. 5, pp. 249-252.

## A THEOSOPHICAL CATECHISM.

J. CAMPBELL VER PLANCK

FOR THE USE OF CHILDREN.

LESSON II.

1. Q. You spoke of the Secret Doctrine in our last lesson. What did you say of it?  
A. That theosophists believed it to contain more theosophical knowledge than any other body of teaching.
2. Q. By what other name is the Secret Doctrine sometimes called?  
A. The Science-Religion.
3. Q. Why?  
A. Because it is science and religion in one.
4. Q. What do you mean by Science?  
A. The search for facts or laws in nature.
5. Q. What do you mean by nature?  
A. The universe as we know or may know it.
6. Q. What do you mean by religion?  
A. Obedience to divine laws.
7. Q. Where are these laws to be found?  
A. Throughout all nature.
8. Q. What then does this Science-Religion do?  
A. It teaches divine laws, the search for them, and how to obey them in our lives.
9. Q. You speak of divine things or laws. What do you mean by that?  
A. Divine things are those that belong to the world of causes.
10. Q. Is the world which we see around us a world of cause?  
A. No. It is a world of effects.
11. Q. What is a cause?  
A. Something which makes or molds. Causes are invisible spiritual forces.
12. Q. What is an effect?  
A. Effects are visible results produced by a spiritual invisible cause.

13. Q. Can you give me an example of this?  
A. Heat is caused by an expansive force. Cold is caused by a contractive force. We do not see the forces, but we feel heat and see it when it bursts into fire. We feel cold, and see it when it condenses into ice or snow. Heat and cold are effects; the forces which contract or expand are causes.
14. Q. What, then, lies within the visible world of effects?  
A. The world of causes, invisible to the ordinary eye.
15. Q. What do we learn in studying Theosophy?  
A. The Science of cause and effect.
16. Q. Why is such knowledge divine?  
A. Because it teaches us to know those causes through which all the worlds came into being.
17. Q. Can you tell me how many principal teachings the Secret Doctrine contains?  
A. Three.
18. Q. What is the first?  
A. That there is one universal eternal principle of Being or Life, from which proceeds all that exists.
19. Q. Name the second teaching.  
A. The absolute universality of the law of periodicity, or action and reaction, ebb and flow.
20. Q. Can you give another name to this law?  
A. Karma, or the law of action and reaction.
21. Q. What is the third teaching?  
A. The identity of all souls with the Oversoul.
22. Q. What do you mean by that?  
A. That there is one universal Oversoul, or soul of the world, and that all souls are identical with, or united to and in, that soul.
23. Q. Do you mean the souls of men?  
A. No. I mean the souls of all creatures.
24. Q. Why are these three teachings so important?  
A. Because all other knowledge rests upon them.
25. Q. Explain what you mean by the souls of all creatures.  
A. I mean that all nature is ensouled. That is, everything has a soul of its own kind and a knowledge or instinct of its own kind.
26. Q. Why so?  
A. Because the universal soul is everywhere. It is in every point of the universe. It is in all bodies and knows all things. The soul of the ant and the soul of a man are not alike, but both are in and a part of the soul substance that is everywhere.
27. Q. Do you mean as each drop of water is part of the ocean and is yet itself?  
A. Yes.
28. Q. There is one great truth which we learn in these three teachings. What is it?  
A. Universal Brotherhood.
29. Q. How do we learn this in the first teaching?  
A. That teaching shows us one divine principle of Life, from which all things proceed. It alone never dies. Since all things, creatures, and men came from it, the one, all created things are its children and all are brothers.

30. Q. When you say universal brotherhood, do you mean the brotherhood of human beings only?  
A. No. I said *universal* brotherhood. The word universal includes all things which came forth from The One.
31. Q. But we see many kinds, such as stones, plants, birds, beasts, men.  
A. That is because the world soul enters first into the elements, such as air, fire, water, and then into the mineral, vegetable, animal, and human worlds. Each soul spark goes through all things thus, and slowly reaches perfection. But in the beginning all came forth from The One, and in the end all will return there.
32. Q. Explain this further.  
A. The only real, the only eternal is The One. And as all things began and end there, that unity or oneness of soul is their only real state. Souls may change their bodies or dwelling-places, for these are not lasting. They pass away. They are unreal. Soul-union with the all is the only real state, so universal brotherhood alone is real.
33. Q. How does the second teaching, that of the Law of Karma, display Universal Brotherhood?  
A. It shows the universe as governed by one great Law. That Law applies to all that exists and knits all worlds and creatures together: all things are the children of this Law.
34. Q. How does the third teaching display Universal Brotherhood?  
A. It shows that all souls rest in and are parts of the universal soul.
35. Q. What then seems to be the first fact of life?  
A. Universal Brotherhood.
36. Q. Can you give it another name?  
A. The spiritual identity of all Being.
37. Q. What does that mean?  
A. That all came from Spirit or the Great Breath, and all will return to it.
38. Q. If it is true that we are all brothers, what should this teach us?  
A. It should teach us perfect justice in all things.
39. Q. How best can we display justice?  
A. By mercy, pity, and love. We should do in all things and to all things, even to the very least, as we would be done by.
40. Q. Can you tell me what other teaching is contained in these three?  
A. Reincarnation.
41. Q. What is meant by Reincarnation?  
A. That the soul enters into many bodies and lives many lives in such bodies.
- J. CAMPBELL VER PLANCK.

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*The Path* – January 1891, Vol. 5, pp. 304-307.

## A THEOSOPHICAL CATECHISM.

J. CAMPBELL VER PLANCK

FOR THE USE OF CHILDREN.

LESSON III.

1. Q. In our last lesson we spoke of the Eternal Principle of Life. Can you tell me by what other name it is called?  
A. The One Life.
2. Q. What does this mean?  
A. It means that one universal Life flows through all worlds and beings.
3. Q. How may we regard that Life?  
A. As a stream flowing eternally from the Infinite.
4. Q. What may we say of its drops or essential Atoms?  
A. We may say that every one is a living soul.
5. Q. Is the soul separate from another or from the whole?  
A. No. They are distinct as the drops or waves of ocean may be distinct, yet are always united to the whole body of water.
6. Q. Is this Life stream more than alive?  
A. Yes. It is intelligent also.
7. Q. Are there different degrees of it?  
A. The Life is the same. The intelligence differs according to the bodies in which the Life Principle is found.
8. Q. What else may the Life Principle be called?  
A. The living Breath of the unknown Eternal One.
9. Q. Can you tell me something of its action as regards bodies?  
A. When it passes into a body, that body is what we call "alive." When it passes out of a body, that body falls to pieces, but the Life forces are still present and begin to separate all its parts.
10. Q. Can you give me an illustration?  
A. A fish that lives in the ocean is part of it. The fish shares the life of the ocean and has a special part too of its own. Then the fish dies. The water forces begin to tear it to pieces so soon as its special part of Life force passes back into the ocean. All the particles of the fish are spread over the ocean; some become food for other fish, some pass slowly back into the water again, some pass into new forms, but still the Life of the ocean is one and the same.
11. Q. What does this teach us?  
A. Universal Brotherhood.
12. Q. Why?  
A. Because all worlds, Men, and creatures breathe the same breath of Life. It passes back and forth between them. What is now mine may next be yours, and then it may pass into other creatures and things. It is always one. We live in it; we are suspended in the Ocean of Life as fish in the sea. So what one does affects all, and brotherly actions are for the good of all.
13. Q. Can we know more of this Principle of Life?  
A. A few wise men may know it, but most men know only some of its laws.
14. Q. Can you tell me what its great Law is?  
A. The Law of Karma.
15. Q. What does Karma mean?  
A. Action.
16. Q. Then is this a Law of Action only?  
A. No. Every action has its reaction, so Karma is the Law of action and reaction.
17. Q. Explain this.

- A. If I throw a ball against a wall, it bounds back. Whatever we say or do goes on and on until it reaches the bounds of our solar system.
18. Q. To whom does it come back?  
A. To the person that did it, as the ball to the hand that threw it.
19. Q. Why?  
A. Because it is easier for it to return along the path that it made.
20. Q. But how can a thought, a word, or a deed return?  
A. Because all these are like waves set up in the ocean. The waves beat the shore and roll back. There is a great Life ocean about us, and whatever we do makes ripples in it. These ripples go on and on, then they return.
21. Q. If, then, I do a bad deed, or think a bad thought, what will happen?  
A. It will return, after a time, to you, and will be your punishment.
22. Q. Do good deeds return also?  
A. Yes, and they are our reward.
23. Q. What is a good deed?  
A. Whatever is brotherly and kind or helpful to all creatures and people.
24. Q. Then it is really happier for us to do good to others than to please ourselves?  
A. Yes. For a selfish deed comes back and hurts us, while it has only pleased us for a little time. But an unselfish deed brings great happiness to all.
25. Q. What makes this so?  
A. The nature of the Life Principle.
26. Q. And what else?  
A. The Law of Karma.
27. Q. Give this Law another name.  
A. The Law of Periodicity.
28. Q. What does Periodicity mean?  
A. Regular periods in changes. That is, ebb and flow, influx and efflux, come and go, in fixed, regular periods.
29. Q. Is this Law universal?  
A. Yes; it is.
30. Q. Name some instances of it.  
A. Light and dark. Winter and Summer. Pleasure and Pain. Good and Evil. Life and Death. The tide comes in and goes out. Men breathe in and out. They are young, then old. Everywhere we see regular changes which show this Law.
31. Q. What causes this Law and makes it Universal?  
A. The Breath of the Unseen Eternal.
32. Q. What do you mean by that?  
A. All we know of the Eternal is its Great Breath.
33. Q. What else is this called?  
A. Spirit or Motion.
34. Q. Into what is it breathed?  
A. Into Substance or Matter.
35. Q. What else is this called?  
A. The World Mother or the Oversoul.
36. Q. Are Spirit and Substance Separate?  
A. No. They are eternally united.

37. Q. When the Breath is breathed out into Substance, what occurs?  
A. The worlds and all things in them are evolved, or made out of action of Spirit and Matter or Substance.
38. Q. By means of what?  
A. By means of Motion. Motion in matter makes forms.<sup>1</sup>
39. Q. What do you mean by Substance?  
A. That which sub-stands or stands under. The one substance out of which all things are made is beneath every thing that is. This is why it is called the World-Mother.
40. Q. After the Breath is breathed out and worlds are made, what next occurs?  
A. All the worlds and all things in them have action and reaction in every part.
41. Q. And what next?  
A. After a long period, The Great Breath is drawn in again.
42. Q. What happens then to the world of Being?  
A. It is all dissolved back again into The Breath.
43. Q. Does it too cease?  
A. No. It is ever coming and going. It is eternal.
44. Q. Why do all things share this action of The Breath?  
A. Because it is in everything and moves them to and fro. They are made of it and through it and in it, so their action is like its own.
45. Q. What more do we know of the Unseen One?  
A. Nothing except this Law which is Its nature.
46. Q. What then may we say of the Law of Karma?  
A. That wherever Spirit or Life is, there the Law of Karma is also.
47. Do you know any saying that gives the moral spirit of this Law?  
A. Whatsoever ye sow, that shall ye reap.
48. Q. What do we learn from this Law?  
A. That strict justice is the eternal nature of all being.
49. Q. What is true justice on the part of Man to other Men and creatures?  
A. Universal Brotherhood.
50. Q. Why so?  
A. Because what is done by one affects all the rest, as all men and beings are living under this law.
51. Q. Can you give me an example of this in human life?  
A. Yes. If I speak an angry word to any one at the beginning of the day, it makes both him and me feel differently for some time. This affects what we say to others, changes them to us, and so all are injured by the one selfish deed.
52. Q. What then is the only true justice?  
A. Mercy and Love.

## NOTE

1. Let the teacher explain crystallization. Also that sounds spoken into a tube against a membrane covered with paste makes forms. The action of sand on glass if a bow is drawn over the glass, and so on.

## THE THEOSOPHICAL FIELD.

JASPER NIEMAND, F.T.S.

After more than a dozen years of theosophical activity the question arises: "Where is the best field for Theosophy?" It is coupled with the admission that Theosophy does not recognize the missionary spirit; it does not believe in what are called "converts" to any great extent. Proclaiming the entire freedom of man, the dignity and sacredness of the human soul, it does not run about attacking the Ideals of others, nor yet thrusting Truth upon the crowd as a huckster bawls his wares. In this Theosophy is preeminently well bred; it teaches one to mind his own affairs. In recognition of this liberality the attitude of theosophical workers is that of persons who stand ready at all times to answer or instruct questioners without going out into the highway to drag them in. They know that only those persons are ready for Theosophy who have grown up to it, who have gradually evolved to it through their inner experience. There is no need to importune such persons; they seek us out.

The Theosophical Society has had, of course, to suffer from the advances of those who want to use it as a stalking horse, or those who think that occultism may for a time afford them a piquante pose; also from that elegant condescension which is the thin enamel to innate vulgarity, worn by persons who imagine that they can confer a service or a prestige upon Universal Truth. This is much as a festoon of attitudinizing monkeys may imagine they lend a lustre to some spreading monarch of the forest. A fond conceit, worthy of our puling civilization, leads these immature individuals to imagine that their money, their touting, or their small names are gifts of price to the Religion of the Ages, and should be gratefully recognized. They may do much for themselves through Theosophy, but for *it* they can do nothing whatever. Universals have their root in Being, and man can only lift himself to them. He must come to need them; he must feel that the Truth is an imperious, an absolute, necessity in his life, before he is ready to make sacrifices for it. He is inevitably called to sacrifice, in some form or other, as the world uses the word. When the ploughman rends the wild soil: when the pruner uses the hook or the sculptor smites the redundancy of marble into dust as the fair form emerges, they do not use the word sacrifice at all; neither does the theosophist when he endeavors to break the clay mold and find within it the Magnum Opus. Theosophy is blind to all the prizes of the world; it has nothing to offer men but the Truth and a search for the Truth, and they must be well out of the nursery and leading strings before they can participate in either; they must be wholly able to stand alone. In the same way the Theosophical Society welcomes all well-intentioned persons, but, whether consciously or not, every member gains more than he or she gives. They share in the magnetic life of a powerful organization, using the word powerful in the sense of real, essential power. If they do not understand the force and value of this privilege they are out of place in the Society: the more they give in sympathy, harmony, or any kind of encouragement, the higher the blessings they receive.

It was supposed, and perhaps naturally, that the best field for theosophical teachings would be found among the cultured classes. The world was to be convinced of error, and an appeal to the intellect seemed in order. Moreover, their influence and example would react upon classes less favored (apparently) by karmic circumstance,

and would induce these to follow the lead of their more educated contemporaries. It seemed to some that the heaven would work best from above downward.

Events have not justified this conclusion. Many persons of the highest intelligence and culture have accepted Theosophy. Some of them are our most valued workers, and he can do the most work who has the most ability to make himself heard by his fellow men. For the worldly plane this holds good incontestably. All that such members have done for Humanity and for themselves cannot be overstated. The heroic and revered Madame Blavatsky stands at their head, but beyond and above our arguments because of her attainments and leadership. Yet the fact that we have found able champions in this class does not controvert that other fact that such members are numerically rare. They are outnumbered by others of their order who content themselves with intellectual appreciation and a watch for flotsam and jetsam in the way of knowledge, ready in a moment to desert.

Theosophy is not a creed, but a new life to be lived, and the question is; "Where shall we find the most persons who are ready to live it?" In the opinion of the writer they are to be found among the working class, so far as the United States is concerned. This belief is based upon radical differences inherent in these classes themselves. The term "working class" may be used for the purposes of this article, and includes all wage earners, especially artisans, mechanics, clerks, and various employees of both sexes. In itself the term is a misnomer, because in the United States we are nearly all workers.

The very first condition of Theosophical progress is the abandonment of the personality. This includes the ability to discard all our preconceptions and ideals for the Truth, for that stands above all human ideals. While searching for the Truth, "the processes of preparation go silently on till the individual, all unconscious, reaches the moment when the one needed force touches him, and then every prepared constituent falls instantly into place and the being is — as it were — reconstructed at once. Conceptions, relations, aims are revolutionized." Until this moment comes, the individual must possess the power of standing uninfluenced by all external conditions. He must be able to think from and for himself; there must be no attraction for any other aim; he must hold himself fluidic and free.

Apart from educational advantages and a quickened intelligence, the cultured classes have the additional ones of worldly experience, observation, and comparison. But they are like the microscopist who loses the ensemble in the ramification of detail; it is a very transient and small world that they know so well. They eat the fruit, but of the orchard they know less than nothing in their mistaken conceptions of life. They are to some extent cosmopolitan, but only in a surface sense and in limited degree as compared with your occultist, the cosmopolitan *pur sang* who must be equally at home, not only in all lands and spheres, but in all elements. They have reached an infinite perfection of detail; they have an extensive and varied knowledge of effects — such effects as art, science, statecraft, literature, and less noble interests —, but they are too far dazzled by these to think of looking behind them for causes. Their advantages weight them enormously by what the French call "the defects of their qualities." They have so much that they fear to lose! They are bound by the million cobwebs of social prejudice, of public opinion, of their family or personal record. There is nothing so confining as cobwebs. Chains may be broken by native strength, but of cobwebs we are scarcely aware; we think to brush them away, but they cling and obstruct the clear sight. In the very nature of circumstances the position of the cultured man or woman is largely based upon suffrage *à la mode*. Wealth may command it, but this also traps us with innumerable enticements; the more refined our nature, the more subtle, the more enchanting these pleasures may be made. The intellectual have formed mental habits which they cannot break, or, if they can, they will not. These processes have made them what they are, and they value what they are. They are encrusted with a growth

which seems to them precisely the most desirable in the world. They are the aloe flower of an elaborate although shallow civilization; they have forced themselves with exceeding great care. They have exquisite ideals; their creeds are pure, their code of honor subtle; whether they carry them out or not, there is nothing finer to be found outside of Theosophy. Their personalities are thus their gods; they cannot become self-iconoclasts. They are ready to seek Truth, even, upon accepted lines, but they dare not trust themselves outside of those lines in transgression of that social code by virtue of which they are pre-eminent. They do not see that this pre-eminence is that of a weather cock upon a steeple; their position depends upon prompt subserviency to self-imposed tyrants. It is impossible for them to look at facts in their own light; it is not done; what would people say? You who demand it, you Truth, you are *impractical*: this is the final anathema of the 19th Century, and a great bugbear for conservative souls. If Truth clashes with our present institutions, let us have Truth and build up a better civilization. They demur; no doubt they suspect they would have but little hand in it. The cultured classes are thus prevented by all the tendencies and surroundings of their lives from thinking independently. They have given too many hostages to fortune. Numbers have an intellectual appreciation of Theosophy, but that does not carry one far; they become disheartened for want of personal progress. Like the Prince of fairy tales who climbed the hill of Difficulty for the golden water, they hear the voices of the stones behind them flouting, jeering, calling them back: they falter, turn, and become stones like their predecessors. Others feel an emotional attraction, but heart alone may lead to hysteria quite as well as to sympathy. Their vivid charm, their intelligence, and their virtues are beside the question. They are too preoccupied to have any intuitions of an underlying current of real life. What is needed is interior conviction, freedom, imagination, elasticity, a superb audacity, perfect fearlessness of all results, confidence in one's own soul as the arbiter of destiny, an entire independence, even of one's own mind: we must be swift to seize the floating clues which drift by us in the darkness; we must have a prescience of the unseen. All this the cultured classes cannot have while they lean upon personages and an arbitrary social system like houses of cards. They would ask what Theosophy has to offer in return for so much effort, and when we answer "The Truth," they would reply courteously that they are satisfied as it is. This is not true; they are not satisfied, but they are epicurean; they dread knowing anything less delightful than themselves. I would not be misunderstood, I who feel their peculiar charm so keenly. When from this hotbed arises a nature capable of freeing itself, capable of self-reliance, of accepting Truth without counting any cost, that nature makes itself respected everywhere; it is a center of energy, and Theosophy has a priceless co-adjutor. The combination is rare because the conditions are unfavorable. We have the statement of Christ for believing that "it is easier for a camel to pass through the eye of an needle than for a rich man to enter the Kingdom of God,"<sup>1</sup> — the mystical region which He said is "within us."<sup>2</sup>

With the working classes the case stands otherwise. In the social order they have no traditions, no Molochs they fear to offend. They are not the slaves of their ideals, but with the first dawn of leisure they look about for an ideal, and they test those of other men. They have come into contact with a more brutal phase of error. Materiality has exhibited itself to them in its grossest aspect; they have not seen it sensuously appareled, or mounted upon a pedestal of Intellectuality with crowds of fame-worshippers at the base. Illusion wears for them a mask of iron instead of an alluring veil. They have been blinded by sorrow rather than joy. They feel an instant need of Truth. She is within their grasp, who can reach so little else. When she comes to them she is welcomed as Deliverer; their love penetrates her meaning better than the unaided intellect does. They have a more eager gratitude, a sleepless desire to pass the benefit

along to others. It seems as if this heaven works best from below upward in American life, where the substratum soon works to the surface and manifests then in power.

The working class are untrammelled by the subtleties of modern thought. They may be tricked, but they take no delight in tricking themselves. Like Alexander, they sever Gordian Knots bluntly: they are able to look squarely at a proposition on its own merits without a sidelong glance at Mrs. Grundy. They have no received and duly-approved yardstick by which they feel bound to measure all things at the risk of the lowered barometer of public opinion. There is not here, as there is in England, an ironclad code of opinions and customs which constitutes the "respectability" of the worker, and which he owes to all the neighbors "in the block." They are moral because they choose to be so, and each feels free to think as he pleases. In fact, next to education they value independence of thought. To them, thinking is a luxury where to the cultured it is often a bore; this because the latter think more tortuously. They are influenced by knowledge; they know that it is power. But they discriminate; they value only that which seems to them to be vital and true; for them there is no fashion in knowledge which changes with the seasons. They are not influenced by the cultured classes, for these are largely recruited every year from their own. They are intensely conscious of their own possibilities. They know that they are the bone and sinews of the country; it has been demonstrated to them by so many of their fellows, now at the head of affairs in all departments, even those of cultured wealth. A future of power is not a far cry to their ambition. While the other class is occupied in maintaining its consolidation, this one is occupied with becoming, and knows that men raise themselves by independent thought, by qualities fostered within themselves. They yield quickly to the flux of change, and their mental activities remain unstratified. These are conditions eminently favorable to Theosophy.

If Theosophy were a creed with churches, clergy, and charities to support and a prestige to maintain, the patronage of culture per se might be necessary to it. Instead of this, it is, as we said, a life to live. It is the water of life for those who thirst, and for water, not for wine, for strength, not for excitement. It teaches man to look within and beyond himself while relying upon himself: this lesson the worker already comprehends. The greater simplicity of his life is free from the involved complexities, the manifold interests of modern social existence, where these things are forever stifling the natural instincts of men. The majority have an intuitive belief in the reality of the unseen; it arises from the greater impersonality of their life, their identification with popular currents. Many have had occult experiences of various kinds: this will not surprise students who know that such would be far more common if our lives were not passed in a continual whirl of external excitement. The case of Jacob Boehme, the poor shoemaker, illustrates these arguments; indeed it would seem that almost all the great mystics came from the poorer order.

Again, what Theosophy has to offer is more needed by the working class. They feel the inequality of Fortune most; it is they who need that explanation of fate which is found in Karma, that consolation which the law of reaction (or compensation) affords. It is even the poor, the wretched, the sinful who have found the hard side of the professor of religion, found that it is his sense of isolation, of separation, which makes the bread of his charity so bitter. They have found that the gentlest philanthropist of them all does not believe or follow his Christ in this,— he does not recognize the brotherhood of man. They have found that the deed of love alone relieves. Sorrow has taught them many truths unsoftened by a sympathizing circle of friends. Life is better known to them than to those who only look upon it after it has been upholstered and well aired. They have learned concentration, patience, endurance; they have mastered the body in many ways. They have everything to gain by Theosophy and little to lose. They are too sturdy, too ingenious, too argumentative for

worn-out creeds to hold them in their exoteric forms: the esoteric might,— but who hopes soon for that apotheosis? The cultured classes make little impression upon American life at large; it is everywhere the worker who rises and holds his own.

Just as we believe that America is the great field for Theosophy because the momentum of progress is so great here, so we believe that among the laboring classes the largest harvest is to be reaped. I doubt not this holds good in other countries, notwithstanding the weight of the aristocratic classes, because I see everywhere a tendency to Unity, I see the on-coming surge of the People and the working of that Principle which determines the Brotherhood of Man.

JASPER NIEMAND, F.T.S.

## NOTES

1. {Matthew 19:24.}
2. {Luke 17:21.}

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## THE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY AND MADAME BLAVATSKY.

JASPER NIEMAND, F.T.S.

The following letter has been received from a valued contributor, and we deem it of sufficient importance to print it in this place:

DEAR BRO. JUDGE:

With pleasure I acknowledge the receipt of your letter, asking whether I am prepared to support H. P. Blavatsky in whatever course she may pursue.

While I know that the action of an individual matters but little, I know also that it does have its due effect: a loyal heart is one of the occult powers. Hence I am glad to answer that I do and shall at all times, in all places, and to all persons, *unqualifiedly* sustain Madame Blavatsky. I will follow her lead so long as I can understand her, and when I cannot understand I will follow with my intuition; when that fails I will blindly and doggedly follow still.

For this course there are reasons. Intuition and analogy alike furnish them. They lie at the very basis of the unseen or occult world, and that world is the only real one. It is not a world of form like ours. Here all tends to form, to segregation, to crystallization; consequently to limitations and boundaries. This is true alike of forms social and political, religious, civic, domestic; it is also true of the minds of men; they also, against our best interests and endeavor, strive to cast us in a mold, that the free soul may not do its boundless work in us, and in order to bind us yet awhile to Nature and the lower natural order.

In that other world which is the True, this order changes. This world is subversive of forms. Its influence penetrates so far into the material world in this respect, that its subversion becomes the condition of free growth; what does not change, be it an institution, a creature, or the mind of man, solidifies and passes into the change we call death, which is a more violent and sudden wrenching asunder of

that which is no longer capable of free growth. The life condition is one of sloughing off as well as receiving, and all nervous action proceeds by ganglionic shocks.

So it must be with the Theosophical Society if it is to live and expand in helpfulness and power. Men must fall away from us e're then as the forest sheds the autumnal leaf. Shocks must occur, not alone coming from the outside, but internal shocks, the necessary efforts of the theosophical organism to adjust itself to the laws of growth.

Many there be who lament these effects; it is because they know them not as laws. I am as enamored of Peace as any man, but I do not choose it at the expense of spiritual growth. For us there is no real and lasting Peace outside of the Eternity. This is a dark age; there is stern work to be done. The lurid action of this cycle is not to be turned by repose, by "sweetness and light." Let all weak and wounded souls fall to the rear — and let us get to that work. There is none too much time to do it in. *The future of the race is now at stake.* It is seed time, and the ground must be harrowed and torn. I know that there is one who has devoted all her being to this work; one who under beneficent and all wise suggestions is hastening it on; concentrating Karma and bringing it to a head in all directions; culminating these internal shocks that the organism may grow faster, that it may be able to stand alone forcefully when it has lost her, and that by its increased action and usefulness it may merit and obtain an increase of spiritual influence, a new outpour of power and aid from that unseen world where Karma is the sole arbiter. And any man or woman may know this as absolutely as you and I and some others do, who will take the trouble to consider the matter from the standpoint of soul and not from that of mind alone.

Then too there is the standpoint of heart, and it is of great value. What says the *Ramayana*? "Be grateful. Sages prescribe expiations for murderers, robbers, drunkards, and other sinners, *but no expiation can wash away the sin of one whose offense is ingratitude.* Why is this? All these sayings are based upon universal laws. So I can tell you (and you know it) why this offense is so deep; why this "sin" cannot be pardoned. It is because Karma is inflexibly just, and he who breaks a chain of influence by refusing to recognize the source whence it comes to him, and by turning aside from that source, has by his own action perverted the stream from his door. His punishment is simply this; the stream fails him; he discovers in after times the full and arid misery of his position. In our world here below we think we stand as isolated centers of energy, having no vital connection with one another and the world at large except by our own will. We do, indeed, succeed in locking up an enormous amount of energy by thus impeding its free flow. But as the evolutionary order and the very nature of Deity are against us, sooner or later we are swept aside, but not without repeated opportunities of choice. These occasions are now repeatedly furnished for us, in matters theosophical, by H. P. Blavatsky; in every test surmounted, in every glimpse of intuition or act of faith, we grow. We do not grow, as a body or as individuals, when from lack of these virtues, and being ungrateful, we fail to give in our constant adhesion to her who stands in this dark age as the messenger of the higher Powers. For in that other world, through and with which she works, there are hierarchies held inviolable from cycle to cycle; vast organizations formed by universal law, wherein every member stands in his own order and merit, and can no more be expunged or disregarded by those above or below him than I can blot out a star. All efface themselves for this work, reincarnating again and again for it alone. There is no other divine method of work than this, which directs the ever welling torrents of cosmic energy down through unbroken chains of great Beings and reverent men. To drop one link is impossible. In the occult world it is not permitted to receive the message and reject the messenger. Nor is it allowable to be ignorant of these universal, self-sustaining laws. Was it not an adept who said: "Ignorance of law cannot be pleaded among men, but ignorance of fact may. In

occultism, even if you are ignorant of some facts of importance, you are not excused by *The Law*, for it has regard for no man and pursues its adjustments without regard to what we know or are ignorant of.”

The sole question is this. Did H. P. Blavatsky bring us theosophical revelations from the East or did she not? No one denies that she did. They split up on conventional and personal questions, but not upon this one. Then none of those who have even remotely felt the influence of those revelations, least of all a Society formed and sustained by her, are really in a position to deny her their full support. She does not pay our dues and rental; but are we “sustained,” as a body, by those things, or by the fresh impetus to occultism and the new ideas given out by her and through her agency and request? Even in the material world some show of gratitude is demanded of us, but in the Eternity it is written: Let all things return through that source whence they proceeded forth. This august Law cannot be violated. The Divine, working on our plane, must have human agents or vehicles. In private human relations they are human, subject to error. In all that pertains to their appointed mission they are to be held as infallible; if they err there, the consequence falls upon them alone. He who follows the guide appointed him in the occult order is the gainer by his utter faith and love, even should that guide lead him into error. For his error can soon be set right and is so, while his lack of faith and love cannot be made up for; they are organic defects of the soul.

We are constantly tried upon the question of form versus spirit, as a test of the power of illusion over us. In the T.S., we naturally hold to our rules and laws. These only govern the exoteric body. Thinkers amongst us must long have foreseen the moment when these forms must change; a moment when we should be asked to testify to our belief in the esoteric body; that is to say, in the actuality of our Society as a spiritual factor, with spiritual chiefs. We may welcome any such hour of test as a sign of progression on our part. It would set formal laws aside. Well it is when spirit and letter go together. They are often divorced by the urgencies of this life, and were we not madmen then to choose the letter? New forms grow all too soon, but when the spirit is fled, life is lost to that form. We have an opportunity of making such choice when we are asked whether we are ready to endorse H. P. Blavatsky or prefer to stand upon our own independence. That independence is a fancied thing, as you know. We are not the natural product of this era, but a graft watered with the heart’s blood of our Founder, one out of season in the mere natural order, but permitted, rendered possible, by the eternal order, and constantly invigorated through her. There are those who say, “Surely I can study theosophy on my own account.” Not so; no one can get divine wisdom on his own account, or for it. Separation and remoteness are only apparent. We must in thought recognize the sources of our enlightenment and go out in love towards them. Minds and hearts closed to these truths are not open to diviner influences at all. They must recognize that the heralds who speak with trumpet voice to the age alone make spiritual progress possible to the great mass of men, and each of us must admit and stand ready to pay the debt of Humanity.

I do not consider it in the least necessary for me to know what Madame Blavatsky might do, or even why she does it. I accept the test gladly, as a new step onward, full of joy for my comrades who do so, full of sorrow for those who do not. “Every human action is involved in its faults, as the fire in its smoke,”<sup>1</sup> says the *Gîtā*. Nor does the Lord create those actions or the faculty of acting, we are told, but that “each man’s own nature creates them; nature prevaleth.” Every organism thus differentiates the one life according to its progress, more or less, while above all the Lord awaits the final evolution of nature into Himself — Itself. Thus it is that her personality — and all personalities — are beside the question. Here too we are tested upon our power to rise above appearances, to look beyond conventions. These shocks

are no doubt needed also. So I look to the spirit and to the fixed attitude behind all those various deeds. It is one of generosity, self-abnegation, absolutely fearless devotion to an Ideal,— the highest Ideal known. Each hour of her life is given to the enlightenment of mankind, and such pearls she distributes throughout those weary hours as might singly ransom the eccentricities of an hundred lives. These personalities are naught. Behind hers there is a mystery. She is second to no mere man, and if called to any issue we must choose her from among men and forms; let us hope we shall never be so called, but that all will follow our true Leader.

The Theosophical Society stands to Madame Blavatsky as a child; our life is hers; in and for us she lives. Her great longing is to see us able to stand alone, to have a claim of our own upon the Great Ones; able to draw our own sustenance and strength from the gods before she leaves us. You who know that I have never met her personally may ask how I know this. Shall I study the True faithfully and not know that true heart? It is Karma appoints us our guides through our own attractive influences, and as such H. P. Blavatsky stands to all the theosophists of the century, recorded or unrecorded. We must be prepared to sacrifice some such things as forms, rules, tastes, and opinions, for the sake of Truth and occult progress. For such progress an opportunity is now offered us through the acceptance of a simple test of intuition and faith. For this Madame Blavatsky has my profound and renewed gratitude, and I am, as ever, hers and

Yours faithfully,

JASPER NIEMAND, F.T.S.

## NOTE

1. {*Bhagavad Gîtâ*, 18:48.}

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## THEOSOPHY AND CHRISTIANITY.

JASPER NIEMAND

Before going further into the subject of this paper, it may be well to state that it is not purposed to attempt to explain either Theosophy or Christianity, but to indicate a method whereby we may be helped towards an understanding of either one, or both.

There are two main aspects in which we may consider the question:

The first aspect is the analytical mode; that is to say, by considering the *difference* between Theosophy and Christianity.

The second aspect is the synthetic method; that is to say, consideration of the underlying identity of Theosophy and Christianity.

In the present brief paper we shall glance succinctly at both these aspects; they represent the polar extremes of one truth. But before we enter upon these polar aspects, however, we must first define what we mean by the words “Theosophy” and “Christianity,” respectively.

The latter term — the word “Christianity” is of simple definition. The term represents that aspect of truth which was taught by Jesus of Nazareth — whom some men called “The Christ,” the Founder of the true Christianity, pure and undefiled. Of his teaching we have to-day only fragmentary portions, which portions,— so far as the public at large has them,— have passed through the prism of various minds; the minds,

for the most part, of simple and uneducated — uninstructed — men; and, at much later dates, from one to another language or languages, under the intellectual criticism of scholars, and the bias of some among churchmen.

The term “Theosophy” is of no less simple definition. But people in general greatly misunderstand the meaning and scope of the word. Just as the Christianity of our day differs greatly from that of the era which saw the birth of this great religion, so Theosophy also differs from the popular idea of it. The term is misapplied to a definite series of ideas, to a fixed belief or creed. Yet Theosophy has no creed, but throws an impartial light upon all Life and all thought: to it, Life is the universal shrine of light and truth.

Those portions of the esoteric teachings, both religious and scientific, of the East, which were put forward by Mme. Blavatsky and also expounded by Mr. Sinnett, Mr. W. Q. Judge and others, have been rounded into a creed and styled “Theosophy” by the public at large. When the subject was newly reborn and startled the century just past, this rough and ready misconception was passed over, without much objection, in the rush and fervor of propaganda and other work. Pioneers work axe in hand, clearing away dense and well-nigh impenetrable and insurmountable obstructions to the passage of life and light, and as such workers, they are obliged to tolerate much which the calm survey of a less strenuous period must gradually remove.

That it was not the purpose of the Pioneer of last century,— Mme. Blavatsky,— to found a new creed, is shown conclusively by her statement in the *Key to Theosophy*. In a closing chapter, devoted to the consideration of “The Future of the Theosophical Society,” Mme. Blavatsky says:

“Every such attempt as the Theosophical Society has hitherto ended in failure, because, sooner or later, it has degenerated into a sect, set up hard-and-fast dogmas of its own, and so lost by imperceptible degrees that vitality which living truth alone can impart. You must remember that all our members have been bred and born in some creed or religion, that all are more or less of their generation both physically and mentally, and consequently that their judgment is but too likely to be warped and unconsciously biased by some or all of these influences —.”

To the further question as to what will occur if this danger can be averted, the author says:

“Then the Society will live on into and through the twentieth century. It will gradually leaven and permeate the great mass of thinking and intelligent people with its large-minded and noble ideas of Religion, Duty, and Philanthropy. Slowly but surely it will burst asunder the iron fetters of creeds and dogmas, of social and caste prejudices: it will break down racial and national antipathies and barriers, and will open the way to the practical realization of the Brotherhood of all men. Through its teaching, through the philosophy which it has rendered accessible and intelligible to the modern mind, the West will learn to understand and appreciate the East at its true value.”

The author then follows on with a description of further results of the spread of theosophical teaching, but enough has been quoted to show that she specifically warned us of the dangers of a lapse into a creed.

Prolonged study of the works written by this Pioneer, makes clear the point that Mme. Blavatsky had two things in mind.

*First:* To establish a Theosophical Society based upon certain fundamental and universal truths.

*Second:* To contribute to the specific study of religions certain ancient data quite lost to our era, and unknown, practically to the whole western world.

In striking the key-note of universal Truth for the last century, Mme. Blavatsky strongly insisted upon three points.

1. That the universe is pervaded by a universal, omnipresent and boundless Principle of Life. This point establishes, if followed up, the truth of Re-incarnation.

2. The universal prevalence of the Law of Periodicity, of flux and reflux. This point leads on to the Law of Karma.

3. The identity of all souls with the Oversoul. This point establishes the truth of Universal Brotherhood. It is nowhere stated by her that the term “all souls” comprises the human race alone. Nor is her ideal Brotherhood confined to the plane of physical life; on the contrary it is universal, hence spiritual.

In putting forward these three universal Principles, side by side with the injunction that Theosophy should not be hardened into a creed, we are naturally led to the conclusion that there *is* a fundamental identity — a reality — underlying all religions and sciences; that Science is really the study and art of Life itself, and that Religion is the study of the Life and aspirations of the Soul. A deeper study and insight demonstrates that Life and the Soul are one and the same — the Soul being, as it were, a nucleus of centralized, organized and individualized Life, each Soul being, as it were, a spark of the Oversoul. Since these universal truths are to be found underlying all religions, we cannot claim that they of themselves constitute Theosophy, or Christianity. They are universal both in action and in application. *Theosophia* is the wisdom of the gods; or wisdom about God; or Divine Wisdom — call it as you will; the fact remains that many students amongst us think that we can best explain our use of the term “Theosophy” by saying that it is a spirit of Life, a way of looking at and of investigating all Life in the light of the fundamental unity of Being, as well as a way of living the Life. In short, the Theosophy of the thoughtful student is *a spirit of unity* applied to the study and the action of Life as a whole. In this spirit we can study Life both by analysis and by synthesis. Analysis individualizes — for the purpose of the moment, of the next step, that which must afterwards be synthesized for the purposes of the whole; it is in the light of unity that our view is rounded and made entire.

Let us take, for the sake of illustration, this question of Theosophy and Christianity. The public at large is often found to suppose that a member of the Theosophical Society would naturally compare the teachings of the *Secret Doctrine* and other books of the eastern wisdom with the teachings of the Bible of the West, and would insist upon the fundamental *differences* between them as differences between two creeds or articles of belief, and would then go on to demonstrate the superiority of his *own* mode of belief. This erroneous idea outlines the method of the bigot and the fanatic, and is a method which has divided mankind and has been productive of the most bitter wars and the most hideous cruelties known to history, perpetrated by man upon mankind. Already in the sweet light which we now see spreading slowly but steadily over the West (the light of charity and the concept of unity), this error of thought is gradually passing away. We are coming to understand that the true theosophist is he who remembers that the Principle of Life is omnipresent, eternal, divine. Hence it is all wise and everywhere to be found; is conscious and beneficent; working always in the law that makes for righteousness; evolving, uplifting, unifying and sustaining all. This truth being present to his understanding, it would gradually penetrate to his heart, finding there the intuitive faith of the heart in the unity of Life. In such wise would he study all religions, with a view to discerning — not their points of difference, but their oneness in teaching of the divine eternal Life and of the Soul. The hair splitting of creeds would be a thing utterly foreign to his thought; as he became more and more wise in study, in Life, in experience. He would carry this method into all the daily acts of his individual life, dealing with that life and its contact with other lives from this standpoint of their fundamental identity: identity of origin in the Great Ocean of Spirit; identity of goal in the conscious enrichment of Being and return to the Divine Bourne of the Oversoul; identity of experience as well, now and

here, in that all human beings are alike subject to the Law of Evolution, and every atom and ion of Cosmos must be subject to it as well. In this way our interest is identical and we are all bound together by this fact of our physical, psychic and spiritual Evolution; we have identity of experience and of our larger Life. Evolving on the one hand, we involve or draw in, on the other hand, that spiritual Life which we individualize and render self-conscious within us, furthering thus that return to the Father which was taught by Jesus the Christ.

Christianity, when viewed in the spirit of synthesis, of Theosophy, is seen to be one of the great World-Religions. And, as such, it is of especial interest as being that aspect of the One Truth which is largely accepted by the world in which we live to-day — the western world. To the West, and to its forms of Thought we have under Karma a duty, for Karma placed us *there*. We are aware that it is impossible to reduce the movement of spiritual Life to a formula or to imprison it in a creed. Our studies have accustomed us to take into account the periodic returns of the religious spirit, and to see the movement of the Law underlying these periodic manifestations as one always governing them and the Great Teachers which that Law calls forth. Each such Teacher has been obliged, in the nature of things, to specialize, to lay stress upon some one of the many aspects of Truth. Thus it has been said that Krishna taught Devotion. Buddha taught Brotherhood, love of all men and of all creatures. Jesus combined the two, but the distinctive note of his teaching was the relation of son to father between Man and Divinity. We can now see that if we study the teaching of Jesus *along this line*, we shall fathom many a point which at first seems either too obscure or too trite when interpreted by some creedal obligation. The Christian Gospels are full of the ideas and the ideals known to all theosophical students, once we take hold of this clue. And how should it be otherwise if we are to view the Evolution of the religious nature of Mankind as a fact? Must it not be that there exists a body of divine men who have the evolution of the human soul closely at heart, and who are moved from time to time by the holy Spirit of Life — by God, as we Christians say — to work upon the visible plane as well as behind the veil of Nature, for the spiritual welfare of Man? As cycles and periods alter, as Humanity comes under the operation of periodic Law, the teachings given for the evolution of the human mind and the human soul into the divine soul must inevitably change their *aspects*, but they are forever and fundamentally one and the same. Each Great Teacher has given his disciples to understand that beyond the main aspects of his teaching were other aspects no less great, so that tolerance, charity, compassion, liberality of mind and entire sweetness of heart — a spirit of unity, in short — must prevail among men who desired to learn the god-like wisdom, the Truth about God. Buddha taught this truth by his silence when certain questions were asked of him. Jesus taught it when He said that his Father's house has many mansions, which mansions many of us understand to represent states of Consciousness. There are many other sayings of the Great Founder of Christianity which are less overlaid by the obscurities of time and much confusion of thought and of facts. As a help to such study, two books published of late are almost unequalled in the clearness and the helpful quality of their suggestive thought. *The Creed of Christ* and *The Creed of Buddha* are written by an author whose name is unknown to the world at large. Those who do know it tell us that this writer is not a Theosophist. But surely no mind so enlightened as that which illuminates the pages of these profoundly interesting and helpful books can be other than truly theosophical in the real sense. Each Great Teacher of Religion must have in mind the limitations of the era in which he appears upon the human scene, and must suit his teachings to the necessity of removing these especial crystallizations of human thought before his teachings can take effect. In this way the teachings, read at some much later period of time, and by men whose very modes of thought are different, may appear to disagree. But the synthetic method with

its spirit of unity, and the tolerance of a wider outlook upon Life, puts an end to discord; behind the apparent diversity we discover the fundamental identity with the other Religions which we have studied and in this way we draw nearer to the happy discovery that the Spirit of Religion is ever one and the same, no matter what *aspect* of that Spirit and Its Laws may be presented to the minds of men in any given era.

We can take up the study of Christianity in this spirit — and what study can be more important to us as Theosophists than the Religion of the world in which we are now embodied and to which we owe a duty, the duty of assisting the further Evolution of its religious instincts (in which we must include our own) and its search for the Soul and the life of the Soul? We are wise if we speak in the religious terminology best known to the West, and if we seek within the Scriptures which are our present birthright, the divine truths of all religions and of all Time. If we cannot find them there, we can find them nowhere, for Karma, regulating the movement of the Law of Periodicity, has placed us where we can find with ease and spread with love the spiritual food best suited to our present needs and the needs of our generation. That Law of Periodicity, of flux and reflux, we must remember governs all the occurrences of each human life, as well as the action of the worlds in space: it has placed us where the light of Theosophy has come to us, to aid our search and to broaden our ideas. We should be the interpreters of Religions, able to reveal to each religionist some truth as yet undiscovered by him within his own Religion, something beautiful and holy which unites him to all the religious aspirations of his era, and all eras. What a high office, to thus hold up the torch of Truth, assisting the spread of those soft and gentle rays which ever seek to penetrate the hearts of men, assuring us of the unity of Life, of the omnipresence of the Law of Love!

Many of us believe the doctrine of Avatars to be one of the great truths; that the Spirit of Divine Truth has its especial incarnations, from time to time, overshadowing or indwelling with the great spiritual Teachers. We look upon these holy ones as Masters, as Members of the Spiritual Lodge, and believe that Jesus the Christ was one of those. When we search the Scriptures put forth in His name, we are naturally guided by the clue of this fundamental identity of all Religions. Hence we discover within these Scriptures, statements of spiritual laws. Who can read the Sermon on the Mount without being struck with its revelations of Karma; of the laws governing spiritual action; of the nature of the One Substance and the Soul? Who but finds in the Parables the teaching of the Principles? Who but recognizes the Voice speaking through those pages, as the *Voice of the Silence*, and what is their Light but the *Light on the Path*? Let us then study those Scriptures themselves, fragmentary though they be, rather than the creeds and the ideas of other men about them: let us study and reflect for ourselves at first hand. Let us do this in the spirit of devotion and meditation, conscious that there is a true and sufficient reason why this Religion of the West has been put forward and embraced by the peoples of the present era, in this, our western world. Then the exquisite spirit and love of that Master of Compassion whom we name as Jesus, in all its human sympathy and god-like self-sacrifice shall penetrate our darkened understandings as a light from the inner heavens, and we shall see in part why that life which seemed to fail so utterly was in its sacrifice and complete surrender the greatest triumph which the heart can conceive. Surely we shall then comprehend that One who endured to the end in order to carry to mankind the appointed teaching in the appointed time of that God Who so loves the world that He sends from era to era His beloved Sons to bless and save those who will accept the gift of spiritual food so freely offered — that One such as this could never leave us straying in the wilderness of this earthy world, and must be with us in spirit and in immanent Compassion and aid, “to the end of the world,” even as He promised to be. By the light of the theosophical spirit we shall see that this which now we call “Theosophy” is the very Soul and core

of His teaching; that the spirit of Christianity and of Theosophy is one and the same, and that every Religion has one identical object. That object — and each one of us may make it his own — that object is:

THE RESTORATION OF THE CHRIST.

JASPER NIEMAND.

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## THEOSOPHY APPLIED TO DAILY LIFE.<sup>1</sup>

JASPER NIEMAND

When we consider the application of a philosophy to the lives of men, we are met at the outset by the necessity of defining the system of Thought which we would thus see applied. The actual need of such application would in itself appear to be beyond dispute, if the philosophy be anything more than a scholastic curiosity. The scientific observer, no less than the religious teacher, has always admitted that the true test of a belief is its effect in the life. It is not really a belief, which is not lived, which is mere lip service and sentimental rhapsody, or which serves merely as an intellectual exercise; such are but figments of the over active brain, shreds of the garments of self-esteem and emotion.

There is more than justice in the imposition of this test to the reality of any system of Thought; there is universal Law in it. This must be plain to the most casual observer, if so be he will think at all. For when a man comes to us with a fact and urges our acceptance of it, or if he puts it forward, the common tenets of good faith among mankind demand that he shall have tested the fact which he professes to believe, if he would have us in our turn accept his belief as a fact. There is a consensus of opinion among mankind in favor of this test being applied. If a belief be vital at all, it is lived. The tide of general common sense directs such sustained opinion among men, and this would seem to have its rise in that other fact that a belief so tinges the thoughts of a man as to govern his action also. From this union of Thought and Action proceed forces potent to affect humanity in one or the other direction. Thought which is barren, which is quite without outcome in the life of the thinker is an artificial product, a mere verbosity. It is idle to dignify it by the name of Thought at all, seeming as it does to be a string of words, without meaning, because without actuality, without Being.

Yet much of our modern life is inconsequent; its rush and mechanism, its material impetus are great, and so we come to find, on the one hand, words taken at a value beyond that which they are meant to bear; and on the other hand, far too many professions made which have no bearing upon the life at all. To talk sweetly and strenuously about a thing is not infrequently accepted as having done and lived it. And the conventional acceptance of the Thought of the majority of people among whom our lot is cast, is also looked upon as homage to public opinion, or dignified conformity to the general Thought. To this conformity in religious matters we owe it that we too often find ourselves “in that dreary place where good is done perforce, and the deed of virtue is without the love that should shine through it.”<sup>2</sup> This is all very well — though a sad waste of time — so long as no one is deceived by it and while the mental gymnastics are understood to be such, and to be no more. It is when the profession is taken at its surface value, when that value is supposed to be a genuine counter offer to the public, that the danger and the trial come up. Where a religious

professor, where a church or a sect put forward a system of belief which is not lived, and where men conform to it for reasons arising out of the material nature, whether in sloth or in comfort, in gain or in inertia, then we have a very real danger to humanity. We attack the foundations of man's belief in man, and in so doing, we undermine belief in God. It is a very old and a profoundly true saying: "If he loves not his brother, whom he hath seen, how shall he love God, whom he hath not seen?"<sup>3</sup> And by "God," we understand the Divine Spirit.

Trust is one of the most powerful forces in the world — in any world. To undermine its foundations is a sin of a high order. From trust all proceeds. We could not live an hour without some form of trust. The very fabric of our lives from day to day has for the warp thereof our trust; for the woof our will to live. Trust, derived from a long, long past, is in our every action, is in our coming into life and our going out of life. Where we find a man who trusts no one and nothing, there we find one who is thoroughly non-moral, so much is trust at the root of our lives. Hence it is a grave danger to the community when we find religious belief becoming devitalized by want of sincerity, by the absence of expression of the faith *in the life* of the man. Hypocrisy, that supreme form of untruth, is bred and becomes ingrained thereby. It will be remembered that that great Teacher, whom we call Jesus of Nazareth, was unsparing in one denunciation only — the condemnation of hypocrites. It is doubtless on account of the necessity for vitality in belief, that we find him saying that a man must live the life to know the doctrine: the denunciation of the idle word — though that is far from being a word, as we understand the term — is a statement of the same order. There is no soundness in life where there is no vitality and expression of belief in action.

Taking it then for granted that the right to demand the application of belief is admitted, we come at once to the further point: what is this which we are about to use? We make inquiry concerning the nature of the belief which we are about to apply to the stress and strain of our living. In the present instance this system of Thought is that which we call by the ancient term, Theosophy.

This well-known name — and it has been made to ring throughout the world in the last twenty-five years — has been interpreted to mean "Divine Wisdom, Knowledge of God," or we might call it "The Study of the Gods." Either definition will serve our present purpose. Under either term we can ask what it is that we mean when we use the term Theosophy. What is its heart, its fountain head?

It would seem clear that we do not mean a body of doctrine, a given creed, for that were to misuse the words "Divine Wisdom." When the Founder of the Theosophical Society in the last century, Madame H. P. Blavatsky, wrote in her *Key to Theosophy* that the great danger to the Society in the future would be that it should lend itself to the propagation of a creed, she no doubt had this fact in mind. Divine Wisdom cannot be a creed, a body of doctrine, however fine, however noble: it must be the living truth itself, if it be divine at all. And this ever living Spirit of Truth can never be unfolded or confined in a set doctrine; it must be ever evolving, ever proceeding forth from the Eternal Spirit, ever approaching man and awaiting his understanding, his acceptance, his incorporation of its regenerative spirit into his daily life. The very moment the human mind, with its law of crystallization and tendency to limitation and to compression within a form, approaches the definition of this living Spirit, that moment we find it escaping the mold. A man may know the entire body of universal data put forward by those scientific observers of Life who have been and who are "theosophists," and may yet be without its vital breath, its essential life. And a man may be ignorant of the first word of the data, and may yet be a true theosophist, a very real follower of "Divine Wisdom," and Theo-Sophia may guide his every step and radiate like the sun from his every deed. It is he who apprehends the Spirit and who lives it out in his daily life, he who makes intercourse with his fellows a communion

with the Divine Spirit in man, who is the true theosophist, and not he who talks and studies — and who still fails to apply the essential Soul of the teaching.

What then is the essence of Theosophy? When I take this word upon my lips I do not mean the system of Cosmogogenesis put forward in the *Secret Doctrine*, though that is grandiose. Nor do I mean the Anthropogenesis, magnificent though it be. I may indeed believe these to be true. But the more I believe them and the more I put them forward, colored by my own mentality, the more do I run the risk of consolidating them into a creed unless I am careful to manifest the free and true Spirit within them all — that which has been defined as: “That united Spirit of Life which is your only true Self.” This is that essential aspect to which I am committed if my belief be vital. It is impossible that I or any other mind — should grasp this enormous system of Thought fully and entirely, so that the more I put it forward in hard and fast fashion, as an inalterable body of doctrine, the more I am on the way to build up yet another creed with which to challenge all other creeds: and so the time long war of creeds is again perpetuated. The moment comes to us all when the heart cries out for something vital, something immanent, something interior, of daily support and comfort, by which to soften the hard struggle of existence and to touch to some divine issue the purpose of our days.

It must have been something of this kind which Madame Blavatsky had in mind when she said: “Do not write like the Peripatetics, but put your heart into it.” And indeed, if we consider carefully her method, we find from the outset that she put forward the unity of all religions at their base, striving to show the same teachings in each, and not so much the identity of universal facts in each, but the unity of spiritual belief, the universality of Soul. I have heard others reminding us how she thundered at Christianity, but it was not at the real Spirit of that teaching that Madame Blavatsky directed her thunders: far from it. The lightnings of her words were reserved for those who would make a form, a Church-and-State policy of that Christianity which was so truly taught on the shores of Galilee, and which had the Love of Humankind, as the Love of God, for all the Law and the Prophets. It was our latter day conformity without the informing Spirit of human feeling and human good-will, without Love and without Charity, at which she aimed her attacks. In this respect, perhaps more than in any other, it is necessary to bear in mind that constant injunction of hers: “Follow the path I show, the Masters who are behind: *Do not Follow Me or My Path.*”<sup>4</sup> The italics are mine, and I would indeed have the thought italicized, for that which one may do rightly and do well, may be far from the duty of another with less knowledge. Moreover, the era was so different. If we consider the universal processes, we dimly discern that the procession of Being unrolls from the Infinite Source, and then returns, enriching that fountain of Spirit with further consciousness of the vast plains of material existence evolved from itself. We see that the outgoing is different from the return, and that era differs from era; this we see with the intuitive mind. So it must be with the centuries; the close of a century must be the period for the breaking up of all set molds of Thought, for the destruction of forms — must be a period of demolishment of the purely formal — as the spirit of the century returns whence it came, to be succeeded by a new breath of Life, an advanced and spiritual order of Being for the new cycle about to begin. The period of dissolution is replaced by a new inspiration; the letter which killeth, and which has accreted round the life of human Thought, has now been broken up, and once again we see the emergence of the Spirit which maketh alive. We now again have to do with the united spirit of Life in which resides the real Self of Humanity.

So it comes about that we ask ourselves what is the true kernel of this faith? What is that within it which transcends data and fact and is, as it were, the basis for our acceptance? I think we shall find that this essence of Theosophy is the declaration of

the existence and the universality of Soul. Much indeed is implied by this. In the first place, if the Soul exists, it must be eternal in its essence, eternally enduring; this gives us rationally the tenet of Re-incarnation. The Soul, if it be universal, must be guided by its own nature, and that nature is expressed as a Law, the Law of the Soul. That Soul, in truth, is the Law; these are one and the same thing. So we come to have that which we call Karma, or the Law of moral causation, of action and reaction on all planes of Being. But the great factor which emerges from this existence of Soul — and how majestic is the emergence — the chief and divine Truth arising from the universality of Soul is that principle of Compassion and Harmony which we call Toleration, or Love, or Charity, or Eros the One Ray, and which has many names among men but which has only one spirit by which all may recognize it — the spirit of undying Patience, Trust and Hope. This universal Compassion is not an attribute of the Soul, we are told in *The Voice of the Silence*: “Compassion is no attribute. It is the Law of LAWS — eternal Harmony, Alaya’s SELF; a shoreless universal essence, the light of everlasting right, and fitness of all things, the law of Love eternal.”<sup>5</sup>

“The more thou dost become at one with it, thy being melted in its Being, the more thy Soul unites with that which IS, the more thou wilt become COMPASSION ABSOLUTE.”

Here, then, we have that by which we may test devotion to the heart of the teaching which to-day we call Theosophy, but which has been known for long ages and to many tongues and nations and men, all of which have sought to express the Spirit of Love, Compassion, Truth. If a man be possessed of this, whatever he does or thinks, he will be genuine in it; and if we wish to impart this life, we must see to it that we are living men; whatever our belief, whether Christian or Buddhist or Mahommedan, or followers of any other creed or of no creed, we shall truly live forth our belief, and Compassion as the heart of it; we shall be living men in our belief, and not dead and purely formal ones. For this is what we have as Souls to do: we have to impart and to breathe forth the Spirit of Life. And that Spirit is Peace and Good-Will to all the earth.

It is then this Spirit of Compassion that we must apply to our lives if we would make the application of Theosophy to them.

A mighty undertaking, this; one to dazzle and confound at first sight.

And yet, since the Soul is universal, and since we are Souls, are THAT SOUL, it must follow that somewhat of this divine essence abides with us, resides in the meanest and the least of men and hallows by its presence, however hidden and however unsuspected, the darkest interiors of life.

This being so, it behooves us to find the application of this principle resident in the atom as in the angel, for by this alone can our lives be made sane and whole.

How shall we touch it? How declare it? Has not the Apostle of old answered for us? “Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not charity, I am become as sounding brass or a tinkling cymbal. Though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries, and all knowledge; and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, and have not charity, I am nothing.”<sup>6</sup>

What a declaration is here! Not only speech of all the spheres; not alone the gift of seership, and the psychic knowledge — yea, and that great, that immense occult dower of faith, that which alone and in its proper might can remove mountains — all these are as naught, even faith is naught, before the lack of charity. In the absence of this informing Soul, this breath of Life, all else is as dust, as nothingness.

“And though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing.”<sup>7</sup> And then follows a definition of this “charity,” concerning which we are not left to imagine that it consists in the bestowal of goods of any kind, or food even, to the poor. This “charity” it is

which suffereth long and is kind; there is no envy in it, no vaunting; it seeks not its own, it is not easily provoked, being patience itself; it thinketh no evil. This it is that believeth all things, that beareth all, hopeth all, endureth all; it faileth never: and though there be these three, faith, hope and charity, yet “the greatest of these is charity.” So spoke one of whom we have reason to think that he was an initiate in the eternal order of the Soul.

We might well stand despairing before these counsels of perfection, not knowing how to attain to them, were it not that we have the counsellor within us; each one of us may hear this voice in his own heart: the heart is indeed that teacher of perfection; it whispers of this divine Love. Guided by the heart, followers of the Heart Doctrine, what shall we fear? What shall we lack? Would it not seem that we have indeed the very spirit of Theosophy when we have a breath of this Compassion stirring in the heart? And when we bend the head and listen well, what is it that we hear? “Compassion speaks and saith: Can there be bliss when all that lives must suffer? Shalt thou be saved and hear the whole world cry?”

We need not then be so concerned to put forward the correct doctrine or to know the occult hierarchies or to number the spheres, but rather to distil from our daily lives the spirit of compassion and of good will. The power to help every man to fulfil his own ideal, to be really that ideal; the power to realize that the ideal is the Soul of the man speaking to him and leading him on to higher and still higher ideals as he comes to fulfil each whole heartedly; to this it is that we need to attain. In the light of this thought the *Secret Doctrine* is seen to pulsate with new life. The grandeur of the Cosmogony, the origin and destiny of man have a wider scope. It is not now the data which strike us so much but the truth that man is a Soul, is the Universal Soul, and is indeed Compassion’s Self. A moment ago, and the Doctrine seemed too great, too remote; an intellectual concept we might be awed by, might be pleased with, but which we could hardly grasp. But now we come all at once to see that “the heart of it is Love, its consummation Peace.”<sup>8</sup> We feel that here is something we can understand, can strive for; here is something the heart can embrace and the obedient mind follow after. It shuts no one out. It excludes no system of Thought. So that the religion and the follower are not lacking in this charity, there is no failure to fear, no limitation to harden. Disciples of this principle of loving toleration, we may seek in each religion and philosophy, in every life and sphere for that which seeketh not its own. All we need ask is that men shall truly be that which they profess to believe — and all enlightenment shall follow after. Though we may find in the *Secret Doctrine* that which to us is the Truth, yet also we may realize that the Truth is in all things and that the spirit of devotion and of simple piety are lights which lead in their due course to spiritual enlightenment. The Doctrine is but the expression, while the feeling of unity and of brotherhood is The Life.

When we come to apply this principle, this indwelling essence to our life, we see it all at once as under a ray of sunlight The pitiful hardness and grossness of material existence is shown up and we behold ourselves to be wanting in Soul. But also we find in the homeliest good will, in the least outpouring of kindness, the seed of the Divine. And we are encouraged greatly when we see that this simple devotion to the holier life is all that is asked of us by the witness within. It is not demanded that we shall know more, but that we shall love more: not that we shall *do* more, but that we shall *be* more; the Soul only asks of us that we shall manifest the Soul. Before this vision all minor differences fade away. We are in the Presence of the Mightiest, of that before which all the kingdoms of the world shall vanish, for it is itself the central factor and spirit of Being. We need not to speak of tenets or of doctrines. We need only to manifest the Doctrine of the Heart. But this doctrine is not a mere chatter of sweetness and of

sentiment. It would not seem to be that of which a man might say that it professed much. How then shall we apply it in practical life?

It would seem that the application is not far to seek if we remember that the object and goal of our endeavor is the Soul. We are not yet adepts — at least it would not seem so, having in mind the nature of our lives. We are not able to put to use all this knowledge of the stars in their courses, of the march of the ages, of which we are sometimes pleased to talk so fluently and with the grand air. It is not ours to remember the birth of Humanity, and the descent of the Manasa born. No. No. But we are quite able to conceive this principle of charity; we are able to live the life of dedication to the service of the Soul. The Spirit of Harmony, the complete recognition of Unity, of the Identity of Soul, these we can carry into the market place and the forum; we can manifest them at home as abroad; they need not be foreign to politics, to statecraft, any more than to the school or the nursery. Our devotion to these is something which we can take with us everywhere; it will exhale from our presence and be felt by all who come in contact with us, for it is, as it were, the atmosphere of the Soul. The Heart Doctrine only demands that we accord to each the right of search for his own ideal, and that we only ask of each that he shall truly manifest that ideal as he finds it. All are under the divine influx alike; no man so low that he may not become the recipient of the wisdom of the Soul, if he but serve that Soul. As the man enters the Gate of Compassion he hears the voice of the Soul and he has but to follow it. For Theosophy is not a doctrine; Theosophy is a life. “I am the Way, the Truth and the Life; no man cometh unto the Father but by me.”<sup>9</sup> The Love and the truth which we show day by day in our intercourse with our fellow men have a voice, and will teach us better than all the prophets and the seers. The forces which we engender are the key to the whole problem.

In something of the same way it would seem that our Theosophical Society might well be a place where we came together to meet all who would there join us, on the common platform of the study of all religions and systems of thought, seeking to find the truth in all, seeking to show accord at the root of all rather than difference. The Truth at the core; the underlying identity within all religions is the Soul. When we show sympathy with the thought effort of another, we manifest in that more of the spirit of Truth than we do when we seek to show the superiority of our own belief. The sympathy is the Life breath; the data are but forms. Thus the object to bear in mind is the endeavor to harmonize, to show how the united spirit of Life underlies every mind and all philosophies; this central fact is that which we should manifest. For the Soul is able to teach these data to its devotees as well as we are, to say the least, while if that Soul of sympathy and toleration be absent from our assembly, then we should speak with the tongues of angels in vain. Is it not the I-am-holier-than-thou spirit which has wrecked many high philosophies? The operative power of the Truth can be and is diminished by the fault of that follower who neglects the sympathy and charity which are the essence of the Soul. If we were to study all religions and even the history of honest disbelief in the spirit of comrades engaged in a world-wide search for that Truth which all need and by which all must benefit, should we not engender in our midst a spirit which would work wonders? What would not the perfect spirit of good-will effect as between man and man, as from nation to nation? If we were able to command this *entente cordiale* at will, there is no aim of peace, of progress and of higher evolution to which we might not hope to raise the world and ourselves.

It should not be supposed that this idea involves the abatement of one iota of interest in the Secret Doctrine. Much less the abandonment of the original lines laid down at the outset for the Theosophical Society. As we scrutinize those lines, in the three objects, we find provision made for just such study as is here suggested. Assuredly it would broaden the mind and expand the sympathies. “To live and reap

experience the mind needs breadth and depth and points to draw it towards the Diamond Soul.”<sup>10</sup> So that while we may and should put forward our own belief sincerely and with devotion, we owe it to our hearers to listen to their belief in turn, sure that there also shall identity be discovered; some trace of the universal, omnipresent Truth. In this way every religion proves and sustains the crowning Truth of Theosophy.

The Soul is as able to inform the life of man to-day as it was thousands of years ago, as it will be thousands of years hence. But we must first provide an atmosphere in which that Wonder-Worker can operate, through which it can reach the mind and heart. We must originate and maintain an attitude of consolidarity, of union in and for the purposes of Soul. Unless our fellow men feel us to be possessed of this spirit, all we can say and teach will be as the tinkling of cymbals. Our only salvation lies in the application of the spirit of Theosophy — of “that united spirit of Life”<sup>11</sup> of which we spoke but a moment ago and which is the Life of Theosophy. Never shall we find the Soul in isolation; nor in that which is puffed up and seeks its own.

We make search for the knowledge of God. Where shall we find the trace of that God incarnate unless in and through the heart of man? “The soul of man is of that order of life which causes shape and form, and is unaffected itself by these things — of that order of life which, like the pure, the abstract flame, burns wherever it is lit. — It stands in that primeval place which is the only throne of God; that place whence forms of life emerge and to which they return. That place is the central point of existence, where there is a permanent spot of life as there is in the heart of man. It is by the equal development of that — first, by the recognition of it, and then by its equal development upon the many radiating lines of experience — that man is at last enabled to reach the Golden Gate and lift the latch.”<sup>12</sup>

We have then to reach that heart, to touch it, to cause it to go through its divine motions — our own heart first, then that of others — before we can learn, or help others to learn and to Be. We annul all our efforts; we efface our own paths; we stultify our aspirations; we turn back upon ourselves if we do otherwise than seek in entire interdependence and sympathy for the wisdom of the Soul. For it is that Soul which we seek, and its Being is not other than this. It is for us as lovers of the Soul to go forth questioning others of their search, rather than to go forth as teachers who have nothing more to learn. The Soul does not so: it is not to be sequestered: it abides everywhere, manifests on all sides. We can learn of it everywhere, wherever there is life, and most of all in the lives of humankind. It is not so vital that men should know the doctrine as that they should live the life, we have said. Should we not be wiser then to begin at that end of our problem? Our attraction and our helpfulness for others will not consist in that we know so much, as that we are of so loving a spirit. Gathered together in that name, we shall find the reality of the promise — “There am I in the midst of them.”<sup>13</sup> What this hard world needs to-day is that men should “*with one accord*”<sup>14</sup> seek the Soul: this accord can only be attained by the generation, in human society, of the spirit of harmony and unity.

Yet even here there is danger of overstraining the meaning. I seem to hear a voice which would say: “Beware of maudlin sentiment. Love is founded on Justice and on Law. If we are more than just to one, another must have less. Some department of Nature must pay our debt. The Love not founded on absolute Justice is no Love at all.” And thus we come to see that wisdom is perfect balance. To this we must at last attain, meantime it must be our ideal.

There is a little tale — it matters not whence it came — of the spirit of man. This spirit wandered far upon the confines of the sphere and was all at once lost to itself. Loudly it bewailed itself. An angel heard it wailing. Rescue it he could not, for it was

lost beyond his sphere. But the throne of God was not far off — it never is far off — and at that throne he bowed himself, crying to the Lord of Life: “Dost thou not hear the bitter complaint of the lost spirit of man?”

“I hear,” answered the Lord.

“Thou art mighty to save; wilt thou not rescue him?” asked the angel.

“I may not,” replied the Lord.

“Is aught then beyond thy power?” the bewildered angel cried.

The mighty one smiled gravely as he answered: “Even so; I cannot save the man.”

Then the angel wondered greatly; and the lost spirit wailed on.

Now this spirit had sought its own shadow,<sup>15</sup> in a region where the shadow is not cast, and cannot be seen, and he thought himself lost because he could not see its projection upon the sky. But presently he wearied of sorrow (being in truth born to gladness), and he ceased to cry out. Looking about him he saw a great shining, and all the heavenly lights were set about him: an exceedingly great joy filled his heart: the glow from that heart rolled away the mists of sorrow, and suddenly he saw himself reflected in each shining atom: not his shadow, but himself, he saw, in all that lived. The Unity lay before him! He gave a great cry of joy: “God! I was never lost; I had only found myself: I am the All.”

“Even so,” answered the Lord.

And now the angel understood that the Lord could not save that spirit of man, because it is never lost.

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There is a blessing in the application of the spirit of Theosophy to daily life. May it descend upon us.

JASPER NIEMAND.

## NOTES

1. Read at the Wandsworth T.S. England, January 1, 1904.
2. {*Through the Gates of Gold*, Mabel Collins, p. 42.}
3. {1 John 4:20.}
4. {“A Private Letter.” R.S. (Julia Keightley) *Reminiscences of H. P. Blavatsky and “The Secret Doctrine”* – 1893, pp. 121-129.}
5. {*The Voice of the Silence*, H. P. Blavatsky, pp. 69-70.}
6. {1 Corinthians 13:1-2.}
7. {1 Corinthians 13:3.}
8. {*The Light of Asia*, Edwin Arnold, Book 8.}
9. {John 14:6.}
10. {*The Voice of the Silence*, H. P. Blavatsky, p. 25-26.}
11. {*Light on the Path*, Mabel Collins, p. 4.}
12. {*Through the Gates of Gold*, Mabel Collins, p. 67-68.}
13. {Matthew 18:20.}
14. {Romans 15:6.}
15. “When to himself his form appears unreal, as do in waking all the forms we see in dreams.” {*The Voice of the Silence*, H. P. Blavatsky, p. 2.}

## THEOSOPHY IN DAILY LIFE.

J. CAMPBELL VER PLANCK, F.T.S.

Reading in the *Sacred Books of the East*, I came upon these lines:

He lets his mind pervade one quarter of the world with thoughts of Love, and so the second, and so the third, and so the fourth. And thus the whole wide world, above, below, around and everywhere, does he continue to pervade with heart of Love, far reaching, grown great and beyond measure.

Just as a mighty trumpeter makes himself heard, and that without difficulty — in all the four directions — even so of all things that have shape or life, there is not one that he passes by or leaves aside, but regards them all with mind set free, and deep-felt Love. Verily this is the way to a state of union with Brahma.

And he lets his mind pervade one quarter of the world with thoughts of pity, sympathy and equanimity, and so the second, and so the third and so the fourth. And thus the whole round world, above, below, around and everywhere, does he continue to pervade with heart of pity, sympathy and equanimity, far reaching, grown great and beyond measure.<sup>1</sup>

For this scriptural injunction there is, of course, a reason. The mighty energy thus diffused through space not only attracts the divine, but it gives, it informs, it creates. On every plane it has its perfect work. On the highest, it becomes the messenger of the Perfect Law which is a Law of Love. Its processes can be scientifically considered and demonstrated in theosophical thought. Its rule and subjection of the lower astral plane can be clearly shown. But what seems to concern us most with the opening of a new year, is its effect on the plane best known to the average man, or its application in daily life.

As theosophists, we have given our adherence to the principles of Universal Brotherhood and a search for Truth. The most indifferent member of our Society has still signed such a pledge, calling his word of honor to attest its reality. Some of us have gone much further than this. A consideration which presents itself to all alike, a reality which is no respecter of persons, is this: Are we or are we not conforming to the spirit and letter of that pledge? Are we endeavoring to form a *real* Brotherhood? I do not need to point out that intellectual enlightenment is only a means, and one of several means, to that benign end. It will be apparent to any thinking person that the intellectual germs which are the bearers of Truth must sprout and bear in our lives; must be transformed into deeds and thoughts impersonal, fraternal and informed with universal love, or else they are mere withered husks which only encumber the mind that has received them. We may send our literature into every home; we may find our facts upon every man's tongue, and still our Society will be an utter failure as a vital, living Brotherhood if the spirit and activity of universal Love is not infused into it. No one can so infuse it but ourselves. Each individual is responsible for its absence, if it be absent, for it alone adequately represents our pledge. We have not given the attestations of our honor to a mere formalism, but to a Reality; to an unlimited energetic Charity, without which we are indeed as brass and tinkling cymbals.

Hence no more urgent question now presents itself to the earnest student (or even to those whose "honor" keeps its pledges) than this one, namely: How shall I convert this philosophy into a working force which shall prove useful in daily life? It is

true that the theosophical code of ethics, were it followed by every individual, would change the face of the world in a day. It also follows that such influence must be of the greatest practical as well as moral use. If each one of us believed that every wrong done would as surely react upon us as that a ball thrown against a wall will rebound; and that what injures one man injures all, it is certain that all our ways of living and thinking would change, and that we should enter a wider sphere, a larger spirit of Life. We should then experience a spiritual, ethical and practical consolidation or Brotherhood.

At the same time, this study and personal practice of the philosophy does not wholly fulfil our pledge. We are still in the world; its ties are more or less interwoven with our daily life, and for this world as it now stands we are largely responsible. All about us are wrongs and sorrows which only a change in the inner nature of mankind can exterminate. We know this change is far off in point of time and concerns the race, while our own personal efforts show us how difficult is its accomplishment. It is indeed not to be accomplished until we regard the entire universe with thoughts of Equanimity and Love. What then shall we do? Shall we wait patiently for this change, striving meanwhile to lift ourselves and such comrades as may be drawn to hear our words, to a higher inner life? If we do this much only, the change will never come. We have taken up the attitude of separation unconsciously, and the estranged world feels that we have deserted it in a need which the soul realizes, though the individual may not. In the inner attitude we are to stand aloof from the fever, the doubt, the selfishness and carnival of desire; but the outer man must also fulfil his duty and he does that by drawing close to his fellow men and by working among them. Until the intuition of the race shall be more highly developed, men need to see our personal presence and activity before they can realize our spiritual sympathy. Just as we give object lessons to a child, so our work explains to them the reality of our pledge and belief.

Spiritual advancement is not a result of mechanical (so to call it) cyclic progress, nor yet a result of the will of the gods. The progress of Law must be reinforced by human will and effort before the personal soul can be benefited by it. The way of the race is devious and long; it is accomplished through individual effort, and each real reform in institutions, in morals, in every department of Life, brings us one step nearer the goal. These things, external though they appear, may each be made the vehicle of higher powers, through the energy of universal Love. As witnesses to the expanding heart of man and to the vital growth of his belief in human and divine consolidation, they bring us inwardly as well as outwardly into closer relations with one another.

There are of course exceptions, in the cases of persons who through their inward fitness have been called away from the world to enter upon a special course of training and service which shall fit them for duties upon other lines and planes than those known to individual life. All such persons have, at some time, worked ardently in the primary fields, and have, through such work, developed into more impersonal and more divine uses. They stood once where we now stand, and through proportional effort in all directions, they have passed on. It is our part to follow them, and while we are still in the world we may be sure that a part of our work lies in it, and includes every practical as well as every spiritual effort towards realizing the highest conception of Universal Brotherhood.

There are many theosophists who do not grasp the urgency of this question concerning the utilization of Theosophy in daily life. Perhaps some of them feel their own ignorance, their unfitness to teach, and wait to know more before they speak to other men. They forget that he who cannot teach can work. Our work teaches. Moreover, through unselfish work we are taught. To learn intellectually, some may wait in vain; and indeed none will truly learn in any sense until they convert what little they do know into working force, just as our food is useless to us until its digestion has set

free some amount of nervous energy, for whose translation into work Nature herself provides. All these natural processes are copies of those of the spiritual world and thus all things bear witness to that Truth which is their Being. Other theosophists are struggling with material cares; others do not stop to think of the real bearing of their professions of Brotherhood. In short, as many reasons for indifference prevail as were sent to the Biblical King when he bade his neighbors come to the wedding feast. Still I believe the chief of these is the want of co-ordinated thought. Not so long ago, an earnest student wrote to the American Headquarters to say that through an appeal made to him for assistance in some work which was being done, he had come to realize the necessity of such work and the lack of it; that he was sure many others, like himself, were so preoccupied by daily cares that they had not waked up to the importance of helping the theosophical movement in some direction, and he offered money to print an edition of a tract addressed to indifferent theosophists, if someone would write it. These pages are the outcome, in second remove, of that work which stimulated him. As we light a fire by communicating to it the vibrations of a flame, so contact with the earnest effort of another sets free a corresponding and latent energy in the heart prepared for higher development.

These considerations are all the more pressing to-day. We are nearing the end of the cycle and all events move more rapidly. Effort made now will have a far greater result than it would have later on. The momentum of a moving object depends upon the energy expended at its start, and those theosophists who are sufficiently intuitive to take advantage of cyclic currents and to work ardently with them and with the Great Powers, will find that they have laid up treasures there, where, to quote Emerson, compound interest is the rate of the exchequer. The creditor of this exchequer is not personal man, but Humanity: what we give as individuals is repaid to the race. This is just, for from that race we spring in part. One year's work done now may fructify far more rapidly for this cause which is our own, than might ten years' work done at a less propitious time. It is true that materiality is now at its highest rate of progress, but with a latent downward tendency; while spiritual activity is accelerating with an upward tendency due to the present curve of progress. Can we doubt which will prevail? It is now in our power to secure the prevalence of spiritual activity in individual lives, just as the Law has already provided for its prevalence in the Universal Scheme. There is scarcely one of us so poor that he cannot make some willing sacrifice, or has not some time or energy to give. Quantity does not matter so much as quality; it is the spirit of unselfish Love that works all wonders.

These thoughts accepted, the student asks himself where he shall begin, to what work lay his hand. For his personal life he alone can answer. If he be a member of the Theosophical Society, it will be well for him to work with and through his Branch; the greater the center the greater the energy. Energy is proportionate to the square of the numbers producing it. The sum of energy produced by three united persons is nine times as great as that evolved by a single person. This ratio is due to the correlations of the forces employed. Where theosophists have not joined the Society, they would do well to reflect on these facts. We are responsible for our latent possibilities. If we neglect to develop and enlarge them by joining a body pledged to Humanity, we must certainly be losers by our determined attitude of separation. We owe ourselves to others, if only for the encouragement of our external presence and support.

Turning our attention from individuals to the corporate Body itself, we find that we are reproached, and justly reproached, with doing little, if any, practical work. As we do not believe in indiscriminate missionary labors and argumentative conversion, we must seek other fields. Are there no children among us to be rescued from the doubts and confusion of our time? Where are our Branch Sunday Schools, where music, story and object teaching of spirit through natural lessons, may give the little ones a happy

and valued hour? Where are our Branch free libraries, with one member told off weekly to attend them, open of an evening to all comers? Can we do nothing to help those social outcasts, so rarely rescued by formal religion, because "the deed of virtue is without the love that should shine through it." It is vain to try to stop those who are on the fatally swift descent of sin, by assurances that some other, however divine, is responsible for them. If we can grapple their minds with the thought that they themselves are their own saviours and that we are integrally and are actually their Brothers and Sisters, then indeed we may recover lost ground for the race. Everywhere great questions and great issues are confronting us and in some one of these each Branch should have a share. Not only should we join with outsiders in such good deeds as they have found to do, but we ought to have some distinctively theosophical work of our own, first as individuals, next as Branches. For example, the competitive struggle and system of monopolies are working as much — if not more — injury as the use of intoxicating liquors. Everywhere thinkers of benevolent aspirations are inaugurating co-operative colonies or works. One such is the Credit Foncier of Sinaloa, a colony established in Mexico on co-operative principles,<sup>2</sup> having excellent privileges from the Mexican Government. The colonists own the land, railroads and industries in common. All public property is so held, but the home is a private institution. The colony is governed by a body of elected Directors. The women vote equally with the men. No corporate churches are allowed; each man is free to worship as he may please in his own home. No intoxicating drinks are made or sold; no gambling or other houses of ill-repute allowed within the colony precincts. All persons are employed by the colony itself; labor is interchanged and the net gain is divided among colonists according to their shares of stock. This is perhaps the largest cooperative venture ever made and has unprecedented advantages of harbor situation and climate, but, above all, its ethical principles are integral and vital. At one time a colonist wrote in behalf of a betrayed and deserted woman, against whom the doors of our civilization were closed, when she tried to return to the path of moral duty. The directors promptly responded by the gift of a share of stock and the assurance that all who endeavored to live honestly and in a spirit of true fraternity were welcome to Sinaloa, whatever might be the mistakes of their past. No more theosophical deed than this is known to me. It would seem as if colonies founded upon more liberal and just division of labor and profit, upon a more enlightened system of interchange and interdependence, would tend to facilitate the advance of the race. All persons may not be able to join them, but they can help them. Clubs are already founded to assist co-operation, and such might be started in Branches interested in seeing justice established as the regulator of human institutions. It is not division of property that the honest man wants, but a division of labor and profits other than that awarded by a system which regards money as the chief factor of prosperity and energy — the great life force — as its underling and slave. While I am well aware that physical energy is but one division of that life force, as regards the value of such energy and that expended for the amassing of personal wealth and for personal and selfish indulgences, I submit that the former is far higher than the latter and should not be underpaid. *The motive determines the value and quality of energy as well as the plane in which it operates.* That other theosophists think with me is proved by the interest of others in co-operative principles, while the fact that these principles and the life they give rise to, lead thoughtful minds into a more distinctly theosophical line of thought, is evidenced by two directors and some members of the above mentioned colony having joined the T.S. Godin, the great co-operator of Guise, also became a theosophist.<sup>3</sup>

These are some of the opportunities of work which present themselves and which may be carried on at the same time with that inward work of self-conquest and self-purification undertaken in the silence of the heart by all true students. I would urge

that this subject of theosophical work be held under special consideration at our next annual convention. The time has come for us to make good our pledge; to ask ourselves whether we shall be a Brotherhood in every vital sense, a working army united by a harmonious, charitable, unprejudiced spirit of sympathy and love, or a mere formal organization interested in intellectual pursuits. Let each one of us ask himself this question, and ask until he finds the answer: Am I working to the full extent of my powers and in every possible direction for that Universal Brotherhood to which I am pledged, and in whose future realization I implicitly believe — witness my “word of honor?” Else honor, loyalty and Brotherhood are empty echoes of an idle and fantastic dream.

J. CAMPBELL VER PLANCK, F.T.S.

## NOTES

1. {*The Sacred Books of the East*, Edited by Max F. Müller; Vol. XI, *Buddhist Suttas* by T. W. Rhys Davids, “Tevigga-Sutta,” p. 201.}
2. {This was a utopian socialist colony founded in 1886 (and fully established in 1887) by Albert Kimsey Owen, inspired by Charles Fourier’s utopian socialist ideas, on principles from Owen’s essay “Integral Co-Operation.” It was named after a French financial institution. The colony failed by 1893.}
3. {Jean Baptiste André Godin had developed a socialist colony “Familistère de Guise” or “Social Palace” in Guise, France, in the 1850s-1870s.}

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## THEOSOPHY IN THE HOME.<sup>1</sup>

JULIA W. L. KEIGHTLEY

Theosophical principles to be vital, must be lived from within, outwards. They should pass uninterruptedly from the state of intuitive ideas into that of objective activity. Pure intellect, analytical and agnostic in attitude, delays this process. While it searches the content of the heart in the spirit of a customs officer examining suspected luggage, much of the force of that heart’s spontaneity is lost. We are dealing with questions of Force, and, from that aspect, intuitive ideas are deadened the moment they are intellectualized.

It imparts much for the progress of Humanity that individual men shall at the present juncture learn to *trust* the heart-impulse lying at the back of Nature; that they shall transmute the potency of the Ideal into the Real in action, and so make Theosophy a living power in the Life.

In the daily practice of our philosophy we need a thread of light to guide us to that living heart of Nature whence Life, upspringing, wells forth to animate all lives. Shall this clue be found in the sad and labyrinthine homes of men, too oft abodes of the “living dead?” To live in conditions opposed to the laws of Life evolves activities of that separative order which conserves only to paralyze; which destroys with destruction in view as an end, and not as a means of building afresh. Could we discard the fatal habit of viewing acts and conditions as final and complete in themselves, could we see each interlinked with the whole plan of Nature, we should in that broader aspect regain a sense of proportion, of relativity, of interaction of states of Being, to which the minds of men to-day are either strangers, or wholly averse.

In respect of the Home, it would appear that the necessary clue may be found by regarding the Home in its true, its essential light. Life is full of false lights, false reflects from the falser Self; the homes of men are in the main unwisely viewed; they are regarded as centers of self-conservation. To most minds the function of the Home, of the Nation, of all organizations is, primarily, to establish a distinction between the life of that center and other similar centers; to mark off a portion of Life for individual purposes. This is partially true, this use of centripetal force; but let not the centrifugal be omitted; neglect not the uses of interaction. The Home is a place where are gathered together the results of the personal life, a place where we garner all the accretions of a life pursued for the purposes of self; we maintain there the same unyielding central motives and plans, resisting all that opposes them. Home! It is a Kâma-lokic treasury where the personal self takes its ease in a mirror lined domain, seeing on all sides itself in its multitudinous hopes and fears. *My home, my children, my religion, my plans:* So runs our dreary creed. The man or woman who has even changed the personal accent, so that it shall read *my home, my children, my religion*, has taken one step towards the Actual, has glimpsed a possible alteration in the tenor of life. Our homes, that should be causes, are results. Let us make them causal and final.

To do this, to elevate the Home in the scale of Power, we must recognize that it is, in essence, a sphere of action, a center of Force. It imports much and continuously what forces we originate in our homes. The Home is a sphere of Life, not a center of static or mechanical Force; it is an atmosphere where divine breaths are playing. All who come to it take from its energies and none can depart without having contributed to them, for each has brought and has taken away Life and the experiences of Life. Each contacts there a certain mode of Force whose impress has made for or against evolution. Every Home has a spirit which it unconsciously expresses; from this spirit men may learn, whether it be wisdom or foolishness, but that which is helpful alike to the dweller and the stranger within the gates is that spirit of broad tolerance which modern education so often aims to defeat. It is not sufficient that the Home should be hospitable to persons; let it be hospitable to ideas; the angels entertained unawares are not bodies; it is our high privilege to minister there to souls.

Consider with me for a moment that the soul chose its earthly dwelling, its various abodes in matter, whether of the body, the family, the nation, as centers of Life wherein it might best express itself, while evolving and gaining the experience now most needed by it. Yet in the modern Home we have attempted to crystallize the living Life into some form which shall represent the mind of the builder of the Home! When that living Light which evades our classification and mocks our sterilizing plan, pours into our mold of clay and breaks it, what futility of grief or wrath is ours! When some line of Karma is worked out, there comes a precious instant where further growth is possible. In that instant the forces of Life assist the budding soul to cast a husk away; it may, if it will, enter a further stage of unfolding, of development toward a fuller Life. Yet in the very moment when greater freedom becomes possible to the soul, the human mind names these agencies of liberation Death, Loss, Disappointment, Despair, until the shuddering soul — as human beings have been known to do — entreats that it may again feel the safe enfoldment of the prison wall. The Home is maintained as a higher form of limitation, but the aroma of Freedom is lost.

How then to make a Home which shall assist those souls who come to it as to a nucleus of Life, there to learn of the Mighty Teacher? There is no formula for this diviner atmosphere. It is created by the breath of the souls dwelling therein: it is themselves. This question may well be asked and must be often asked, with intervals of stern endeavor set firmly between each inquiry, before the true Home impulse can be communicated at all: each fresh propulsion of the heart towards this image assists in its evolution, until at last the center becomes actual because it has been so long and so

fervently ideal. Vibrating waves of Thought, pulsing about the image, have urged it on through the ether into the receptive air, have developed it from a thought into an action, from power latent to power alive and current in the world of men.

It thus seems that we must go to the field of Force for our answer, seeing that we deal with Forces, and not with a supposed solid, material fact called Home. The essence of all Energy is that it shall act and react; the moment it had ceased to interact it would have passed out of Being. It is unthinkable that Energy shall cease to be; though man in his folly endeavors to detain it in the cells he so laboriously builds for its occupation; yet in so far as he thinks and observes at all he comes to see that if he would make of his Home a living center, he must first provide for the free interaction of Life there.

He does this by means of two great occult forces. The first of these is Harmony. Magic word, so oft repeated, so little known! Harmony! By its true use man the slave becomes man the master magician, balancing the Forces of his own existence. It is not to be presented in a nutshell, or to be verbally included between the covers of a book. It is to be sought for, to be lived, to be felt, but not to be described. It is not amiability, nor cheerfulness, nor sentiment, nor sympathy with those whom we can understand to the exclusion of the broad Whole whose sole common experience is Pain. By-products these; partial and temporary adjuncts which disappear in the fiercer throes of Life. Patience perhaps? Patience wears a tinge of sadness; she must merge into Contentment, her higher Self ere she can touch this master-chord of Harmony. In the *Voice of the Silence* we are told that the real Compassion is Harmony; I seem to descry it as that entire acceptance of the Law, that harmonious adjustment of the mind to the ebb and flow of Life.

The continual alterations in the mode of Life's action which we feel in our lives, are they not really the efforts of the Law to readjust those lives, bringing them into line with the currents of Life in that ether, that atmosphere, that heavenly breath which pours its tidal waves throughout our spheres in continual endeavor to adjust their individual pulsations to the universal action? Did we never think that Life must snatch us from the sands ere It could launch us on the shoreless sea? The evil which is not resisted of the wise is that seeming sorrow which is the breaking up of our hopes and habits under the action of a wider Law. To hold the Home as a place where Life may freely come and go; to teach each heart within that Home to cast itself freely upon Great Nature; to trust Life largely; thus, companions, shall we administer our stewardship faithfully.

From this point of view, the Home serves a universal purpose. Our children are not ours; they are Life's children; their souls sparks of the Mother-Soul, their bodies formed of lives of Mother-Nature. We and they came together, not by chance, but of set purpose. We are here for one another and because of one another, our purpose that of learning more of Life in company. Human Law compels us to feed, clothe and nurse our children; divine Law demands that we do the same by their minds. It is for us to assist these Egos to evolve their powers and train their thoughts. We can help their building of the brain by simple demonstrations of the Unity of all things, of the analogies of Nature. We can show them that every model man ever made has been patterned after some one of her forms, that every thought mind ever thinks takes effect in surrounding Life; we can call the tides, the winds, the stars in their courses to our aid; no example too high to serve the purpose of the true Home.

Our own relations with our home companions must be our first and continual illustration of these truths. We must look at the essence of things, see them in their wider relations, inform all our dealings with Love, with Compassion, with Harmony; shall we evoke these in other hearts if we have not poured them forth from our own?

No; no; our lives alone are teachers and helpers of men: our fine language is nothing. The deed, and not the word, is eloquent.

Toleration is the second necessary Force. It is Harmony expressed in relation to mankind. It opens the mind and sweetens the heart. It enriches the individual life by many an experience not yet its own, for to the tolerant man many puzzles of existence are revealed. In pure practicality this quality is invaluable in every form of civic life. It is the Door of Heaven — that Heaven which is Harmony. A little child comes to its use as readily as the sage — more readily.

If continuously and steadfastly we view thoughts and acts from the standpoint of Force, we see that man evolves given Forces, causing them to play for good or ill in that center he calls Home. The Home is not a toy we have made for ourselves; it is an offshoot of Karma wherein man meets his just debts and must pay them; not a private speculation for the furtherance of personal aims, but a focus of the Universal and Divine; a point of friction, if you will, between spirit and matter, but the contest is for advancement and not for retrogression of the human soul. Our homes should be so vital to the welfare of the community that each would be missed from its orbit as a planet from its system. It is there, and not elsewhere, that the gods await us. The Soul sheds her mild radiance upon these homes of men and would claim them for her own; she would use them for the sheltering of egos yet unborn; for the deeper unfolding of our latent powers; as altars of ministration to the race. Let but the heart of Love govern thee and thy home, and all shall presently be well with thee and with us all.

JULIA W. L. KEIGHTLEY

## NOTE

1. {*Audible Audiobooks*, 2015, *Theosophy in the Home*, Publisher's Summary:

Julia Keightley was much more of a mystic than many of her Theosophical peers in writing. She seemed to take a much more hands-on approach to the material than many of those around her. While other writers of her day were viewing Theosophy from an intellectual standpoint, Julia desired to see results from taking direct action. In this piece, originally published in the periodical *Theosophy*, in 1896, she writes of the importance of not escaping away into one's home, but instead incorporating it into your spiritual life, as well as making it a part of the greater community.}

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*The Path* – June 1888, Vol. 3, pp. 87-92.

## THINKING VERSUS READING.

JASPER NIEMAND, F.T.S.

The opinion of theosophical students is divided in respect to reading. There are those who consider that the chief source of learning is study, while others deprecate much reading and urge us to confine our efforts to “living the life.” The truth of course is that both methods are to be combined. They serve different departments of the same end. By study — especially of scriptures — we are enabled to form more just ideas of what “the life” may be, and in what way we shall live it. By living it, we correct all mistaken ideas; we shave and prune the excrescences of the mind. The application of spiritual (impersonal) ideas in daily life; the study of how we may hold to them amid the practical routine; the endeavor to discover them within all material conditions and

things; the effort to develop them; broaden the nature and enable us, through the spiritual will, to alchemize it into spiritual essences and powers. Nothing is wholly material; if it were it could not exist, it could not cohere for an instant. That mysterious force which is within all things and enables them to “live,” or to advance through successive changes, is what we call Spirit. In *Bhagavad Gîtâ* we find that Purush and Prakriti, or Spirit (energy) and Nature, are forever conjoined. All the powers existing in the macrocosm having also their various specific seats in man, it follows plainly that, if we wish to evolve more rapidly by means of these powers, as the universe also evolves by them, we must think and think within ourselves. These forces are under the guidance of will, thought, and knowledge;<sup>1</sup> reading will never enable us to reach them; thinking may put us on their track. To examine this question of reading. What is it that we do when we read? It is not reading to repeat, parrot like, words which we instantly forget, like the infant class over its primer. The eye encounters certain words and an idea is conveyed to the brain. Is this all? For certain persons it is all. They accept this idea as a form, a crystallization representing a certain state of things. If it attracts them, they retain and quote it; otherwise they dismiss it. In either case it is to them a finality. Such persons have their brains stored with such formulas; they have never lived them out, even in the mind; they do not really know the idea represented by this form of words at all. The fancy or the prejudice has been tickled by mere sound. All this is so much useless lumber. Show them what some of their favorite ideas really involve if carried out, and they cast them aside in disgust or dismay. This is the sort of reading which is much to be deprecated, along with that other kind undertaken to “pass time.” That an idea is a seed which, once planted, should sprout and grow, they do not see. That all ideas have a specific, energetic life of their own, and that this life is directly proportionate to the vitality (or truth) of the idea, they do not see. That thoughts have a power of self-reproduction, bearing a thousandfold for use or misuse, that they have an insidious and tremendous power, none but occultists know. That a part of the vital energy and real being of a writer is diffused throughout every page even of his printed works and more or less affects the reader as a psycho-magnetic entity, is rarely thought of at all. Every thought modifies the mind; it energizes according to the nature of those thoughts, diffusing a pernicious, weak, or beneficent force about us. If they are too rapidly forced upon it, the mind becomes gorged; we have mental dyspepsia and an unhealthy condition, not only in the internal organ called mind, but also in the physical organs which quickly respond to its condition. A habit of the mind is soon formed, and, like the dyspeptic, it craves abnormal quantities of food, alternated with periods of sluggish inertia: moreover, it becomes habituated to certain kinds of stimulus: if we feed it long upon novels or excitement, it will reject more healthy food. A greater reason for careful choice of reading than all these is found in the fact that something within us, that thing which knows and strives to make us know, takes advantage of the vibration set up in the mental (and through that to the outer) man to transfuse his understanding with more light. This something, this soul, leaps up within us, touched by the current flowing from those thoughts, and asserts of them, “They are true!” or, “They are false!” Thus books may help us to remember, to recall what we have lost. And no man to whom life is sacred will wish to expend those energies of which life consists in any idle fashion, or to develop their lower forms when the higher are equally at his command.

How then shall we read? When we have reason to believe that the writer knows somewhat of his subject, we may assume a receptive attitude. Where such is not the case we cannot usefully read at all. We may not judge our author. He may have found truths unsuited to us now, or teach them in ways which we are unfitted to pursue; this being so, we shall do well to avoid what is at present unhealthy nourishment. Where we feel attracted and do read, we should receive the idea into our minds and, submitting

ourselves passively to its influence, note what impression is stamped upon the sensitized plate within. The true character of the idea is *felt* rather than intellectually cognized, and by such a study of the interior impression we receive the verdict of the hidden judge. We need dread no *Vehtmgericht* but this; by it all stands or falls.<sup>2</sup> To attain this end we must hold ourselves still. The outer self must maintain an attitude of suspended judgment, or up comes our mere personality with quips, cranks, whims, opinions, and loves, drowning the inner voice with its racket and hubbub.

Another way of utilizing ideas is to assume their merit and to study wherein that merit may possibly consist, what fine ray has escaped our grosser sight. For example: I quoted to a comrade this line; "We must be ready to say at any moment, in whatever circumstances, whether expected or unexpected: 'It is just what I in fact desired.'"<sup>3</sup> My comrade replied that this appeared to him hypocritical. If he lost an arm, for instance, he could cheerfully submit, but he could not in truth say that he desired precisely that accident. This objection has a surface correctness. Had he read with an assumption that the line must have some truth in it, and had he examined it in that belief, he would doubtless have found its true bearing, while such personal exertion opens up a mind and nourishes it as no artificial injection can do. That true bearing is that the re-incarnating soul has chosen those circumstances most needed for its evolution; to work out that evolution we must work through our Karma; there is no other way. Hence my Higher Self, my real self, did in fact desire just that body and all its Karmic circumstances and life as a necessary experience for my soul at this juncture, the soul having to pass through all experiences, and though *i* may not desire them, *I* do. No true statements can be based upon the assumption that the personality, or even the lower principles of the soul, is the real ego at all.

There is again another point to be guarded against in reading books other than sacred writings, whose inner meaning we strive to assimilate. It is the reverse of the one above stated, and cautions us against too great mental hospitality. It is the danger of basing our faith upon the personality of the writer. If we do this, were he the Jove of Theosophy himself, we may receive injury rather than benefit. We may have good reason to believe him possessed of more or less knowledge. Whether he has himself assimilated that knowledge is again another question. An initiate will have done so, and the real value of his writings for us will consist in the fact of his being himself those truths which he gives out: he is himself the word and the sign of his degree. Only in so far as he has lived out his knowledge and *become it*, can he impart it beneficially to its readers in turn. Otherwise he runs the risk of presenting partial Truths through the medium of his own personality and tinging them thereby. In this way, with the best will in the world perhaps, he gives to students himself and not the Truth, gives his warped edition of it. As an occult fact, we can only give ourselves and no more; hence to give Truth we must be It. Herein lies the value of the writings of initiates, ending with those of our beloved Madame Blavatsky, who alone has dared to speak plainly to her era. The movement she inaugurated and the well-spring of teachings she opened for us to draw upon have been the means of renown for many writers who, without her initial courage, had never won an audience or a name. Even as one of the very least of these, I say; "May we never forget the debt."

Were all readers forewarned and ready to discount the personality, this danger would be lessened. Such discrimination in these matters is a spiritual quality not as yet generally found among men: it is a power of the soul, a more or less direct perception of Truth. It behooves the writer desirous of serving mankind to look well to his words, to the form in which he imprisons so much of the Truth as he has found, and to strive earnestly only to give forth so much of it as he himself embodies in life, so much as he has become. Great harm is constantly done by the spread of brain and lip knowledge, to be proven false supports by suffering men. And we do better to take the tone of

suggestion rather than that of authority. We may have touched upon our higher powers without having fully raised the nature to them. While we are but man we only see by glimpses; then the veil falls again. So I would preface all writings with the request that the reader be guided by his own natural selection to a very great extent.

Many writers, too, have come into this life with a special task to perform. They have something to say or to give, and when it is done, their usefulness to humanity is over; they seem then to have outlived themselves; long before their bodies pass into the ranks of the unseen, their virility and life-giving power have departed. We often see this fatal high-water mark in the life of the poet, the painter, the leader we followed and loved; see that he can never surpass it, that he has touched his highest state for this incarnation. To remain there is impossible. A law of nature decrees that he must advance or recede; in nature there is no standing still. We ask ourselves who has set this fatal limit, and we see clearly that the man alone has done himself this wrong. It is Karma, but a Karma of his own making. Some there are who pass, indeed, beyond that limit to intellectual greatness, but in doing so they have passed beyond our ordinary sight and have joined the silent workers in the Lodge of Truth. The only indication left us of their progress is the fact that they have never fallen to a lower level than that great one where we saw them standing. They have never followed up their words of power by the impotent babble of senility. Few indeed are these men, for "many are called, but few are chosen."<sup>4</sup> They are those who have a Karmic stock of spiritual energy sufficient to flood them over the crisis, and they use their highest intellectuality as a stepping stone to that which lies beyond intellect and above thought. The lesser men suffer. They have done so much, sacrificed so much, they do not understand why their words are no longer snatched from their lips and passed eagerly along the expectant throng. It is because those words are vain repetitions: they are no longer living, winged things. The speaker has not renewed his thought; he has fallen to worshipping his own methods; he makes an apotheosis of his present knowledge instead of reaching up to the realms of real life for new, vital essences. Thought, however broad, follows a circle at last, and in it he runs like a squirrel turning a wheel with puerile activity.

The mere fact that a man thinks he has done something or sacrificed something should show him his mistake. Deeds have been done through him, not by him. His so-called sacrifice was his opportunity to rise to real greatness, and only his half methods have limited it to a sacrifice. Some cry out in despair that it had been better to do nothing at all. I would not say that. The irresistible waves surge onward and bear us to a certain point: we may lie there long; still this is so much progress which we can never lose. The pity is that we should not arise ourselves and go further without waiting for the next tide.

These considerations show us that disagreements between theosophical writers are often unavoidable, the writers being but men and women. It is to our advantage to use our discriminative powers, to strengthen them by use. So we are not injured by these differences. We are more injured if we stake our faith upon any one or several writers, just because when our idols crumble,— and crumble they must, we are so often found in the dust beneath them, found stunned and wounded by their fall. "Let a man learn to bear the disappearance of the things he was wont to reverence without losing his reverence."<sup>5</sup> A truer word than that Emerson never wrote. We are instruments in mighty hands: if we turn our edge, we must expect to be laid aside. We must then refrain from solidifying our thoughts into a system, our reports of Truth into dogmas. We may not be dazzled even by the highest heavens, but must worship Truth alone.

Thus the whole problem for both writer and reader consists in eschewing mere forms, in looking beyond words to the principles which they represent faintly. A man

represents one or more universals; his thought should do the same. He will never mislead while he only gives us these; we shall never misunderstand him while we look for nothing less. All reading is useless, so far as spiritual progress is concerned, which cannot be conducted upon the above lines. If they limit your reading, they will extend your thinking. So much the better, for thinking is the path toward becoming. "What a man thinks, that he is; this is the old secret," say the *Upanishads*. There is a way of taking a thought and brooding over it as a bird broods on the nest; by this method the true thought hatches out and itself manifests to us. We must apply these thoughts to the touchstone of our own souls. Reading and thinking are not to be divorced. They should be one act; then each would correct and equilibrate the other.

My last word upon this subject would be this, and I would say it emphatically. Never receive and pass onward a thought which you do not feel and understand. On this point accept no authority other than your own soul. It is better that you seem to lose a ray of Truth than to accept and deflect it by a want of understanding, a want of assimilation of it. If it be yours in the Law, you cannot lose it. It will be sent to you again and again until you do receive it. Take then what your nature selects until you reach a point where you can rise above nature. When this is reached you will not need to read any longer, except from the wonderful book of life and from those blessed Scriptures wherein the Divine has spoken to the ages through men who had attained to some share in His being.

JASPER NIEMAND, F.T.S.

## NOTES

1. Itchasakti, Kriyasakti, Gnanasakti. See *Five Years of Theosophy*, Page 110.
2. Vehmgericht. A secret tribunal of old. {Chiefly in Westphalia, in the 14th and 15th centuries. Now geographically part of Germany.}
3. See *PATH* for Feb., 1888, page 328.
4. {Matthew 22:14.}
5. {"New England Reformers," *Essays: Second Series*, Ralph Waldo Emerson.}

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*The Path* – January 1887, Vol. 1, pp. 308-314.

## THOUGHTS IN SOLITUDE.

PILGRIM {PROBABLY JULIA VER PLANCK}

### I. {1 of 8}

Within the symbols and doctrines of the Christian Church may indeed lie hidden all the truths of the Occult Philosophy, and another and abler pen has already traced the correspondences, but it is necessary to realize differences as well as likenesses, and while Christianity, as a definite system, has embodied for the world many noble ideas, it seems to the writer to have been able to display only one fact of the divine jewel of Truth — to have been able to trace only a short line of the celestial circle of Wisdom.

Putting aside all such unphilosophical dogmas, as a personal anthropomorphic God — atonement by the vicarious sacrifice of another — eternal damnation and such like, which may be regarded as the outworks of the Creed, and which indeed many of its own professors deny or minimize, and coming to the essential kernel of the system — the inner stronghold of the faith — that which would be regarded as such by all its

truest sons throughout these nearly nineteen centuries of its existence, it would yet seem to be but a one-sided statement — a partial view — compared with the all-embracing Catholicity of the Occult Wisdom.

Unfortunately the outworks and excrescences above referred to, have, during these many centuries, so warped the thoughts and feelings of the populations professing this religion that it is no longer the pure and exalted doctrine as preached by its founder, but something very different. There are, no doubt, here and there good and noble souls, who practice the higher virtues of Christianity, but they are in such a minority that they are quite unable to affect the popular standard.

When one begins to analyze the stupendous outgrowth called Western Civilization, of which steam and electricity, in their practical uses, may be regarded as the types, and to ask how and by what means this vast fabric has arisen, we are informed by those who are able to see below the mere surface of things that the setting of men's minds in a certain direction must have been the factor, and it is only logical that if a man's highest religious duty is put before him as the saving of his own soul from perdition, a tendency of mind which may be characterized as the supremely selfish must naturally be set in motion. When the converging lines of heredity through many generations have so strengthened this tendency that it has become a potent factor, the development "*in excelsis*" of the purely intellectual faculties as dissociated from the moral will be seen to be the inevitable result, and from this has naturally evolved the Western Civilization which is spoken of with so much pride. But are not nations like trees to be known by their fruits? "Do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles?"

What sins are dwelt on with more emphatic reprobation throughout the whole teachings of Christ than those of hypocrisy and cupidity? And where is hypocrisy deeper than within the Christian fold? So deep indeed, that it has become an integral part of the nature, and is no more recognized as a vice than it was by the Pharisees of old. And where is the worship of mammon more rampant than throughout the length and breadth of Christendom? The preachers of the Churches may utter faint-hearted protests, but the nations nevertheless remain prostrate before their idol, and as steam and electricity extend their sway, and new countries are laid open to modern progress, the more primitive races, to avoid extinction, join in the mad competition for wealth. But whether conspicuously shown in the acts of States lustful to conquer fresh territory, or hidden in the individual character, where it displays itself in the haste to grow rich by fair means or foul, it remains none the less a gnawing canker at the heart of Christendom.

What a gulf there lies between the practice of modern Europe and the divine teachings of the Master.

Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon Earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal. But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal. For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.<sup>1</sup>

And again: "Ye cannot serve God and Mammon."<sup>2</sup>

There is probably no teaching more thoroughly altruistic in its character, and which, if it could be literally applied, would exercise so direct and beneficial an influence on the human race as the teaching of Christ, but to the impartial student there seems to be none, the spirit of whose revelation has been more perverted and degraded by his followers of all denominations, and following the spiritual law whose

complement on the physical plane may be recognized in the axiom that action and reaction are equal, the moral light to which Christ's teachings soared is the measure which decides the depth to which such teaching, when perverted, must inevitably fall, and Christendom may veritably be said to have become Anti-Christian.<sup>3</sup> All the religions of the world have more or less lost the divine afflatus by which they were originally vivified, but it has been reserved for Christianity to mold the life of the nations from the very blackness of the shadows cast by the "Light of the World."

When we ask to what goal or catastrophe this Western Civilization is hurrying, it is still more necessary to have the eyes of those who are able to read the signs of the times. The following is an extract from a letter to which many of the above ideas may be traced which was signed "a Turkish Effendi" (in the absence of any right to suggest the real and more authoritative name), and was published by his correspondent in *Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine* of January, 1880:

The persistent violation for centuries of the great altruistic laws propounded and enjoined by the great founder of the Christian religion, must inevitably produce a corresponding catastrophe; and the day is not far distant when modern civilization will find, that in its great scientific discoveries and inventions, devised for the purpose of ministering to its own extravagant necessities, it has forged the weapons by which it will itself be destroyed. No better evidence of the truth of this can be found than in the fact that Anti-Christendom alone is menaced with the danger of a great class revolution: already in every so-called Christian country we hear the mutterings of the coming storm, when labor and capital will find themselves arrayed against each other — when rich and poor will meet in deadly antagonism, and the spoilers and the spoiled solve, by means of the most recently invented artillery, the economic problems of modern 'progress.' It is surely a remarkable fact that this struggle between rich and poor is specially reserved for those whose religion inculcates upon them as the highest law — the love of their neighbor — and most strongly denounces the love of money. No country which does not bear the name of Christian is thus threatened.

But to return from this long digression, take Christianity, I say, in its loftiest ideal, as taught and practiced by its founder — and it certainly is a very lofty one — altruism in its most sublimated form — self-sacrifice incarnate upon Earth — giving of its life-blood to raise the sons of men, and drawing all to Him by the sheer force of divine love, until the believer's heart is set on flame, and nothing seems worthy in his eyes short of absolute union with this divine personality who is at once his Saviour, his brother and his God.

Yet were you to analyze the thoughts and feelings of the most ecstatic saint, would they display more than an ardent soul, a devout mind and a holy life?

Those of the Dualist Philosophy might indeed argue that such an one had his feet well planted on the narrow way — but the students of the wider Philosophy of Nature know well that everything on Earth — religion included — is under the governance of natural law. The attainment of perfection is not to be achieved by sentiment alone — *it is a scientific process*, and knowledge is the supreme enlightener.

The devotion of Bhakti is indeed a necessary prelude to progress in the religious life, under the guidance of whichever special cult the neophyte may aspire, but it is as it were the outer court of the Temple, and the Holy of Holies cannot be reached by any save those who have attained knowledge.

Without some previous study of occult writings, this word knowledge will entirely fail to carry home the idea which it is intended to express, and let alone the liability to

misinterpretation from this cause, how can anyone pretend to describe it who has himself none of this knowledge, who has not yet trodden one step of the path that leads there, and who can only strain with vague imagination towards the sublime conception of the inmost workings of Nature through her manifold diversity laid bare before the intuitive vision? However, although it is an act of temerity on the writer's part, these few words may convey some idea to those who are no further on the path than himself.

When the lower states of consciousness have been so welded in the fire of supreme emotion that duty, though involving the most appalling sacrifice, is no longer a thing to strive after with pain and struggle, but is a natural outcome of the life — the absolute expression of unity with nature — when the higher faculties, emotional, ethical and intellectual, whose respective functions may be said to be the perceiving of the Beautiful, the Good, and the True, have been so merged in one that the Buddhi or divine spark which hitherto flickered, becomes a bright, steady, luminous flame — when the “Explosion,” as St. Martin called it, has taken place, “by which our natural will is forever dispersed and annihilated by contact with the divine,” — then and then only is one fit to begin to tread the path of knowledge.

That it leads altogether beyond human experience, and entirely transcends what we can conceive is but too apparent.

The 15th and 16th Rules in the second part of *Light on the Path* may help towards a vague apprehension of what this knowledge means.

15th. Inquire of the earth, the air and the water of the secrets they hold for you. The development of your inner senses will enable you to do this.

16th. Inquire of the holy ones of the earth of the secrets they hold for you. The conquering of the desires of the outer senses will give you the right to do this.

And the final secret of all may be said to be wrapped up in the mystery of “self.” When the knowledge of the individualization of Being is reached, man has learned all that this world can teach him, and in the words “Know thyself” lie folded the ultimate possibilities of Humanity. Knowledge is indeed the supreme enlightener.

There is no purifier like thereto  
In all this world, and he who seeketh it  
Shall find it — being grown perfect — in himself.<sup>4</sup>

Whether any intelligible idea as to the knowledge itself can be evolved from what is here written — it will at least be apparent that a goodness so exalted as to be scarcely imaginable as a human attribute is required as the necessary qualification for the commencement of the search.

Well did Shelley write in his Prometheus:

The good want power but to weep barren tears  
The powerful goodness want — worse need for them.  
The wise want love; and those who love want wisdom.  
And all best things are thus confused to ill.  
Many are strong and rich, and would be just  
But live among their suffering fellow-men  
As if none felt: they know not what to do.

and the current Theologies of the world have not been able to remove the reproach. In the case of Christianity the failure may, to a great extent, be owing to its sentimentality

and its failure to realize that to be supremely good it is necessary to be wise — though wise with a higher wisdom than that referred to in the above lines.

But Christianity's greatest fall has probably been its disregard of the facts of Reincarnation. Whatever interpretation may be put on the great Master's utterance on this subject, and however the early church may have regarded it, it is notorious that Christianity, as interpreted by its mediaeval and modern professors alike, has entirely ignored the evolution of the soul progressing through innumerable earthly existences, and has instead adopted the illogical and unphilosophic dogma of a human soul born into the world from nothingness and meriting by its 70 or 80 years of earth-life an Eternity of bliss or an Eternity of misery.

But one does not expect of the child the reason-guided actions of mature manhood — its teachings must be given in the form of dogma, to which it must yield implicit obedience. Nor do we expect the infant school to provide the same training that the University does for the cultured intellect. Similarly the various Religions of the world have been the infant schools for growing Humanity until the complete stature of manhood should be reached.

It has been remarked by some Christians who are much enamored of the self-devoted love exhibited by the Founder of their faith, and the strong feeling of personal love and attachment thereby called forth from them, that Theosophy is cold because it does not dwell exclusively on that side of the nature, but while each separate Religion that has existed in the world may be regarded as the analysis of one special characteristic of the mind, the occult philosophy gathers into one synthetical whole all its varied characteristics. The different religions accentuating as they do different truths may be regarded at the same time — according as one looks at them from the scientific or religious stand-point — and both views are equally tenable and mutually comprehensive — as natural evolutions of the peoples among whom they arose, and as revelations from the unseen universe of partial truths which have to be received and assimilated before mankind can be fitted to comprehend the Supreme Truth in its abstract purity.

It will be seen from the foregoing that what we call Theosophy is the supreme expression of all Religion, as it is the final synthesis of all Science — for it is faith merged in Knowledge.

When one looks abroad on the world and sees how few even among the Religious, the Cultured and the Intellectual are able to grasp the Truth by intuitive vision — while the masses of mankind are sunk in degradation and semi-barbarity, the mind is lost in the vistas of the future, during which the present Religions or those which may have taken their place will have to continue their work of teaching.

Education is slow and Evolution is tardy, and the whole circle of wisdom is slow to trace; but the march of Nature has been as it was bound to be — for the best — and the line of Pope

One truth is clear, whatever is is right.<sup>5</sup>

seems more and more to be borne in upon the mind as an Eternal verity.

Destiny has guided us till now, and has made us what we are, but we who now realize the omnipotence of the divinely guided *Will*, have become potentially the makers — let us take it in our hands and shape our own career, for the sooner we rise to the heights of our Being, the sooner shall we be able to stretch down helping hands to the suffering Humanity of To-day.

PILGRIM.

## NOTES

1. {Matthew 6:19-21.}
2. {Matthew 6:24.}
3. It is an old declaration of the esoteric doctrine that “the counterfeit religion will last as long as the true one.” — [ED.]
4. {*Bhagavad Gîtâ*, Chapter 4.}
5. {*An Essay on Man*, Alexander Pope, Epistle I.}

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*The Path* – March 1887, Vol. 1, pp. 367-370.

## THOUGHTS IN SOLITUDE.

PILGRIM {PROBABLY JULIA VER PLANCK}

### II. {2 of 8}

The votaries of Religions that preach salvation only through the acceptance of their dogmas must inevitably be more or less animated by the proselytizing spirit, and the more pretentious the claims of power to save by the inculcation of orthodox opinion, the more urgent must appear the necessity to spread those opinions as widely as possible. Indeed it seems imperative on one who holds such a faith in his heart of hearts, that he should spend his life in trying to spread it.

But when the true philosophic thought is attained and the law of Karma with its infinite ramifications realized as the all-pervading power, how vain will seem all attempts to control or even deeply affect the destiny of others. Truly Occultism teaches the widest tolerance, and though its student will doubtless as formerly try to influence all who are brought into contact with him in his journey through life, and if possible instill into them the thoughts that actuate him and give his life a definite purpose, yet will he realize that over his own life alone has he paramount power. He may exercise his worldly wisdom as the sower of seed, may avoid what is most patently the rocky or the thorny ground, but he will gradually learn to cease to look for results from even the most promising, and will rise more and more on the wings of devotion to the true giver of the increase.

While therefore it is a subject for satisfaction if the Theosophical Society should indeed prove to be the dawn of that better hope for mankind the nucleus of that Universal Brotherhood which shall overspread all lands, and which shall plant in the hearts of men the Science-Religion along whose lines will move the spiritual progress of all future Humanity, yet as a Society it can scarcely be expected to be free from the imperfections inherent in all organization, which being of the earth is necessarily earthly — and after all it is a matter of very small moment in what form truth is given to the world. This only is certain that truth must advance that no man can stay the wheel of evolution — that the Divine Wisdom which we believe animates us will one day be recognized by all mankind as the only solution of the problem of the Universe, and as the guide to Life Eternal.

And Destiny will not be hurried — spite of our impatience — any more than she can be retarded. The evil Karma of the World must work itself out. The unclean man let him be unclean still, let him measure every depth of vice and taste of every spring of passion till the hour strikes for him also and his painful upward progress has to begin. So have the Rishis done who went before us, so have we done in past existences,

indeed we may have but extricated ourselves from the slough, and the mire may still be clinging to our feet. For no man can transcend experience, and all earthly places, foul and clean alike, must be trodden by him. Nor when the words or acts of others come into direct antagonism with our own personality, any more than when the cruelty and injustice in the world at large are brought painfully before us, shall we continue to blame the actors, or allow the old prejudices “with their lurid colorings of passion” to dominate us any longer, for the true philosophic thought will have taught us to recognize that all acts are but the result of the “Three Qualities” blended in infinite combination — the great Karma of the World working itself out.

The deeper one looks into this Western Civilization of ours, and the more one realizes in what degrading depths its masses are sunk, in what heartless frivolity so many of the more opulent spend their lives, and in what superstitious intolerance its so-called Religious World moves, it seems indeed a forlorn hope to attempt to carry conviction of the Occult Truth or expect a wide-spread acceptance of it. But though this age of Darkness may exhibit an appalling depth of materiality, yet in all ages of the world, the blind multitude are many and the lovers of Wisdom few. And indeed this love of Wisdom is no light attainment, but one for which the soul has been educated through life times of experience and paroxysms of pain, for while the gratification of any of the senses still continues to give supreme satisfaction, there is no room in the soul for Theosophic thought. Not until by the slow education of repeated experience it is realized that the senses can no longer satisfy, that even the higher joys of communion with one’s kind — though culminating in the ideal union of two souls — are but steps in the ladder to the Supreme Thought, can any true idea of the Divine Wisdom have been formed. Indeed a time will come for the student when the gratification of the senses will actually cause pain. It may be ushered in for one through the sense of sight, when the most beautiful scenery of earth, and the most perfect combinations of mountain wood and water only accentuate by their faint reflex the passionate desire for that land which no eye hath seen, that land which no eye can see. Or the symphonies of earthly music which once enthralled the soul may raise the longing for the song of the celestial choir to that ecstatic point where it becomes unrecognizable from pain. And so the student is driven inward to find at last his refuge in pure Thought, and he begins to perceive that the Eternal World of ideas is the only real World, the only one in which pure Being is to be found, and that this phenomenal existence is indeed but the circling of the nets of delusion, the restless tossing of the false salt waves of sense which reward “with droughts that double thirst” the deluded souls that float on them.

The more the student lives in this ideal world, the more will he find that the association with those whose interests are exclusively centered on earthly things becomes repugnant to him, and that even the calls of duty to descend from the tranquil heights of Thought, to the jarring discord of action in the world, are responded to with increasing pain, though duty in such cases is likely to be in process of changing her sphere of action. When the inner struggles of one still bound by ties of earth suggest such thoughts as these, surely the isolation from contact with the rude world of the most spiritual men, those who have achieved the sublime heights of Mahātmaship, is no longer a thing to wonder at, but becomes apparent as an absolute necessity.

The desires above referred to of seeing the invisible, and realizing the divine, will probably if practiced continuously enough, and with sufficient intensity, be the prelude to some partial lifting of the veil, when the ecstatic may reap in a moment of beatific vision more than he ever dreamed of, and receive accretion of strength for the coming years, though this is more likely to be the immediate reward of some supreme self-devotion whether in act or thought, and when the words of Krishna, “near to

renunciation — very near — dwelleth eternal peace”<sup>1</sup> will flash upon the soul as truth that requires no word of mortal man to give it authority.

But woe to the man who unduly cultivates his spiritual faculties without being a complete master of his lower nature — the beast below will turn and rend him some day — the little bit of lust unconquered may be the means of his complete undoing. For as his astral consciousness develops, his whole being intensifies, including the small unconquered part of his physical nature, which he will then have to fight upon the Astral plane, in far more terrible struggle than had he conquered on the physical. It becomes in fact what is symbolically known as the “Dweller on the threshold” that has to be fought and conquered before the neophyte can aspire to gain the first glimmering of vision on the true spiritual plane. For it must always be remembered that our nature is threefold, “body, soul and spirit” as the initiate St. Paul expressed it, and until the personality has transferred all its forces unto the soul plane, it cannot expect to attain to that of spirit. From this it will be evident how necessary it is to live more and more continuously in the Eternal Thought until all fleshly appetites and desires of sense die off by sheer inanition.

The vague dreams with which life began, and which the child with memories fresh from “that imperial palace whence he came” pictured in a material way of a golden city with walls of jasper and with gates of pearl, and into which no unclean thing was permitted to enter, are lost for a while in the frenzied rush of youth and early manhood, but maturer years bring them back with an added pathos and a more spiritualized meaning. It is indeed the Golden city we all seek for — “the city that hath foundations whose builder and whose maker is God.”<sup>2</sup>

PILGRIM.

## NOTES

1. {*Bhagavad Gîtâ*, Chapter 12.}
2. {Hebrews 11:10.}

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*The Path* – April 1887, Vol. 2, pp. 16-20.

## THOUGHTS IN SOLITUDE.

PILGRIM {PROBABLY JULIA VER PLANCK}

III. {3 of 8}

### CONTENT AND SATISFACTION.

The ideas these words represent lie at opposite poles of the circle. The former should stand for the philosophic calm, the minor peace, the comparative equability of Soul which the disciple has attained, while the latter implies the stagnation of Will, the death of aspiration and of all true progress.

When the first impetuous burst of feeling is over, and time with her slowly disenchanting hand has begun to blur the outlines of the first vivid creation of thought, the knowledge gained seems to be the only possession left — the knowledge that there is a Path to tread and that no thought is worth thinking, and no word worth uttering that has not for its aim the one supreme object — the finding and the treading of this path that leads to deliverance from conditioned existence. But it is one thing to be

possessed of this merely intellectual knowledge, and another to have the Will, the Courage and the Strength to find and to tread the path.

After much uncertain questioning and many anxious thoughts about the path, remembering always that “it is not found by devotion alone, by religious contemplation alone, by ardent progress, by self-sacrificing labor, by studious observations of life, that none alone can take the disciple more than one step onwards, and that all steps are necessary to make up the ladder,” a clue may yet be obtained from the lines in the *Bhagavad Gîtâ*, so beautifully rendered by Mr. Edwin Arnold

Some few there be  
By meditation find the Soul in Self  
Self-schooled, and some by long philosophy  
And holy life reach thither; some by works:  
Some never so attaining, hear of light  
From other lips and seize, and cleave to it  
Worshipping; yea! and those — to teaching true —  
Overpass Death! <sup>1</sup>

Aye! “The aids to noble life are all within” — the path indeed lies there, in other words there are as many pathways to perfection as there are individual Souls.

There is no doubt a saturation point for Energy as there is for Truth in the individual — it may come in the form of lethargic weariness, or it may come in the form of satisfaction. To the old man, weary of life, the rest of death is sweet, but even though he may seem to have earned repose, such feeling still appertains to the quality of “Tamas,” and should be resisted at any cost. The feeling of satisfaction is far more insidious — indeed it is the limit to any further possible advance placed by the man’s own deepest sub-conscious self. Around us are to be seen men in all stages of moral growth who have attained to this satisfaction. Though the mere gratification of the senses and the social amenities of civilized countries may become to the majority of the votaries of pleasure a dull meaningless treadmill, we yet see some to whom such life affords true satisfaction. They have reached their goal. And if we turn to the Religious world, who does not know one or two of the many happy Souls who have attained the complete rest of satisfaction? Burning questions do not exist for them — they deem that they have solved the insolvable — They too have reached their goal. Nor does this sphere of objective life in which we dwell alone exemplify the working of this law of nature. The realm of the Deva-lokas, could we penetrate to those serene heights of being, would show us Souls who had attained to their Saintly rest, who had reached their supreme satisfaction — rest and satisfaction however that must along with all conditioned existence come to an end sometime. But to the god in the Deva-loka, as to the worldly epicure, the satisfaction he has reached is the evidence of the limit of advance — the advance made in the different cases being merely one of degree. Each has shown an incapacity for further endurance, whether of suffering or of joy, though in most cases it must be suffering, and their progress has therefore come to an end. But man has within him the potentiality of Godhead, not the Deva (god) in his realms of bliss, but the absolute unity with the divine Spirit of Life of which nature is a manifestation — the Being where all individuality is merged in one — the one ever-permanent state of Nirvana — the Peace of God that passeth all understanding.

When after long years of incessant goading, the goad within ceases to act, a minor peace is attained. It is a matter of wonder to the disciple, who cannot understand why it should be so — he has had no hand in the slackening of the torture cords — he only knows that the strain is withdrawn and that in the quietude his thought can range

undisturbed. But with the removal of the pain, he seems to feel as if his search were less intense, and then follows the inexplicable paradox of the actual invocation of pain by one part of his nature, while the other part of him regards with fear and dismay any recurrence of it. Nevertheless this tranquility of contents continues. It goes without saying that this state includes the perfect content in all outward conditions. It may not have reached the transcendent light, where fear of any earthly catastrophe as well as desire for any earthly gain are alike non-existent. The disciple still remains a creature of habit, and imagination can easily conjure up situations where the equanimity would be entirely overthrown. But at least fresh desire for earthly objects has as a rule ceased to operate. All earthly life indeed stands before his mind, in its true color, as possessing value only so far as giving opportunity of recognizing its utter valuelessness, and of stretching forward to those things which have permanence and value, and the one all-absorbing desire that remains, is that when the burden of earthly existence has again to be taken up, the progress gained in the last life may not be lost; that in the words of Plato, we may so pass through the waters of Lethe as not to defile our souls with absolute oblivion.

In one of the early numbers of the *Theosophist* the aspirants for chelaship are warned against too soon undertaking a life for which they are not yet fitted, and all are advised to master first their most apparent weaknesses — their most besetting sins — The mastering of such, and the continuing to be the master, until relapse is constitutionally impossible (though this may imply a period which one life may not cover) would indeed seem to be for most the necessary entrance to the Path. While by this exercise of self-restraint the aspirant is acquiring the necessary Will, Strength and Courage for the treading of the Path when found, “new hands and new feet are being born within him” with which to scale the heights that lie beyond. The search for perfection may well find its simile in the scaling of some seemingly inaccessible peak. After journeying for long years through the dim forest on the plain, and falling into many a slough of despond, with torn garments and with bleeding feet the climber has at last emerged. The forest lies below him and he sees the dim plain stretching to the horizon, but it is only the first plateau of the mountain he has scaled, and straight in front of him rises a seemingly perpendicular face of rock. Yet up this face of rock he has to go, for there can be no turning back when it is realized that what he has undertaken is the one thing worth doing.

But while insisting on the necessity of the gradual strengthening of the character by victory over all the faults of which the disciple is conscious, the common mistake of the religious must not here be made, and the conquering of any one sin or of all sins be mistaken for the goal, instead of a mere preparation for the treading of the path. Indeed — given a sufficiently ardent desire for the ultimate goal — all sins and weaknesses that stand between the disciple and the object of his desire will by that very fire of desire be annihilated in a flash of thought. One of the most important means of keeping alive and intensifying this desire is by keeping the goal constantly in view. And as it must have been the failure of all earthly things to satisfy the heaven-born longings of the aspirant that first set his face towards the path, so the bringing back before the mind’s eye the past experience of futile longings and disillusionings will best serve as impetus for the next transport of Heavenward flight.

What a man sets his whole heart on that he will undoubtedly attain sooner or later. The man whose desires do not rise above the gratification of his physical senses gets what he desires and that, as a rule, quickly. He whose life is concentrated in the emotional nature will in time achieve his “*summum bonum*” in the union of love he has dreamt of with another soul. He to whom the acquirement of knowledge is the one thing needful, must attain what he desires, and that in exact ratio with his energetic search for it, while the philanthropist whose aim is to do good to others — whether on

the material or the moral plane, and who feels impelled to the so-called sacrifice of self in some definite course of action — though this lies far apart from the “killing out of all sense of separateness” which constitutes the true “self-sacrifice” — will doubtless also achieve his reward, though in some less obvious way. But

Narrow

The heart that loves, the brain that contemplates,  
The life that wears, the spirit that creates  
One object, and one form, and builds thereby  
A sepulchre for its eternity.<sup>2</sup>

We who recognize the finger of Mâyâ in all these things, and whose search is for that intuitive Wisdom in which they are all embraced, but which transcends them all, does it not behoove us to lift our minds more and more continuously to the Supreme? and to free our thoughts more and more from all limitations? for as it was the inability to fix the soul in worship on the attributeless Deity (though he had freed himself from *all* personal desires) that prevented the devotee from straightway attaining Nirvana, and instead landed him in the heavens of the Devaloka, where the conditions of bliss he had pictured to his mind as the Supreme were his inevitable reward, so should we even now begin to free our minds from all limited conceptions, and strain more and more towards the infinite.

I cannot better conclude than by quoting the last few lines in Farîdu-d-din Attâr's description of the seven stages in the road leading to union with the Divine Essence.

Last stage of all is the Valley of Annihilation of Self: of complete Poverty,<sup>3</sup> — 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.<sup>4</sup>

PILGRIM.

## NOTES

1. {*The Song Celestial*, Edwin Arnold, Book 13.}
2. {“Epipsychidion,” Percy Bysshe Shelley, lines 169-173.}
3. This is the common term among the Muslim Mystics for the highest degree of the contemplative life.
4. {Farîdu-d-din-Attâr. Also in: “The Saints of Islam,” W. S. Lilly, *Eclectic Magazine of Foreign Literature, Science, and Art*, October 1883, p. 534.}

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*The Path* – May 1887, Vol. 2, pp. 57-61.

## THOUGHTS IN SOLITUDE.

PILGRIM {PROBABLY JULIA VER PLANCK}

IV. {4 of 8}

As said Solomon the wise, “there is no new thing under the sun.”<sup>1</sup> Our thoughts are but the thoughts of preceding ages. That this must be so will be apparent when one

considers the Eternity behind. All possibilities of nature must have been realized and all thoughts thought in the — to us — dim past. And while the wheel of evolution still turns this must be so. At the apex of the orbit in each revolution, a few of the greatest souled ones have attained emancipation, a few have been able to lift the latch of the Golden Gate. But the remainder of the candidates in nature's school who have failed at the final test have again to begin the weary round, along with those evolving from lower conditions, with only so much light to guide them through the labyrinth of life as may have been enshrined in the traditions or religions evolved during the previous efflorescence of Humanity. How are they to regain the thoughts of the past and obtain some true interpretation of the mystery of life? All thoughts indeed are writ in the Akasa from which the Prophets and Poets of all ages have drawn their inspiration, and in proportion to a man's striving to get below the mere surface of things, will be the degree in which he succeeds in making part of that inheritance of the ages his own possession.

The scholar too would seem to have a part to play. What worthier object can be his than that of rendering intelligible in the speech of his epoch, the thoughts and ideas enshrined in the dead languages of the great thinking races of the past? The scholars of to-day, those who have drunk deep at the wells of Sanskrit and Greek learning, have indeed a heavy responsibility upon their shoulders. Were it not a worthier aim of life to make common property the thoughts and ideas of the sublime ancients than to wrap themselves as so many do — though there are one or two notable and glorious exceptions — in the self-gratulation of exclusive culture and stagnate in the memory of past achievement?

Those too who are animated by the Theosophic spirit, and who feel the supreme desirability of the path they are striving to tread, are bound to find words more or less appropriate to carry to the world a conviction of this supreme desirability, words which may convey some idea of the animating life within which is quite as much an embodiment of the scientific spirit of the seeker after truth, and the single-eyed determination of the man of the world to achieve his object, as of any devotional or religious feeling. Religion — in Christian countries at least — has been made far too much a thing of sentiment, it has its use no doubt in prompting to the initial effort, but when the path is chosen it would seem that singleheartedness of aim and firm determination were the dominant qualities required.

The thought that prompted the present paper was expressed in a footnote written by a friend in that mystical work of the middle ages "*Theologia Germanica*." The text expresses the thought that all that is, is well pleasing and good in God's eyes, while the foot note by citing one out of the many instances of earthly action so diametrically opposed to what the most optimistic could consider as pleasing to God, commands as the necessary corollary to the text its converse proposition.

Search as deeply as we may into Nature's life, and obtain though we may some intuition of the love which may be regarded as "creation's final law," that law in its working throughout all objective existence must still appear to us as unutterably hideous. The cosmos exists indeed for those who have extended enough vision, in other words the faith to see it, its picture may be seen in the depths of the soul, that very throne of God, but to us who tread the pathways of the world, who are daily brought in contact with the social evils of this generation, the crime, the ignorance, the poverty, the suffering, how can such existence appear to us other than a chaos? Is it not a veritable Hell on Earth? But is there no "best Philosophy" such as Shelley speaks of

...whose taste  
Makes this cold common hell, our life, a doom  
As glorious as a fiery martyrdom...<sup>2</sup>

The reproach of being unpractical is often made against those who are deeply imbued with the philosophic spirit — they may not have the ready panacea for the cure of existing evils demanded by the philanthropist, whose partial remedy he is so apt to consider as such, and to apply with ill-considered action — but they who look deep down see the real remedy, though their words may fall as vain sounds on the ears of the world.

The forces too that have long been set in motion are not lightly to be diverted from the goal towards which they have been hastening, and that goal is for us beginning to loom but too clearly in view. That child born of man's deep seated sense of justice (perverted though it may be) out of the dam, dire poverty, the shrieking red-clad socialist stalks among us, and following the inevitable law of retribution, over the people who have fallen deepest in the slough of materialism, and have been most dominated by the lusts of the flesh, is beginning to tremble the moan of the coming storm, while in their most populous cities the cries rise loudest. It may be too late now entirely to ward off the storm, but surely its fury might be mitigated were we even now to read the lesson aright.

To a people whose upper classes are pandered to by nameless lusts, and whose lower classes breed like beasts of the field, without recognizing, as the beasts do, a non-breeding season, to this adulterous and lascivious generation were it not a worthy aim to show by word and deed that *it* is possible to dissociate love from lust, and that the loftiest emotion of which Humanity is capable has no necessary connection with the sexual bond? But what advance can be made till society recognizes that instead of offering a premium on marriage, they rather are worthy of admiration who can guard inviolate the sacred seed, under the influence of an aim the worldling knows not of — the aim of transferring the life-force from the material into the spiritual plane, with whatever results may accrue from this transformation of energy, of transcendental powers, or sweeter far the realization of the Platonic dream of union with our other half, the finding that within ourselves lay the twin soul which has been the object of our life-long search, in other words that in the microcosm, man, as in the macrocosm, God, are contained both the male and the female elements of existence.

What a contrast to this age of materiality to read of that old time when to prevent the depopulation of the country, it was necessary to enjoin each true-hearted Brahman to marry and beget one child before devoting himself to the main object of existence which should be to-day as it was then, the practice of Yoga.

But besides helping to counteract the dominant evil of our time another reason can be given for the practice of celibacy, though this lies more on the interior plane, and is therefore more a subject of speculation. For it is a satisfaction to think that by refusing further to swell the already over-teeming populations, the ranks of the unborn are lessened to a smaller degree, that a few more souls continue to enjoy the rosy dreams of Heaven.

But though the general acceptance of a less gross form of life would greatly tend towards the amelioration of human existence, to expect it from this generation would seem like putting the effect before the cause, for what is there to impel towards any curbing of the passions while Ignorance holds almost undivided sway? All evils under which Humanity groans may indeed be ascribed to that baleful influence, and it is useless to lop off one of the hydra heads of the monster, while she is capable of replacing it by a still more hideous growth. Andromeda truly pictures Humanity to-day,

but where is the redeemer Perseus to be looked for save under the shining garb of the occult wisdom? The worldly knowledge with its glittering train of physical sciences and mechanical inventions can never set Humanity free, it but weaves round its votaries still more deluding webs of darkness. But we may hope that Reason will once more “shed her beams of dawn” over the dim world, and that true faith will once more shine in the hearts of men, for when the knowledge has filtered in that this life is but one of an endless chain of similar existences, will not the futility of gratifying every whim of the senses, which must so often before have been gratified give place to the desire for freedom from such dominance, and to the yearning for some more lasting bliss? and when it is realized that our present thoughts and acts are the factors that determine our future lives and that the pain (or joy) of the present is the retribution of the past, will not a goad be fixed in the hearts of many to drive them on the right way? and finally, when it is dimly perceived that the soul in past existences has experienced all heights and depths of earthly things — has realized all the sweets of wealth, of honor, of power, of love — that the bitter has been very bitter indeed and that the sweetest of the sweet has failed to give permanent satisfaction, will there not spring up in the soul a deep distaste for this loathsome life, a firm intent to pierce the veil of *Mâyâ* that hides from us the celestial region?

This piercing of the veil, or to adopt a simile which will carry us a little further, this scaling of the mountain is conceived of in very different ways. To some it seems as the culmination of one gigantic effort, to others as the result of infinitely slow progress. It is now pictured as “the killing of the deadly serpent of self for which Supreme moment is needed a strength such as no hero of the battle field needs.” Elsewhere it is described as the steadfast toil of the will “till efforts end in ease and thought has passed from thinking,” as the gradual centering of all thought in the eternal thought till all earth-born desires and fears die out through sheer lack of the nourishment whereby they may be kept alive. The truth may lie in the union of these two apparently contradictory modes of thought, or it may be that as the different natures of men impel them to different lines of action, the pathways are really different though conducting to the same goal, or it may be suggested that the desperate effort referred to above, the supreme moment when the strength of the hero is needed, may be symbolized in the action of one of the mountain climbers, who has strayed from the true mountain side, into some rocky cul-de-sac, up some misleading pinnacle. A desperate leap will doubtless be required of him to reach the true breast of the mountain again. But he who has started on the ascent with a true guide will not mistake the rocky pinnacle for the snow-clad summit. His progress will be fast or slow as the strength and will within him shall decide. Therefore to the aspirant should it ever seem like the steady ascent of the mountain for which are demanded all his combined energies of courage, prudence and steadfastness. And as the summit is approached, all dread anticipation of what the future may bring as well as the fever of personal desire and earthly passion will be left behind like the mist of the valley. Hope and Fear alike will disappear in the purity of that serene air.

And the love which could no longer identify itself with any one object of desire, or find any resting place on earth will have been gradually purged from all taint of animal passion, and will daily become more Godlike in its diffusion, until personal likes and dislikes melt away before its intensity of worship of the one supreme Perfection. All appearances of difference will then be blotted out — friends and enemies, kinsmen and aliens, yea, good and evil men — all will appear alike — for God only will be seen in all, and the bliss of Yoga will be attained.

PILGRIM.

## NOTES

1. {Ecclesiastes 1:9.}
2. {"Epipsychidion," Percy Bysshe Shelley, lines 213-215.}

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*The Path* – June 1887, Vol. 2, pp. 85-90.

## THOUGHTS IN SOLITUDE. PILGRIM {PROBABLY JULIA VER PLANCK}

V. {5 of 8}

### THE TWO PATHWAYS.

In man's attempt to pierce the dark mists of ignorance that surround him, in his search after the perfect life, two ideas alternately dominate his horizon — two pathways seem alternately to invite his footsteps. These may roughly be designated as the Scientific and the Religious.

When full consideration is given to the stupendousness of the undertaking, to the almost inconceivable heights at which we aim; when it is realized that we aspire to reach the ranks of the Dhyan Chohans, the rulers of our Planetary System; to become, in fact, part of that diffused Divine consciousness in which is upheld the life of the World, does it not seem reasonable to conclude that all knowledge and all power must have been realized and beneficently practiced by such an one in his upward course — that the conquering of the desires of the outer senses must have been accompanied by the development of the inner senses, through whose agency the whole elemental kingdom must have been cognized and conquered, and the hearts and minds of men read as in an open book?

But when the disciple realizes that all earthly power, honor, dominion, has long been put aside by him as valueless — that the one word which has dominated his being is love, and that the failure to realize any perfect union on earth has created and intensified the desire to plunge and to be lost in the Nirvanic ocean of Divinity, will not the attainment of powers and the development of inner senses appear to him as mere circumlocution and surplusage? Why not make for his goal at once? The bondage of material life being but the impulse to act, liberation consists in destroying this impulse, not by suppression, but by the knowledge that the ego is independent of it. This knowledge is attained through faith, but the faith that leads up to it is liable to die if not fed by obedience to the will of God — "If thou wouldst enter the life, keep the commandments" — the commandments set in the various Scriptures of Humanity — then in long-suffering patience work out the term of imprisonment in flesh.

#### Rule the flesh

By mind, governing mind with ordered Will;  
Subduing Will by knowledge, making this  
Serve the firm Spirit, and the Spirit cling  
As Soul to the eternal changeless Soul,<sup>1</sup>

till the "dark" and "passionate" qualities of Nature have melted away, and the serenity of "Satwa" alone remains. And the soul, which has centered itself more and more on

the Supreme Soul, will find its earthly ties gradually dissolve, until the last one disappears, and it naturally gravitates to its eternal home.

This is a lovely picture, and there are many to whom such a pathway — the pathway of Religion — must have inconceivable attractions; but let us pause and consider well whether it is one which we in this Kali Yuga are yet fitted to follow to the exclusion of all others.

If we were such complete masters of the physical nature as to be absolutely fearless under any conceivable circumstances, and if our hearts were filled with such an all-embracing love for Humanity that at no moment would we hesitate to lay down our lives for it, we might, perhaps, consider ourselves worthy of passing through the final gateway of contemplative devotion. Doubtless there are few men, worthy of the name, who have not risen, in moments of exaltation, to the thought that even the physical well-being — let alone the eternal salvation! — of suffering Humanity would be cheaply purchased by his death. It needs not to turn for an example to the Cross of Calvary, though that is regarded by Christians who fail to realize the inner meaning of their own faith as something uniquely transcendental in its self-sacrifice. Heroism is not so far to seek, and History can point to many a martyr who has braved as painful and ignominious a death without the stupendous motive for the sacrifice, such as might well goad any high-souled man to make it. But it is another thing to live constantly in the devoted frame of mind referred to, from merely rising to it in moments of exaltation.

Doubtless, also, there are men who, by the judicious use of right emotion, can, at times, so nerve themselves that fear shall seem an unknown word; but who is able to live in constant disregard of consequences, even on the physical plane with which we are tolerably well acquainted? So long as the horrors of the unknown psychic plane transcend anything we can conceive of on the physical, or while the realms of darkness contain one thought of terror for our imaginations, how can we consider ourselves worthy of the final crown of being? For is it not Perfection that we aim at? And where a trace of fear is present, or where love in its plenitude is absent, how can we expect to be within measurable distance of our goal? Four lines from one of Matthew Arnold's poems, many of which seem to breathe a subtle, though possibly unintentional aroma of occult thought, may here partially help to express the idea intended:

And he who flagg'd not in earthly strife,  
From strength to strength advancing — only he,  
His soul well-knit, and all his battles won,  
Mounts, and that hardly, to eternal life.<sup>2</sup>

Though it must be remembered that fear is an attribute of the physical only, there is an interblending of the elements of our nature, and it stands to reason that the unknown sights and sounds of the plane just beyond that of which the physical is cognizant are capable of striking a far deeper terror, as well as of fascinating with a more subtle power.

And is it not logical to suppose that, as the disciple has gradually realized the unsatisfying nature of all earthly things — has learned to put aside its temptations, and to rise occasionally to a standpoint where its fears cannot assail him, so he must start on his journey of discovery in the unknown psychic world — armed always with the firm will and the lofty aspirations towards the Spirit — till he has learned also that its attractions cannot detain him, and that he has the power within him to dominate its terrors?

Until, therefore, we can stand as master in our house of life, and until the "Enthusiasm of Humanity" has possessed our Being, we must not imagine that we can discard the Scientific pathway before we have really begun to tread it. Indeed, the desire to tread the Religious path alone may, in some cases, have a partially selfish origin not altogether unallied to the slothful quality of "Tamas."

When it is realized, too, that work for Humanity "all up the line" is the prevailing rule, that the Divine and Semi-divine beings whom we know under the name of Mahâtmas and Adepts are unremitting in their arduous work for the race, it will become apparent that the breaking down of the walls of our personality, and the merging of our individual being in the universal Divine Being, is a very far-off goal, which not all of them even have yet reached.

The attitude of mind of all students of Occultism towards the great mass of Humanity, must, as stated in *Zanoni*, be one either of pity or of scorn — as a fact, it seems to fluctuate between these two. The feeling of scorn, indeed, easily rises in the breast when contemplating the petty aims and prejudiced views of even the noblest and worthiest specimens of the race we have known; and when to a naturally proud disposition is added the conviction that the objects of desire striven for by the mass of men are below contempt, the feeling of scorn often seems to carry all before it; and when it is felt that through pain and suffering heights of thought have been scaled, and that contemporaries, and even those who were once looked up to as teachers, have been left below, it often seems as if the only refuge from the lonesome isolation were to be found in a scornful pride. But surely, pity is the truer feeling, and it must be with relief that the disciple turns to the softer memories of past years, when the mere glance of a passer in the street carried home a tale of untold endurance and uncomplaining suffering, or when a modulation of voice opened the flood-gates of emotion, and the deep pathos of the fate of this suffering Humanity seemed to bind all together in community of being. It is in such moments as these, when it is realized that the supremest bliss would be obtained by the utter abandonment of "self" for the Great Cause, that the two pathways really merge in one, and it is felt that the "great renunciation" must be the final outcome alike of the love of God and of the service of Man.

It would seem, then, that our efforts to identify ourselves with the great whole must not be confined to yearnings after the ineffable Perfection, but must also take the form of work, on whatever plane it may be, for a more or less recognizedly concrete Humanity. It is very difficult to know what special form this work should take. While fully accepting the ideas expressed in Number II. {2.} of this series, as to the futility of attempting to exert paramount influence on the thoughts of others, Ignorance must yet be recognized as the prime curse of mankind; the attempts at diffusion of the true philosophic thought must, therefore, ever stand in the first place; and doubtless, along with the increased effort to enlighten Humanity, there will arise in the heart of the worker a greater love for and identification with Humanity which must lead to a more or less partial breaking down of the partition walls of his individuality.

If we turn from the evolution of the individual to the evolution of the race, as a whole, the analogous thoughts which occur are, that while the veil of obscurity must ever hide the future, and while it must remain impossible for us to know whether our special efforts in this or in that direction are destined to be successful, it may broadly be stated that — at least in this Western civilization of ours — individualism seems to have reached its zenith, and that the problems for the race to work out in the future will probably lie in the altruistic effort to supplant individualism by schemes which will more or less recognize the underlying Brotherhood of Humanity. The societies of today that call themselves Socialistic put forward plans that may be utterly inchoate and unworkable — and some of their members certainly appear to hold opinions as to the

rights of revolution and violence which are alike hateful and fearsome to all true lovers of order — but those who think their work lies in this direction will doubtless feel impelled to try and discover the truth that underlies all these manifestations, with the view of guiding, if possible, the forces towards a peaceful issue.

The development of the inner senses is also one of the many pathways that must be pursued for the attainment of the real knowledge and power whereby we may potently help this suffering humanity, and give our aid to the few strong hands who hold back the powers of darkness “from obtaining complete victory.” When by the unfoldment of the inner perceptions, we have reached the platform whence earthly life is seen as from a height, the physical nature will have become a mighty tool in our hands to be used in the service of man. What vistas of work for the race will then unfold to our view! Of those who can grasp this idea by strong imaginative power, some will, no doubt, feel urged to force the development, though such forcing must doubtless be attended with danger. That it can be forced is a fact known to many students of occultism, and he who is in earnest will doubtless find a more or less competent instructor. To step consciously into situations where previous experience will be unavailing and where dangers are known to exist certainly requires courage, but how is greater strength to be gained or courage to be acquired save by undertaking the task and facing the danger? Nothing should be done rashly, and every step should be taken with due caution, but the path will have to be trod some day, and if only a little courage and a little strength are already possessed, this would seem to be a means of increasing our store of them. A sudden stoppage of the heart by an access of sheer terror, or a death in life dragged on to the grave through the delirium of madness, are awful possibilities to contemplate, but even were the investigator by some rash attempt to make utter wreck of himself in conflict with one of the elemental forces of nature, it should always be remembered that it would only be of his present earth-life that the wreck would be made, and that when his time came to appear again on the earthly scene, he would doubtless come back endowed with greater powers than if he had not made the attempt at all.

The separation throughout this paper of the two pathways, the Scientific and the Religious, has been made, it must be remembered, for purposes of contrast. Such division is purely arbitrary. Man’s nature is indeed complex, but it is a unity in complexity; similarly, the path, though multiform, is one. But it is more especially in carrying out such investigations or developments as those just dwelt on that the supreme necessity of the qualities known as the devotional or religious is apparent. Indeed, it may safely be asserted that the searcher who starts with a mere scientific interest, and in his own strength only, runs the greatest possible danger, while he is certain of success whose animating motive is the all-embracing love of Humanity, or the still intenser worship of the Supreme Perfection. If the old self regains its dominance, the disciple may well tremble, for in such moments the “Dweller of the Threshold” has a secret ally in the man’s inner stronghold; but while the love and the faith continue to be his guiding impulses failure is impossible, for when “Self” is cast aside, what is there to fear for? and when God dwells in the heart, then is strength made perfect.

PILGRIM.

## NOTES

1. {*Katha Upanishad*, Edwin Arnold, translator, Third Valli.}
2. {“Immortality,” Matthew Arnold.}

## THOUGHTS IN SOLITUDE.

PILGRIM {PROBABLY JULIA VER PLANCK}

VI. {6 of 8}

SIR PHILLIP SIDNEY.

When sickened with the petty aims of the world around — when wearied and despairing in the quest of the ideal brotherhood, it is refreshing to recognize a kinship of spirit even across the gulf of centuries — to feel that the brotherhood of love we seek for is no vain dream, and that when we are worthy to enter its ranks, comrades such as Sydney will be there to welcome us.

On reading over the life of this paragon of the Elizabethan period, though his actual achievement seems at first sight scarcely to warrant the renown he won, the aroma of his character which so captivated his contemporaries, is still felt to be the truest criterion by which to judge the man.

But the chief lesson to be learned by students of occultism from the life of Sidney is that in proportion as passion rises to intensity is its power to act as the true alchemist in the transmutation of the baser metals of our nature into the pure gold of the heart.

For the mass of men who stagnate through life without one intense passion to fire their nature, the formula of Eliphas Levi — modified as follows would indeed seem to be appropriate — though of course referring to the ultimate destiny, not to the result of any one earth-life. “The spiritual passion towards good and the spiritual passion towards evil are the two poles of the world of souls: between these two poles vegetate and die without remembrance the useless portion of mankind.”

To see that Sidney was made in a more fiery mold, it needs but to read his “Astrophel and Stella.” Though the complete purging of his nature and the conquest of self is only made apparent in the concluding sonnets, the passionate outbursts of his love, and the fiery path he had to tread are manifest throughout the poem, and naturally form a bond of union — all the closer when the culmination of the desire has been identical — with those who have had analogous experience.

It is perhaps difficult at first to realize how the love of an actual living woman should have the same purging and purifying effect as a similar love idealized, but nature is not to be bound by rules of our making in her methods of drawing different souls towards perfection. Both may be taken as illustrations of the fact that whether emotion starts from a pleasurable or a painful source, on reaching a high enough degree of intensity, it enters the region where pleasure and pain are merged in one, and then it is that it becomes the solvent of the man’s lower nature.

It must indeed have been a fiery ordeal that Sidney passed through, for the earthly love by its intensity so to burn itself clean out of the heart, and leave only the lofty aspirations expressed in the following sonnet, which truly seem to formulate the very sum and substance of Theosophic thought.

Thou blind man’s mark, thou fool’s self-chosen snare,  
Fond fancies’ scum, and dregs of scattered thought;  
Band of all evils; cradle of causeless care;

Thou web of will whose end is never wrought;  
 Desire, Desire! I have too dearly bought,  
 With price of mangled mind, thy worthless ware;  
 Too long, too long, asleep thou hast me brought,  
 Who shouldst my mind to higher things prepare.  
 But yet in vain thou hast my ruin sought;  
 In vain thou madest me to vain things aspire;  
 In vain thou kindest all thy smoky fire;  
 For virtue hath this better lesson taught,—  
 Within myself to seek my only hire,  
 Desiring naught but how to kill desire.<sup>1</sup>

PILGRIM.

## NOTE

1. {"[Thou blind man's mark]," Sir Philip Sidney.}

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*The Path* – August 1887, Vol. 2, pp. 147-149.

## THOUGHTS IN SOLITUDE.

PILGRIM {PROBABLY JULIA VER PLANCK}

VII. {7 of 8}

THE HIGHER CARELESSNESS.

When the mental vision has been searching with troubled and anxious gaze for some sure clue to the heavenward path, or when it has recoiled in horror before the picture of an effete civilization breaking up, and anarchy and violence taking the place of order, it is an intense relief to realize that there is an inner stronghold where the worn warrior may retire to, that there is a sure harbor where the storm tossed bark may find rest. And this harbor is ever at hand, this stronghold may be entered any moment. It requires but the conviction of its paramount necessity, it requires but the surrender — absolute and unconditional — of the man's lower nature to the other pole of his Being, and lo! he has attained a peace and a strength that the crumbling of the world in ruins at his feet could not shake. To be able to live in this state permanently is to have attained the condition of the Yogi or the Saint, but to have experienced it even for one moment teaches that it is the first step on the true spiritual path, which the mental vision might grope for through eternity without finding.

For one whose imagination can conjure up scenes of that human earthquake, a social revolution, where the impossibility of gauging the forces or of foreseeing the developments, adds so awfully to the horror of the situation. Surely strength and courage must be the paramount qualities required, courage to keep the heart from fainting at the dread anticipation, and strength to keep the brain from reeling in the conflict.

But if the man has so fixed his soul on the Supreme soul, has so surrendered his will to the divine Will, has so identified himself with the Deity, that he feels he is but a tool in the omnipotent hand, the divine carelessness will have entered into him, and that will give him strength. There will be no looking forward with dread anticipation, for he cares not what happens to him — the duty that lies at his hand he will do with a

clear brain and a steadfast will, caring not for the result though it may be danger and death — but what matters that? the flesh may quail at the final parting, but the man who has identified himself with the spirit within, which has inhabited many a house of flesh, has raised himself above mortal fears.

It is only in moments of supreme concentration and by intense imaginative power that we who toil on on lower levels can occasionally get a glimpse of this serene condition, which as far as words can describe it would seem to be portrayed in the second part of *Light on the Path* (Rule 8). “You can stand upright now, firm as a rock amid the turmoil, obeying the warrior who is thy self and thy king. Unconcerned in the battle save to do his bidding, having no longer any care as to the result of the battle — for one thing only is important — that the warrior shall win; and you know he is incapable of defeat, standing thus, cool and awakened, use the hearing you have acquired by pain and by the destruction of pain, &c.”

Even these who are still bound by the desires of action may occasionally reach in imagination the exalted serenity of this state of being, and such contemplation must doubtless help in freeing from the bondage of desire. Philanthropic work for Humanity will no longer seem an object for action, for the devotee will have become conscious that the Supreme Power that acts by him, is also guiding by invisible hands the whole course of human affairs, and the well-meant remedial actions of purblind men will, under the new illumination of the eternal light, appear to him in their true character as the ineffectual gropings of captives in a cavern. And the very fact of his no longer desiring to garner the fruit of his actions will cause his actions to be all the more far reaching in their results. The will becomes omnipotent when dissociated from human desire, for it is then part of the divine will.

His attitude towards Humanity will also find a parallel in his attitude towards Divinity, for the passionate adoration will have been left behind, and will have given place to the carelessness of the divine serenity.

The conquering of all earthly desires must be a work of ages, and many lessons will doubtless still remain to be learned by him who has attained to this state. It is written that the aspirant must always look forward with awe, and always be prepared for the battle, but in the vast scale of Being, great distance is lost in the infinite beyond, and from our present standpoint this higher carelessness would indeed seem to be the ultimate state realizable by man while still he bears the body, for what other is it than a foretaste while in the body of that “peace of God which passeth all understanding?”<sup>1</sup>

PILGRIM.

## NOTE

1. {Philippians 4:7.}

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*The Path* – October 1887, Vol. 2, pp. 208-212.

## THOUGHTS IN SOLITUDE.

PILGRIM {PROBABLY JULIA VER PLANCK}

VIII. {8 of 8}

What is known in the present day under the name of Theosophy, as has repeatedly been stated, is the primary truth which all the religions of the world alike have

enshrined — it may be regarded as the kernel of which the religions have been the husks, and it would seem that in the development of this idea, and in the comparison of the objects aimed at by the various religions and by Theosophy, that we shall best realize the stupendous scope and importance of this divine hidden wisdom.

While some of the religions may have been more transparent husks than others through which the kernel of the wisdom of the ages might be dimly visioned, in other words, while some may contain vague hints of the wider horizon and the more transcendent heights of being, it may generally be stated without making invidious distinctions that the religions of the world as a rule have concerned themselves almost exclusively with the present earth life and the life lying immediately beyond. It is with the rewards and punishments of this state in the immediate future, and with the moral or virtuous thoughts and actions of the present life, which are supposed to be the means of meriting the former and of avoiding the latter, that the priesthoods and the teachers of religion have principally dealt. Indeed, so engrossed in the pursuit of worldly objects have the priesthoods of some religions become that the wider horizon has been completely lost by them.

While the quality of spirituality is but feebly developed in mankind, while the occupations and aims of this present earth life continue to absorb so very much the greater part of the energy of men, and while the intellectual development of those who have some dim perception of a higher state has still to achieve its period of blossom, the different religions adopted by the various races of men will continue to supply the required needs. But there are a few in each country who have risen above the prevailing level — the forerunners we take it of the mighty coming race, and their numbers are being daily added to — men of thought and feeling who through pain and inward struggle have emancipated themselves from the deadly bonds of superstition, and who have at the same time been too great hearted to fall into the still deadlier grip of the opposing faction that usurps the name of science, and that parades its little aims under the denial of all that is most sacred in humanity — men who by intense imaginative power have grasped and realized all that this life has to give, and have been forced to put it by as failing to satisfy their highest aspirations. For such men the Theosophic advent has been a true Eirenicon. No longer bounded by the dimly imaged heaven which superstitious ignorance stretched into eternity, all life now lies before the impartial student of nature in logical order. The law of absolute justice under the name of Karma, which follows with impartial reward or retribution every act, every word and every thought, is now recognized alike as satisfying the moral conscience of the religious man, and as extending over the whole horizon of man's nature the inevitable sequence of cause and effect which the scientists have shown to exist in the material world; while in marked contrast alike to the agnostic acceptance of annihilation, and to the diabolic theory of the arbitrary awardment of eternal bliss or eternal misery to the poor struggling mortals, who after a short life time of 70 or 80 years are surely unlikely to be deserving of either, the picture is completed by the steady progress and evolution of the soul through the continually repeated vicissitudes of earthly life — alternated and relieved by the blissful dreams of heaven where the infinite variety of human character will through aeons of time reap in subtle distinction that which is the due of each.

The objects of the Theosophical Society may be stated as twofold. Firstly to act as a counter movement alike to the decaying but still lingering superstitions, and still more to the rampant and growing materialism of the present day, and the best way to attain this first object is surely to give to the world such a system of thought as may help to explain the mysteries of life. Such a system as will at once satisfy man's logical requirements, his moral feeling of fitness, and his highest spiritual aspirations. And where will such a system be found as in the doctrines Theosophy teaches? The second

and main object to which the first leads up, is to act as a guide to the pathway of deliverance by which man may escape from the alternating miseries of birth and death, and attain the one permanent state of Being. This is the great — the divine — secret — to be bound no longer in conditioned existence — to merge the manhood in the Godhead! To catch a glimpse of one of the thousand states of ecstatic being that lie in infinite gradation between us and that stupendous goal would blind us with excess of light. Surely then the only figure before the mind when whispering in worshipping awe of that ineffable state of being should be the kneeling angel with head bent low, and wings crossed before the face.

While a large and increasing number are likely to be influenced by the teachings of Theosophy towards more tolerant and wider views of life, the number of those who will feel impelled to attempt the great undertaking will not probably in this age of darkness be relatively large. But indeed it is not a matter of choice, the destiny of each guides unerringly in the path he is bound to tread, the good within drives and will drive in ways that we know not of. The deep depression or the cutting sorrow of former years may pass away, the torture may take a more subtle form, but while the wings are yet too weak to soar for long in the heavenly air, the detachment from earthly things is bound to bear its first fruits of pain, and the heart will still remain steadily crushed between the upper and the nether millstones. When the aimlessness of this life has made itself felt, to the exclusion of all other thought, to escape from its desolating curse must seem the one object worthy of accomplishment. The converging lines of Karma must doubtless have led those who feel impelled to scale the transcendent heights, compared with which the most soaring ambition of earthly life sinks into nothingness, but in weak-kneed moments to be thrust on such a path of greatness is felt to be a pathetic destiny, a forlorn hope, truly forlorn if the present life alone is regarded, but it is a forlorn hope that *has* to be led.

To realize with vivid distinctness the inanity of all earthly bliss, and yet to catch no refreshing glimpse of the beatific vision; to taste no strengthening sip of the heavenly Amrit, this is indeed a desolateness without any parallel in worldly life, it is the “indescribable vacuum” of the heart, so well pictured in an article in the June *Theosophist* entitled “Divine Heartache.”<sup>1</sup> But as the writer there goes on to describe in words which recall St. John of the Cross’s “Obscure Night of the Soul”<sup>2</sup> the apparent contraction of the heart is caused by the divine fire which is driving out its rheum and filthy moisture, and is but a prelude to the ultimate expansion. St. Thomas à Kempis, also dwells on the trouble of mind the disciple must learn to bear, and points out that “to be in a state of great devotion and sweetness” is not advantageous “for it is not by these things that a true lover of virtue is known, nor doth the spiritual progress and perfection of a man consist in these things.”<sup>3</sup>

It is written, “He that hath put aside woman hath put aside the world” and this would seem to be the best illustration of that final detachment which is the prelude to the first step on the path to higher things. The different earthly desires from that of mere animal comfort up to the most ideal love, have all got characteristics that blend into each other, but earthly desire at every turn has to be fought and conquered, or put in other words it is a continual raising of the object of desire, either through the failure of realization or through the satiety that comes of realization. It may have required the experience of many incarnations to weed out of the heart the desire for wealth, for title, for power, for consideration among men, at each death of the body a step may have been gained, and the object of desire raised a degree in nobility, until its culmination is reached in the desire for the ideal union, the true marriage of the soul, to which the bodily union is but a subsidiary supplement. The intensity of a fruitless passion if kept undegraded by any acceptance of a lower love, if steadily nursed through a whole life-time as the one thing worthy of achievement, may have alchemical

force enough to transmute this love into what it already resembles, the still loftier and purer love of the Universal Soul. “Woman” may have been “put aside” and the ideal union as a tangible reality in this life despaired of — in moments of enthusiasm the earthly love may appear totally eclipsed by the heavenly — but while lungs fit to breathe the heavenly ether are still undeveloped, descents have to be made to the lower air, the old hopes of love rise again in the breast though more faintly, and the old torture is gone through again.

But if the ultimate goal is steadily kept before the mind’s eye, each pang that has been endured should have given added strength. The goad that drives each man to higher things is deep seated in his being, and must remain so through life until it ceases to be a goad at all by the conquest of the special desire against which it was directed, and if only we bear in mind that it is a matter of small moment whether or not we attain our earthly desires, and that the one thing important is to follow loyally what at the time seems to us highest and worthiest — though that highest and worthiest ideal is ever moving upwards — periods of peace and satisfaction are bound to come at last, and we may repeat with Sidney

Leave me, O Love, that reachest but to dust;  
“And thou my mind aspire to higher things;  
Grow rich in that which never taketh rust;  
“Whatever fades but fading pleasure brings.  
Then farewell World! thy uttermost I see  
Eternal Love, maintain thy life in me!

PILGRIM.

## NOTES

1. {*Theosophist*, June 1887, p. 549.}
2. {*Dark Night of the Soul*, John of the Cross.}
3. {*Of the Imitation of Christ*, Thomas à Kempis, Chapter XXV.}
4. {“Leave me, O Love, which reachest but to dust,” Sir Philip Sidney.}

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*The Theosophic Isis* – May 1896, Vol. 1, pp. 116-118.

## THOUGHTS ON CENTERS.

JASPER NIEMAND

*(The following paper was published in the E.S.T. in 1893, and is now made public. It had at that time, as it still has, a very important application to every Centre throughout the T.S. Perhaps it is no longer a question whether the T.S. as an open body shall fail, but whether this or that particular Centre, by reason of small disharmonies and lack of toleration within itself or in relation to other Centres shall fail to preserve its special unified life. The practice of the First Object, as originally worded, not as reduced to empty metaphysical verbiage, is all that is necessary to avert such failure. — Ed.)*

A center is a nucleus of energy, self-sustained from within, and capable of radiating its force to all other parts. The creation of a center, however created (“created” as such, or evolved to the point of being such), has the radiation as its primary object. This

radiation is the result, roughly speaking, of the balance of forces. Thus whether we speak of the nuclei formed by Evolutionary Law, or of those centers established by the Lodge, of that center which every soul may cause itself to be, (or even of the various Societies maintained by mankind at large) this intention is the same. A center distributes energy to all those out-lying parts which are in relation with it, receiving by reaction a certain amount of force, but always, by virtue of its own essential nature, generating vital energies from within itself. This being the distinguishing attribute of real centers, it of necessity follows that the lack of such attribute on the part of any center shows disintegration, shows that the center, as such, is ceasing to be.

A center can only give forth what it contains, that is to say, a center may remain such while changing its quality. Suppose, for example, a strong and useful center full of harmonious impulses, radiating help of a mental and spiritual kind to all quarters. Imagine then that discord arises in (or between) its component parts. The center generates discord. It then becomes as powerful for "evil" as it has hitherto been for "good," and it will remain a factor for such spiritual and mental discord until its energy shall have run down. By "evil" is here meant action opposed to the currents of Law, in the evolutionary harmony; the term "good" stands for the reverse. This is merely a rough statement, a bare outline of a fact in nature. A discordant vibration has run through all the sphere and its action has been reversed. The importance of considering this fact lies in this — that every student desirous of becoming a center of usefulness, may become the exact reverse without realizing it. He thinks to drop out of sight, out of action, but he cannot; to exist is to act.

Not Masters themselves can all at once withdraw force from such a center once it is created. The storage of energy must be gradually expended. The moon is an example of this fact. The earth is said to have received the storage of energy of the moon, now a shell, so to say, of astral influences injurious to the earth.

The moon center has given its life forces to our planet; its action is reversed and its present output of energy is of a lower order. The storage of energy must be gradually expended; it cannot be annihilated or forcibly expelled; it must follow the processes of Nature and run down. If, created for useful purposes, it turns to discordant ends, it can only be left to run itself out gradually, along with other abortions of Nature, as Nature unaided has her failures. These lie within the scope of Karmic Law.

If we suppose the case of a center established by Adepts, with the assistance and consent of certain men for the subject of helping the race, we may at once see that, if the men who compose it once begin to generate discord there, the Adepts have in time no choice but to withdraw their aid. They cannot abolish that which has become a living fact in nature, an entity. Then the men who have failed to abide by their original intention have not alone the fact of that broken pledge to contend with; they must thereafter bear the responsibility of having created a center active for evil, for that it will become and will continue to be until all its natural force for discord has been expended. A clue to this may be found in a letter of Mahâtma K.H. in *The Occult World*, where He says that the brain of man generates a higher order of energy from the gross cosmic. When the minds of many men have thus generated force, what will be the result if they use that force for discord instead of harmony? It must follow that, in our Society, in our groups, in all our centers, harmony must prevail, or we have established a nucleus of discord actively opposed to Law. And the same within ourselves. We never, for a single second, remain inactive for either the black side or the white. Our various acts do not so much count in themselves, as the order in mental force engendered; this force can be, and doubtless is used by the Masters, and hence the need of fidelity to Their Ideals. For the Ideals which we make and impress upon the brain of the universe, live. The man who has formed such a living picture and then

abandons his intention, fights against that to which he himself has given life and form, and at the first quiver of a mental energy opposed to it, this living ideal reacts and injures him. Then all is discord and opposition, in the center or in the Man.

JASPER NIEMAND.

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*The Path* – October 1890, Vol. 5, pp. 210-211.

## TO BE REMEMBERED BY THEOSOPHISTS.

AUGUST WALDERSEE

KARMA. Karma is not a person nor a collection of conscious powers. It is not merely retribution, for it is also reward, help from others and to our fellows.

We have no right to decide that we will not “interfere” with the Karma of others who may need help. As we are ignorant of the exact working of Karma in each case, and are not ourselves above Karmic bonds, we are really not able to “interfere,” and to speak of doing so is conceit and assumption. The only persons who can interfere in Karma are adepts, who have reached to perfect knowledge, and when interference in Karma is referred to, it is in respect to these beings.

It is said that Karma is created or comes into existence by action, but it is not well enough understood that *action* means not only the definite conscious acts of life, but also all and each, the smallest acts, conscious or unconscious, automatic or otherwise. Therefore it is said in the Hindu books that the sleeping body of man creates Karma — by its breathing. For, when we breathe, some lives of minute beings are extinguished, and we in order to live ourselves have to bear that small portion of Karma.

The Karma produced by thought is more potent than that from act. Acts are really dead thoughts, for they are the expression on the mortal plane of thought, and while the Karma of some acts may be very small and soon wiped out, the thought behind it may be so strong and deep that it will affect the soul for more than one life.

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SEVENFOLD CONSTITUTION OF MAN. It is a philosophical and substantial error to say that there are seven principles which include *Atma* as one. There can be only one *Atma*, indivisible and present in each so-called principle, high and low. Hence it is the whole. It is more correct to say that one spirit manifests itself by means of six vehicles.

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THE ILLUSION OF “I” AND “MY.” There is no greater illusion than that which leads us to say “my Karma,” “my spirit.” No being on earth has *his* spirit separate from others, nor any Karma dissociated from the Karma of the race, nation, and Humanity. Remember these words from a letter to the U.S. Convention 1889, “Your Karma, good or bad, being one and the common property of all mankind, nothing good or bad can happen to you that is not shared by many others. ... There is no happiness for one who is ever thinking of self and forgetting all other selves.” And the *Bhagavad Gītā* says that only he knows indeed who sees that there is but one Kshetrajna or knower in all the different bodies of creatures. Are theosophists afraid to lose their miserable personal selves in the great unknown one?

AUGUST WALDERSEE.

## TO THOSE WHO SUFFER.

### {SUFFERING. —

TITLE OF THIS ARTICLE IN *THE VOW OF POVERTY*}

JASPER NIEMAND

Last night I saw in dream, a man. He was weak, poor, an exile; his feet were torn, his wounds bled, his heart bled also. He cried out to heavens that were brass; they sent forth a dull reverberation, a sullen thunder, in reply. Around him was blackness; in his soul was a grim despair. This wretched, hunted, abandoned creature gazed wildly about him, finding nothing upon which Hope might rest, not even Death, for he knew he could not die before his time. All Life passed before him as he stood at bay, and mocked him in every tongue.

I heard a sigh as if someone beside myself grieved at this piteous spectacle and, turning, I saw One who seemed to be a guide of the country, and to whom the sufferer appeared to be known. Of him I made inquiry.

“Can no one help that man?”

“Oh yes. There is one who can help him.”

“Who is that?”

“Himself!”

“Why does he not help himself, then?”

“Because he suffers so much. His suffering engages all his attention.”

“What, then, is the cause of this great suffering?”

“Himself,” said the guide, and smiled. This smile revealed a divine pity, more tender than tears. It opened my heart, so that I said:

“Teach me more of this strange Self which is at once his persecutor and his Savior.”

“Nay,” replied that guide; “thou shalt ask thyself that question, for that self is thee also, and every other man as well.”

Then I awoke, understanding very well that we suffer from ourselves, And I could see, too, how each man was the sharer of the experience of others, for is there not that rare, tenuous aether in which every human sphere is suspended, feeling every current, every thought, every struggle of all its neighbors, of the whole vibrating mass, and translating every vibration into thoughts of its own quality in the wonderful mechanism of the human brain? Could I not see well how these thoughts, in their dynamic and formative energy, molded that aether into pictures which lived, moving along currents that were baleful or beneficent in their action upon other spheres, according as they caught the tone of the mass, or failed to reach it? This tone was given by the Great Law Itself as the appointed chord to and by which all spheres should be regulated, in order to vibrate in unison, and, where any sphere failed to do so, vibrating at its own choice and out of time and tune, the whole aether was violently agitated, its current of light rendered turbid, its melody disturbed, destroyed. Well I saw that what was mainly required for the restoration of harmony was that each human sphere should accept without resistance the great currents of the Law as these impinged upon it. Of course at first, many of them would suffer internal confusion from this sudden

change of motion; they would experience Pain, and even disintegration in some parts. Let those who had the courage so to suffer for the restoration of general harmony would soon find a new and higher form of organization crystallizing within themselves, just as the music of the master's bow causes the sand particles to thrill and to range themselves in ordered patterns of beauty, or as at the magnet's mysterious message iron filings range themselves in the same polarized lines as those of the human brain. Yes; what was imperatively needed was that every human creature should stand still long enough to feel the currents of Law sweeping through his life, and then think with and obey them. In other words, the first step is Resignation.

In the year whose last sands slip by as I write, many cries have fallen upon my heart. That heart suffers like every other. This truth gives to each heart the divine right to understand all the rest. We hear the cry of the exile, and out of our own experience we respond to him. There are so many cases. There are the comrades who wish much to do and to be. They desire greatly to work in the Altruistic Cause. Karmic circumstance fetters them. So they devise plans whereby they may be made richer, or stronger in body, or more free from care and duty, or to gain more ample time in which to work. But that Karma which they themselves have made, and which is their only judge, refuses them these things. Then a deep sadness falls upon them with the failure of their plans; their energies are sapped and wasted by the thousand allies of doubt and despair. They forget that their plan is not needed. What is greatly needed is Harmony. This is only attained by submission. When we accept Karmic Environment and go calmly to work to take an inventory of ourselves as we now are, both externally and internally, in all our mental states and Ever Changing Motives, and then ask earnestly what such a man, in such a given condition of life, can do, just where he stands and as he is, to help Humanity, we do find an answer somewhere. We do find some work to our hand. It may be only in Right Thought that we can help, but in that dynamic power we work silently along with silent nature and the Great Vibration, whose melodies are real, are profound, and heard by the inner ear alone. In thus spreading the fluidic far reaching energies of harmonious thought upon the ambient aether, we create currents in accord with those of that Universal Mind whose grand totality is "Angels and Archangels and all the Powers of Heaven." Is this a small power? Not so. By its means we change our whole mental environment; and that in turn will order future Karmic circumstance so that in the next life, or perhaps even in this, we shall be placed where we can help our fellows more. That help is their due and our privilege. But I think we place undue stress upon material help. The heart of man is at the bottom of every circumstance. It molds every event, builds up all societies, determines the character of every age. Reforms that do not reach that strange and hidden heart are built upon the sand. Nothing can reach it but Right Thought, and it is in the gift of every person to turn that reconstructive power loose upon the wild turmoil of our time. This is the Light that stills the waves. Instead of chafing at our limitations and our failures, let us then accept them with harmonious serenity and use them as our instruments. Thus I know a sick person who uses the sympathy, evoked by that sickness as a means of gaining the attention of others to higher thoughts. I know a comrade in great poverty who realizes that this very poverty gains the ear of those likewise suffering, and of those too who think much of the material gifts they can bring, and so this brave soul drops a true brave word here and there on the thorny way. By acceptance of Karma we learn great and wonderful things, and a master has said: "Karma is the great teacher. It is the wisest of guides and the best."

This does not mean that we should sit down supinely and think only. It means that we should accept the inevitable in material life, and gather what spiritual riches we can find, in order to give them all away.

Then, again, come the sufferers through Love, the hearts that cling to the personal sweetness, the strong human ties, the thousand endearing tendencies often cemented by a long, though unknown, Past. Death, separation or Life, sweeps between. Or the Beloved suffer, and we cry out. We cry in ignorance. Our Love is never lost. Every Universe makes for Love: that Love is Harmony, is Justice. Not one vibration of it is ever lost. Out of our deep spiritual nature this yearning Love comes pouring, an eternal fountain. Our personal mind translates its meaning in many perverse ways. We take it to mean all kinds of personal desire or hope. That we belie our nature is evident because, when these desires are gratified, the heart is never content with that, but goes on to new desire. It is the sacred truth that, in the very ground of our natures, a spark burns ever in the vibration of the highest Love. All our small personal affections are simply the straying tendrils of this one great root, and ought to draw us inward to it. Our Love rests in the highest bond. We do really desire the highest fulfilment of the loved one's Being. We can, if we will and if we seek, find ourselves consciously reaching up in hope to the perfection of those beloved natures. It is really the Higher Self, the great Ideal One, that we love. The man or woman, Its faint reflection, is there to lead us to this blessed Truth. Alas! We find self far too much in so called love, but I believe,— in all conscience I can attest it — that once we get a glimpse of this truth, that our inner natures yearn to help our Beloved to greater heights, we will make a mighty effort to continue in that higher, holier hope. From thus loving one, to loving all, we proceed gradually through the pure overflow, or the natural gravitation of Love, until we know nothing of Separation. For all starved natures there is then this hope. We are not to love less, but to love more. To expand to fuller conceptions; to realize deeper meanings; to find within the self of flesh and sense, and all the selfish corruption of our natures, these germs of living truths; these meanings we have indeed perverted, but which we are powerless to destroy, because they are germs of that Truth which is One and indestructible, the “Law which makes for Righteousness,” the Harmony which is Love.

Those who suffer will find at the very root of their suffering, no matter of what kind, some revolt against this Eternal Law of Love. We have only to turn round and obey it. We have only to cease desiring to put it to personal use, or to grind personal comforts out of it, and all its blessings and powers are ours. It lives in every heart; it gilds and glorifies every atom; it “stands at the door and knocks;” it is Life, it is Light, it is Peace, for it is Eros, the one Ray, it is universal, divine Love. Oh! My suffering comrades; accept it, embrace it! Live by it, at any cost; die by it if needs be, for so only shall we find Life eternal, only by receiving and acknowledging the Law: only by living in the thought of all beings, in harmony with all and with Love.

JASPER NIEMAND.

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“And he who has come to his own again,  
 Though he speak no word and sing no song,  
 Himself is a Voice to the hearts of men:  
 For the silent Seer, the swift, the strong,  
 Has touched the radiant vesture spun  
 By the starry Gods for the Only One.”

— ARETAS.<sup>1</sup>

## NOTE

1. {This verse is not in *The Path* article, but *is* in the book following the chapter.}

## A TRIAL YEAR.

J. W. L. KEIGHTLEY

A long chain lay before me. Considering it link by link, I saw that the strain was greatest wherever one link overlapped another; the point of junction was the point of trial. No two links were precisely similar in molecular structure and each must feel from this an added friction in their inter-connection. Yet the whole chain could only be strong with the strength of the weakest link and the uniformity of the pull increased the power of the whole by modifying the pressure upon any one single link.

So I fell to thinking of the cyclic chain. The memory of our teachings came before my mind, enhanced by the experience of all comrades and myself in and with them. Well we know that 1896-97 is that period which sees the overlapping of two cycles,<sup>1</sup> but did we also consider that, because of this, it must be a period of intense interior strain, intense surface friction? Did we remember this? Or did we think that the dawn of a new cycle had made all things easy; that we should slip onward into a smooth way? Did we forget that the hour of dawning is chill, is a contested point, where the darkness battles fiercely ere it passes; where forces of light and warmth draw tensely to a point of culmination before they can expand with blessing into the waiting, the still dim world? Did we ignore that the opening moment of a new cycle did not witness the closing hour of the old, that this was relegated to a period further on, just as one link overlaps another and finds within its own circle the outer, the closing side of its fellow-link? Doubtless we remembered these things. Doubtless we foresaw a trial year for Humanity.

The expanding force of the new cycle meets, at a given point, the indrawing forces of the old cycle; this creates a point of struggle, of friction, which may be called a trial year. It is not a year according to human subdivisions of time, does not begin and end with our dates. Yet it has a definite beginning and ending according to real and occult time divisions. Also, its effects will come to an end earlier in the lives of some individuals than with others. For the world at large the time is precisely fixed. Call it the period within which the dark forces have most power over human nature, and this may be said, roughly speaking, to end with the century, with the last ripple of *effect* of the expiring energy of the old cycle. Effects outlast the latest indrawn breath, be it remembered, outliving for a short time the force which produced them. Finally, upon the energy with which the new force overcomes the old, upon the elasticity of its spring forward, much depends. The maintenance of that energetic propulsion depends upon ourselves, *in this case*. We shall bound joyously forward with Nature, shall we not? The great Mother, unimpeded by us, shall carry us on.

So, standing where the strain is most intense, facing the dawn indeed, but with the sights and sounds of night and storm still assailing us, how is it with us who entered with foreknowledge this trial year?

Is it not strangely well with us in the vortex of force where we stand, breasting the world stream, enduring the friction of the waters, the assault of the under tow? Strangely, I say, for here and there one has been sucked below by the under tow, and white faces, despairing hands have swept past us in the night. The under tow of the Past was too strong for them. They have loosed their hold upon their comrades, and the long, living line has closed up again, has pressed forward, not without a tear for those who fell. But the great line is standing, is advancing, and the cause of its well

being and its power is that “pull all together” which equalize the strain. Because we are in brotherly unity — for this reason is it well with us. Our accord is our safety.

And yet it is a time of trial, interior and unremitting. Now should it not be so when the welfare of a Race is at stake? For the dying throes of the elder cycle have power to impair the vibrations of the new one and it is precisely for this reason that our unwavering hearts, our steadfast minds and rooted ideals create an atmosphere of strength about us filling the decadent hours of the old cycle with a calm and a harmony in which, as in the lap of a mother, the young cycle may gather its forces together: their dispersion will not be witnessed, their flight will be strong in this calm atmosphere which we provide.

Still is the strain felt by us. We whisper it not to one another. Each endures, and is silent, working on; or here and there a song of cheer arises as men sing at the hardest labour, to make that labour lighter by their lightness of heart. That is the brave spirit. That is the true spirit. Yet, because the trial is everywhere so unremitting, in one or another way — sometimes in all ways — it is good to remind one another that we knew this provision of Nature, that we entered the trial year unafraid.

For did we not know too that more destinies than our own hung upon it? That heroes not yet incarnate hung above it, waiting, hoping, longing to descend? Did we not know that armed and turbulent nations paused, unawares, upon the brink of war, awaiting an issue foreseen by us, but to them unknown? And the little children the world over, tender-eyed and wistful, did not their future await decision while they played unconsciously through all the trial? Yes; we knew it all. Knew it to be big with Destiny. Knew that we ourselves had, ages ago, with others, provided the trial, and could even now provide the triumph.

For all these possibilities we must supply the required conditions. Great events are in the air. Under existing conditions they cannot take shape and life here below. When we shall have transformed the present conditions, so that the necessary base shall be supplied, then shall these waiting potentialities become actual in the daily life of the world. There must exist — as a base on this material plane — an opportunity for the right development, the orderly unfolding of character under wise encouragement and with the stimulus of right contemporaneous thought, in order that the progress of the soul here in matter may be helped. This opportunity will be given through the children of every nation when in each nation right conditions of education are supplied. Theosophy alone can do this. That is to say, theosophists must do it, affording everywhere a base. As they pass through the trial year they not only give this base; they also find their own base; each one his own. Re-birth of heroes, peace of nations, help for the children, these shall follow on the Crusade work as that awakens the ancient fires of nations; and what are all these but a universal nearness to The Self?

For that triumph each soul of us, Comrades, has stood and stands ready to suffer the awful strain. To us it seems assured — that hour of victory. *To us*. But how about your country, mine, all the nations? Which stand? Do any stand? How fares it with the Race, too? Ah, we know not these things. And, not knowing, shall we not redouble the effort, both of work and for unity; shall we not clasp hands closer as we breast the foaming world stream? Our harmony of aim secures more than now we dream of. Our fraternal love, self-impelled, has reached forward until more centuries than we count are in its charmed hold.

But even were we not secure of this — and in hours of gloom who is secure? — then were it still wise to press forward where solitary retreat is impossible save as self-destruction while the living line stands and will not turn back.

Since then, to look behind is all in vain,  
And all in vain to look to left or right;  
Why face we not the future once again.  
Turning stout hearts towards the shadowy main  
And strong to bear ourselves in patient pain?

Ye suffering hearts, each one is seen and loved! Ye brave minds, each one is upheld! Ye deathless souls, each one nears the hour of self-consciousness and power. Though the trial year be heavy, yet its gifts are many, are wonderful, its last hours are full of healing for the nations, if so be ye stand. Therefore stand; stand singing. Singing for joy that we have met and known this hour, whose trials spell Redemption, Freedom, Light.

J.W.L. KEIGHTLEY.

## NOTE

1. {Kali-yuga and the messianic cycle?}

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*The Theosophical Quarterly* – April 1906, Vol. 3, pp. 510-511.

## T.S. ACTIVITIES.

JASPER NIEMAND

### LETTER OF GREETING FROM JASPER NIEMAND.<sup>1</sup>

September 13, 1905.

Dear Herr Raatz: I have with much pleasure your kind invitation to write a few lines to the Convention of the Theosophical Society in Germany.<sup>2</sup>

H. P. Blavatsky, the creator of the Theosophical Society in the nineteenth century, breathed into it the breath of life. We may say that, roughly speaking, she gave birth to it upon the inner planes of Being; through her, it was supplied with a name, an ideal form — call it a Thought form and mold, or model. Often, as its creator saw it apparently about to depart from the model she laid down for it, she would most impetuously threaten to “destroy” it; in other words, to abandon her interest. In this case, naturally, the stream of Life which she was injecting into its veins (the model or ideal) would run dry, and the mold would soon go to pieces. So, at least, have we reason to think.

But after the departure from this plane of Consciousness and of Being of H.P.B., and her trusty Lieutenant, William Q. Judge, a quite different position obtained. The Theosophical Society, comparable to a child that has been brought into the world, nourished by its Mother, and cared for by its nurse during its infancy, now saw itself orphaned in a sense, and left, during the period of its childhood to the care of its brothers and sisters — ourselves. We, then, must care for the well-being of this child of the Ages, re-incarnated each century, for the helping of mankind. And also for another and equally important reason, which is bound up with the first: for the evolution of a Soul — the national Soul, as well as the evolution of those individual Souls which we may regard as forming the aggregate units of the national Souls.

It is quite evident that this child, however excellent its inherited constitution, cannot rise far above the level of its family and its surroundings, in its childhood.

Inheriting, as it must, any human imperfections of its parent, it has in addition — like many a human child — to fight against any shortcoming of its educators, its surroundings, its family environment. For this reason, amongst others, the Theosophical Society partakes of the human nature of its members, their errors, the limitations and the purely mortal and human nature of the individual members of which it is composed. We know well the grand *Ideal* of perfect toleration and brotherly sympathy with all phases of life and thought which was set before it for its Ideal Form. And also each impartial and thoughtful mind amongst us must admit that if the Society falls short of this *Ideal*, the cause, the fault, lies with us, the individual members. Our shortcomings, our limitations, our imperfections, fetter, harass and confine the free and noble growth of the Theosophical Society: after the same fashion, our aspirations, our Love and Sympathy, with all that breathes, do develop and sustain its *real* development. This, then, argues that the only way in which the Society can be truly developed, vitalized and maintained towards its larger and higher growth, is by the life and thought of the units composing the Society; in other words, *ourselves*.

In order rightly to develop and strengthen the Society, each member must broaden his sympathies and purify his thoughts. Not by mental and verbal presentations of our philosophy and our ideals can this be done in the least. Words are not vital. *Thoughts profit nothing of themselves if they have no issue in the life*. What we need is a Life-unit, lives lived among men, in the actual light of the common day, lives full of sympathy, lives, ever aspiring towards and receptive of the Soul; live hearts, beating with charity, tolerance, aspiration in each beat.

A light can never be lit save one bearing a light already in his hand. The sacred Flame of the Soul can only be lit by these who are, in very truth, themselves “Bearers of the Flame.”

So then, let us nourish this gentle child by our virtues, our heart’s best sympathies, and by the spirit of Love; eschewing the letter thereof, which only breeds discussion, argument and — in the end — folly. Let us render unto each the full freedom of Thought which we ourselves demand and require, but let us ever remember that perfect Toleration is the very life essence of true growth, and that we can never in the least aid our fellow men to live rightly, save by our own true and right living.

What, then, is this right living, do I hear you ask?

Those for whom I speak think that right living, in its essence, may be held to be explicitly rendered by those words of Jesus: “Render unto Caesar the things that are Caesar’s and unto God the things that are God’s.”

Let us not confound the duties of our station and country, into which we are born under the high behest of the Soul, with the duties of others. Let us not imagine that *our* ideas, *our* mental mold and fancies, based (all of them), upon a wrong idea of the real constitution of the universe, have the least weight in comparison with that living and vital Spirit of Love which thinketh no evil, imputes no wrong to another, forms no judgment and executes no penalties, but which freely, purely, nobly aspires, and suffers every other man to aspire as he can, and is, in his human limitations, able to take in the pure breath of the Soul.

Let us then uplift, nourish, and sustain the T.S. by the only *real* means; by our own brotherly, patient, forbearing and aspiring lives. We — each one of us — *are the T.S.*, and he who criticizes it, criticizes and condemns himself. Let us then in this forbear, and labor on all together towards the better end, the broader goal. One thought may well have our most careful consideration. We are told that toward the close of each century — in the last quarter — an effort is made towards the presentation of the Theosophical ideal. Is it strange, then, that we do not find in the

history of the world, some definite record of this effort? Or is it true, as we believe, that this effort is made each time on a different line, so that the various attempts towards the presentation of the universal Truth range all the way from the teachings of Buddha, Jesus and many another Teacher down to that of the mystics and messengers of both East and West? In a word, all these teachings, different as they may seem, and as they are in the mental sense, are really but *different aspects of The One Truth*. This alone should move us to the widest tolerance. It is not the “The Theosophy of H.P.B.” that deserves our devotion, but (if we like) “Theosophy as taught by H.P.B.” We should never forget that other and equally devoted Messengers of the Great Lodge have taught the Universal Truths which in some periods have been entitled “Theosophy” *under quite other methods and other names*. This knowledge must give rise, in us, to tolerance of the very widest description. That which binds together all these systems of Thought in one body of Truth, is That Soul Which Thinketh no Evil, and knows the One Light back of the innumerable aspects and presentations of Truth.

Thanking you for your fraternal attention, and wishing that your deliberations may be fraught with aid and inspiration for us all, I am

Yours fraternally,

JASPER NIEMAND, F.T.S.

## NOTES

1. Received too late for publication in the January issue.
2. {The Tenth Convention of the Theosophical Society in Germany was held in Berlin on September 15, 16, 17, 1906.}

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*The Theosophical Quarterly* – January 1908, Vol. 5, pp. 355-368.

## THE UNITY OF RELIGIONS.<sup>1</sup>

J.W.L. KEIGHTLEY

{I.}

Strictly speaking, the title of this paper is a misnomer. We speak more correctly when we say that there is in reality but one Religion — that is, Religion *per se*, or the religious instinct which is part of the root nature of mankind. This instinct, or impulsion towards Religion, is primeval; we find it everywhere coexistent with mankind; as men evolve, it manifests in many beliefs, doctrines, dogmas, creeds, philosophies, symbols, churches, finally flowering into what we call “the Great Religions” of the world, those which at some period of their history have flooded the attentive world with light. But the flower is not the fruit, and Religion has often been found to have its rich fruitage in simple beliefs and trusting hearts which had inclined to no dogmatic or formulated religion, but which had entered into lowly converse with the Father, and had realized the Presence of God. We shall grasp the distinction better when we remember that a man may have no formulated belief whatever, may belong to no church, no society, philosophical or ethical, and may yet be a deeply religious man. The converse is also perfectly possible. We may be placed by our own will in all these centers, and yet may have a minimum of the religious instinct, of the natural Religion, that which leads Man to seek for his own soul and for its true relations with the universe and with spiritual Being. Let us then accept for the moment this distinction between religions and

Religion, looking upon our topic in this light, with the additional proviso that the two may be and often are found joined together in the illumined unity of devout minds.

It is Unity which we seek, for it must inhere in Religion — in the religious instinct of Man — as we see when we remember that the essence of Religion, its Alpha and Omega, is that it leads Man away from himself. Religion is One in very truth. It is the aspiration of the human towards the Divine, the outreaching of Man towards that which is higher than himself. The catholicity of this upward trend of the human heart reveals to us the unifying factor; among the multiplicity of creeds, the religious instinct itself is everywhere the same.

If we go back to the beginnings of mankind, so far as history has enabled us to do so, or if we consider what may be called embryonic Man in the savage state, we find in primitive and wholly uncivilized conditions distinct traces of the religious instinct. Historians have told us that no tribe of men has as yet been found without some form or mode of Religion, however crude, and (to our eyes at least) unworthy of that name. May we not venture to believe that in a just Balance weighing all the environment and conditions, no spark, however feeble, however defiled by materiality and ignorance, which was yet the faint and intermittent ray put forth by an inchoate mind darkly seeking something higher than itself, would be wholly denied the noble title of Religion? History records periods in which mankind has been as

An infant crying in the night;  
An infant crying for the light  
And with no language but a cry.<sup>2</sup>

The cry has arisen from the formless plane of primitive nature; it has been wordless as the flicker of a flame is wordless; yet for the wise, the flame has a voice.

The earliest traces which we find of the religious instinct active in Man enables us to take note of certain points. For example: there seems to be a three-fold basis of Religion which is always found. At the very root of the religious instinct we discover certain essentials. There would seem to be one Law, having this threefold base. The Law is the Law of Love. The moment that we conceive of a Being — or it may be a Something — greater than ourselves, greater than collective mankind as we know it, then almost in the same breath we address ourselves to this Power; we entreat It; we propitiate It; we look upon it as a Giver, having something to bestow and willing — conditionally willing, it may be, but still willing — to fulfil Its function of bestowal. This conception, however overlaid by selfishness and ignorance, is still a far-off recognition of the reign of the Law of Love. This Giver exists to give; that is the function of the Power which primitive Man sees in the storm, the darkness, in the upheaval of Nature as in her most smiling hour, and whether to ban or to bless as he sees it, the fact remains that we have here a dim recognition of the Divine Nature — that it always gives. The heart of Man has never conceived it otherwise. That which is above him has always been the Giver. And this giving, this expansion towards the universe on the part of the Supreme Power, is the evidence of the spiritual nature of the Law of Love as it first dawns upon the untutored mind. That mind has not named the trait; it is left to us, observers of a riper era, to name it. We come to recognize that all races of Men are impelled from within towards Something outside and beyond themselves; Something, it may be, better than themselves, but at all events Something stronger, higher in the scale of Life, richer in power; Something able to reward, to protect, to save or to destroy.

Thus the first manifestation of the religious instinct is the recognition that there *is* Something greater than myself, and from this idea of Something greater, Something

beyond me, I go on to feel that It must be better than I; better, that is, in such form of excellence as I am fitted to recognize. If I be a savage, my ideal may take the shape of a greater strength, a wider power to slay the foe and to exalt the friend: or it may be the fuller license in the share of the spoils of combat and chase which that misshapen ideal is able to confer upon me. Clearly, the first, tentative outreaching of the religious instinct is toward a Greater-than-self, toward an ideal Power which reigns somewhere, somehow, above me, and which I wish to enlist upon my side; whose benefits and protection I desire to claim; with which, in short, I desire to ally myself, desiring it even unto the point of invocation and sacrifice. We must mark this first point well: the wish to ally myself with the Greater-than-I, is the initial step, on the part of Man, toward a recognition of Unity; Unity as between the Greater-than-I and himself, in the first place; and, in the second place, Unity as a desirable — that is an ideal — condition. Overlaid with selfishness, greed and fear as it is, we yet have here the first trembling step of the human soul housed in the depth of the human heart toward a goal that is immortal and eternal. And though this goal be hidden in the icy mists of Time, nevertheless it is a goal, an ideal of such exceeding sweetness, of such undying power, that even its first, feeble flicker in the heart of animal Man has the quality of impelling him to look beyond himself for the fulfilment of that heart's desire. So doing, he has taken the initial step in *spiritual* evolution, and through age after age of increasing enlightenment he will find the essence of the matter to be still the same: only the desire of his heart will be different, ranging the wide, the universal gamut, until at long last he comes to desire singly and solely, the Will of the Father. So that we have here, throughout the life course of a man — or the life course of a human race, if we prefer so to view it — the concept of Unity, of a Unity in diversity, which finally rounds itself to one, clear, spheric Whole. It is in this way that we may see a rudimentary concept of Unity as the earliest base of the religious instinct in Man.

The second side of the threefold base brings us one step further. It is the aspect of Sacrifice.

No sooner do I glimpse the Greater-than-I, than I think I must attract to myself the favor, the attention, the affection of this Power. How shall I achieve this end? How propitiate and please It? Experience has shown me what pleases, what disposes *me* favorably toward others: it is that they shall make sacrifice before me, shall bring offerings unto me. So I hasten to take some of my possessions, or to acquire such and such objects as my labor or my combat or my chase may obtain, and which are known to be pleasing unto the Power, and these I offer up to that Power. Being a savage, steeped in ignorance of all kinds, I *rob* myself as little as may be in making my sacrifice. But as my consciousness enlarges, as my need widens and deepens and my desire grows imperious, I begin to give of my best, seeking better to please. Later on, we find this impulse fully established and recognized; it is a canon of the law that a man shall give of his best to the Lord God. A few steps further in human evolution, and the sweetest Voice of all declares that the best which I have to give is myself, however unworthy the gift may appear to alien eyes. Do thou come unto me! This is the call which so stirs the heart. "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest."<sup>3</sup> It is rest for our souls that is offered if we will give ourselves, if we will take upon us that tender yoke.

The savage has unwittingly touched the earliest manifestation of this light in his idea of sacrificial offering. In something the same fashion, the "civilized" man of to-day — no less than primitive humanity — has been known to offer as little as may be to the God of his confession and time. Doubtless this trait of withholding oneself, while lavish in material offerings, will remain cloaked and veiled, a shadow in the shades of human nature until that nature is purged of self. Perhaps the purely human side of our nature, so strangely composite, will always seek how little it can give to God

and yet retain His favor, while the very seal of the spiritual nature in us is the willingness — the joyfulness — to yield up all unto the Will of the Father.

Thus this dim idea of Sacrifice, involving and including some far off idea of self-sacrifice, is the second aspect of the threefold spiritual base to which we have referred. Whenever a human being desires excellence, attainment, success, power, there we find, first; self-identification with his ideal, however crude and debased (from a higher standpoint) it may be; and, secondly, that he makes sacrifice for it; the sacrifice of ease, of pleasure, of other tastes; of health, it may be; of time, of sleep, of comfort or of happiness in one or another form. Every man knows, practically, that he must give if he would receive. If he would attain, he must work; he must sacrifice at each point of contact with the incoming power. Even Genius has been defined as an infinite power of taking pains, and assuredly we may descry in the highly sensitized nature of the genius the source of the sacrificial pains he must endure. Is it not a strange thing that this principle, so tacitly recognized in regard to the desirable contents of this world, is so frequently overlooked in respect of spiritual attainment? Yet how clear the Voice. "He that loseth his life for my sake shall find it."<sup>4</sup>

The third aspect of the threefold base is Obedience.

One who had deeply studied life, once pointed out that "respect for and obedience to Law" typifies "the subjection of the lower nature to the higher," adding that the lesson of every Religion worthy of the name, "is that it stands for Obedience." Must not this always be so? Wherever we find recognition of an underlying law, or submission to rule, are we not in *essence* looking at a manifestation of obedience to the nature of Being? Even the small rules of social association convey this teaching; all stand for the subordination of self to wider and more general interests. The savage who worships his fetish, who prays, sacrifices, talks to it, does all this in the belief that he is following out a line of action which is based upon observed rule. He does not consciously reason thus, of course, but still we find that he does one thing and recognizes another as "taboo," this or that will not please the fetish; such and such actions are traditionally pleasing to it. In a measure he is constrained to some degree of self-control; his observance is not altogether as he would wish, but is conducted as tradition and experience of the ways of the power may advise, or the medicine-men command; they are obeyed as later on we find the priest, the prophet and the seer obeyed. In all these cases obedience is the rule. In the worship of nature spirits, or the gods, we find the same traces. The very seasons put forth their mandates; the stars in their courses are obeyed. Largely viewed, the specific action matters little; what does matter is that Man is acquiring the spiritual quality of Obedience, an essential quality of the soul.

A further and higher trait is there as well for our finding. Just as we see that the gratification of desire or the granting of a prayer is expected to follow on after a sacrifice, so too, at the higher pole of human development we find that renunciation is said to be the forerunner of true happiness; that it is "the soil from which blooms the beautiful flower of Joy." We are thus enabled to follow the evolution of religious ideals from their crude, apparently ignoble beginnings to the aftermath sung by every saint and seer. We find that the spirit which moves in Man moves in him from his earliest dawn, that our human nature closes round a breath of something more divine. This Spirit in Humanity it is which traces out the path to be trodden, and the tracing corresponds to the unfolding of our discernment, and of our powers of attention and obedience to the guidance of that inner light. We are *gradually* led along this path by the Evolutionary Power. Whether we take the case of the individual man as under the Law of Reincarnation; or reject this thought and view the Evolution of the race as a whole, we find the same results. These may be summed up as the instinctive recognition, on the part of human beings of whatever stage of Evolution, of a twofold fact:

First: That happiness is only to be gained by the appeal to something higher than oneself; and that we cannot refuse this interior prompting.

Second: That the only Freedom worthy of the name — the Freedom to Be — is only found by observance of and obedience to some law, supposed to be founded in the natural order of Being as viewed by us at the time and under our lights.

It does not in the least matter that Man is unable to cognize, or to name and label certain traits in himself. That may be for the historian, or for the intuitive observer of a much later stage of development. It is only as we come to unify that we discern the sweet workings of the law that makes for righteousness and know that Obedience and Sacrifice were with it from the beginning of Time; that in its august balance, Renunciation and Freedom are the same.

## II.

We have now seen that primitive man has been led, by the workings of some law within himself, to reach out unconsciously towards certain fundamental realities. In so doing he has all unwittingly become a partaker of the Great Communion; he has entered the age-long Mystery. For he has *begun* to develop his spiritual Consciousness.

The next step of the primitive races has been toward higher forms of Religion than fetishism or the worship of idols. In their place we now get the worship of nature spirits, or of the forces of Nature. In other words, a further development of the idea of the nature of Being, its greatness and power. Also a clearer, a somewhat more sane comprehension of entering into relations with it. Some observation, too, of the laws of Life playing over the face of Nature; glimpses even of a conscious Purposiveness in these laws; some better worship, due to a more advanced ideal. Such a stage is followed, in tentative degrees, by the final emergence of someone among the great Religions, or Philosophies, of mankind. Here we must pause to ask ourselves; by what means is this transition of the religious ideal accomplished?

Men fall naturally into social groups animated by a common necessity, a community of interest, which eventuates in a somewhat uniform religious ideal. This grouping develops — by attrition — those laws or rules of Association which spring from the communal requirements, and without which no social body can maintain itself as an organism. The primary, the imperious demand made by those laws upon each individual of the associated group, is that each shall to some extent subordinate the personal desires to the good of the whole. The ideal of human solidarity, or unity; of sacrifice in order to maintain the cohesion of group or tribe, nation or race, gives rise in time to all human law. He who does not obey the rules enacted for the benefit of the whole, is thrust forth. These laws of organization cannot be escaped; they are the conditions of manifestation and association upon all planes of Life. There is, of course, continual oscillation; there is resistance and submergence; there is individual gain and loss. Men are led by human affections and instincts to group themselves together; they are led by human passions and desires to struggle, one against the other: there is the push and the pull, the attraction and the repulsion; the higher self, agent of the associated whole; the lower self, separatist and divider. Through this attrition and oscillation Man develops qualities of sympathy, of fraternity, of human understanding; he has now a rudimentary self-identification with the social body, some faint intuition of community of religious ideal, of some order of faith and hope shared by his fellow men. He joys and suffers, he gives and takes, he rises and falls; he is in travail with the soul. Thus, by imperceptible advances but with a majestic continuity does the Law of Love work with its human children (guided by who shall say what Divine Beings behind the veil of Nature?), and a very precious attribute is seen to emerge. The moral

Consciousness of Man arises slowly from the enveloping darkness of unaided Nature, and under the impulsion of the Spirit of Humanity, his ethical ideals are born. The first step has been made towards the evolution of the Divine Consciousness in him; the hammer of a titanic Spirit is beating fire from the iron of his life.

We now see that the laws of Association, Like the fundamental basis of Religion, stand for Unity, and make for:

Sacrifice (of the unit to the whole).

Obedience (to the best interests of that whole, whether in social or religious ideal).

Freedom (under such laws as are enacted for the common good).

The original ideal of Unity is now more concrete, more developed. The religious instinct, expanding from within; the attrition of Association acting from without towards the center of his life, play upon his Consciousness, and to the original concept of a Greater-than-I, Man adds the further ideal of a Dearer-than-Myself: he will now yield up his desire-life, to some extent at least, for the communal life and the general welfare. He does this because he has made a *conscious* discovery. The savage knew it only as the animals know — with his instinct — but now Man *consciously* recognizes that, for him, life has no sweetness without the presence of his fellow men. Human Consciousness has put forth a blossom. How beautifully Sabatier puts it: “In every consciousness is a new principle of unification, the germ of an order grander and more beautiful than the material order which is maintained by physical law.” This principle of unification it is which underlies the religious instinct, urging Man towards the formation of one ideal after another, subordinating each new mode of Thought to the requirements of the Spirit of Humanity. “It is a fact that the moral consciousness does not appear at the beginning of evolution, nor does it at any moment burst suddenly into being all luminous and perfect,” says Sabatier. This point once reached, the unfolding of religious ideals presses rapidly forward; the ordered processional of the great Religions begins.

It has been said that of all wars the religious war is the most bitter. This may well be: fanaticism has a shrewd flavor of wormwood and gall. The sign and seal of the religious instinct at a certain stage of its development — narrow but intensely pronounced — is intolerance of any religious ideal but its own. The difference between creeds is that which at this stage is most insisted upon, is that which is at once prized and most condemned: there is a sharp reaction away from the ideal of Unity. This is but a stage of progress; the pendulum will next swing the other way; it is the earlier question of oscillation and attrition. Man needs but to look a little below the surface of creeds to see that one Religion arises out of another, that they follow one upon another as wave follows wave upon the sea. Religions evolve, and alter in evolving; there are traits common to them all; each is at once the vehicle and the educator of some given type of human mind. Indeed it is easier to point out similitudes than to emphasize differences, once our minds are attuned to this sweeter song.

### III.

The classifications of Religions, and the order of their succession is the task of the scholar, a task so wide that even a sketch of it looms far beyond the limits of this paper. But we may glance at the leading tenets of a few of the better known Religions in search of a unifying thread — shall we say a “thread soul?”

In Nature worship we have an acknowledgment of the modes or manifestations of Life — Being. As the idea of human relations with the Supreme Power takes the field, we get the thought of the growth of the soul, or Animism. Spiritism brings us to

the worship of souls that were human and have departed from the plane of visibility. In Polytheism the object of worship is the individual soul, now become divine. In Dualism as in Monism we have a definition, in terms of human thought, of the nature of the Divine. So we may see that we never get away from the nature of Being, and the relations of the human soul to that nature.

Approaching the Great Religions we do not find that the case has changed. The object of all religious thought is to make manifest the inner loveliness hidden in the Divine Life, as a man draws forth a statue from the stone. India gives us a colossal conception of Unity — the One Self: embraced in this fundamental idea are:

The Immortality of the soul.

Reincarnation.

The identity of all selves with the One Self.

The Law of cause and effect (Karma).

That the destiny of Man is Deliverance, final and complete.

Within this field further teachings and philosophies arise, but over all is the One Self.

Then we have the golden Age of Greece, when sages builded into their philosophies some murmur of the universal song. Thales, Orpheus, Plato, Socrates, Pythagoras, Iamblichus, Plotinus — to count these names, each expressive of a different ideal of the ordered sequence of Being, is like the counting of gems strung on a silver cord. Pythagoras taught the immortality and pre-existence of the soul, its reincarnation also; the perfectibility of Man as well, and the Brotherhood of the three degrees of Becoming, which are said to have embraced:

The *Akoustikoi*, or hearers; those who heard in silence the teaching of the master.

The *Mathematikoi*; those who had as their task the training of the mind.

The *Phusikoi*, or those fitted to examine into the nature of the world and of Being.

The Stoics followed with Epictetus; then the mystical theology and the restoration of Platonism by Ammonias Sakkas,<sup>5</sup> the son of Christian parents of an humble walk of life: he was a laborer, but abandoned his occupation and his Christianity in order to promulgate his philosophy. With the passing of his pupil, Plotinus, passed the “last light of Greece,” about C.E. 204. A modern writer says: “The whole purpose of the doctrines of Plotinus was to direct men towards the blessed life, a kingdom of heaven attainable by them. Having a faith in the illimitable destiny of the human Soul, he directed all his energies towards showing man how to attain a knowledge of God, union with the Divine, called by him the Contemplative Life. True, there were other lives — the political life, the moral life — but these had no rationale but as steps in a ladder leading to the highest.”<sup>6</sup> The ideas of Ammonias Sakkas and Plotinus have a most familiar ring to Christian ears. In this we find the teaching of the “kingdom of heaven,” and the allusion to the political life being other, reminds us of rendering to Caesar “that which is Caesar’s, to God, that which is God’s.”<sup>7</sup> The teaching of Reincarnation, indubitably held by some among the early Fathers of the Christian Church, is here as well, side by side with the culminating thought that union with the Father is to be sought. (“Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father in heaven is perfect.”<sup>8</sup>) These men were inspired with the melody and the simplicity which sit at the heart of Life. It is much the same inspiration as that which speaks to us from the Christian Gospels. Greece as a whole seems to stand for a splendid Freedom, like the glad beauty compelled from the rock — be it lovely form or fiery spark — that Freedom which Epictetus found when he was dragged through the streets in chains.

In ancient Egypt there were also several forms of Religion, great learning, sublime conceptions. Petrie says, “Once firmly established in Rome, the spread of Imperial

power carried her” (Egypt’s) “worship over the world; emperors became her priests, and the humble centurion in remote camps honored her in the wilds of France, Germany, Yorkshire, or the Sahara.”<sup>9</sup> Egypt had her worship of the Queen of Heaven and her Son, until the spread of Christianity altered their attributes but not their nature. The influence of Egypt in the Trinitarian dispute is worthy of comment. From our immediate point of view, the specialization of the religious influence of Egypt would appear to be Obedience. Law, Order and the Will of the Gods stand forth with marked emphasis.

The latest born of the Great Religions — the Mohammedan — “under the impulse of a great and dominating idea, within the space of eighty years from its birth, had spread from the Indus to the Tagus, from the Volga to the Arabian Sea,” says Hare.<sup>10</sup> We find many of our own ideas in, the Religion of Islam: its cardinal principle is said to be a belief in the Unity, and in the power, mercy and supreme love of the Creator; God is omnipresent and the will of Man is free. Judge Ameer Ali thus quotes its conception of Evolution, as given by an Islamic poet, “Dying from the inorganic we developed into the vegetable kingdom. Dying from the vegetable we rose to the animal. And leaving the animal we became men. Then why should we fear that death will lower us? The next transition will make us angels. From angels we shall rise and become what no mind can conceive; we shall merge in infinity as in the beginning. Have we not been told: ‘All of us will return unto Him?’ ” (Koran. {Qur’ân})<sup>11</sup> The youngest Religion, like the most ancient, has Unity as its theme.

Of Persia, China, Japan, we understand less, but here and there our mist is penetrated by the soft shining of their star. Over the eternal snows which wall Thibet away from the world, come stealing whispers of truths immemorial, and their icy fastnesses seem to the inner ear of thought to obey the mandate: “Oh, ye Frost and Cold. Oh, ye Ice and Snow, bless ye the Lord: praise Him and magnify Him forever.”<sup>12</sup> At the apex of Time as we know it stands the figure of that Buddha whom men call “the Light of Asia,” he whose rapt contemplation has a silent influence upon our western world to-day. Thus by degrees our thought returns upon itself, remembering One who came telling of the spirit of Love more clearly than any other; He who taught of the joyful soul of self-sacrifice, and whose “greater love” laid down his human life for foe as well as friend.

Comparison of our Christian ideals with those of other lands and eras is of the deepest benefit, showing the similarities and the variations of the universal theme. It is a common error, not with the student or the philosopher, but with people in general, to think of Religions as though each were a rigidly defined creed, standing alone, aloof, and fixed to all time. More exact thought, though it skim but the surface of history, shows us that all Religions have evolved and taken on form after form: there is reincarnation for Religions. A group of Italian writers have recently told us that our Christian Religion was “first Judaic, then Pauline, then Hellenic, then universal.” In his *Penetration of Arabia* Hogarth tells us: “Remember that, not only as the head and fount of pure Semitism the Arabs originated Judaism and largely determined its character and that of Christianity, but also the expansion of the Arabian conception of the relations of man to God and man to man (the Arabian social system in a word) is still proceeding faster and further than any other propagandism.” Another writer shows us that the ancient Scandinavian Religion exhibited correspondences to the various Aryan Religions. The briefest glance at these vast systems, these names glorious with the nimbus of Thought, must make the sectarian pause. He can no longer regard his own Religion — be it what it may — as something which exists by itself and owes no debt to any. Trace back a few centuries of the flight of Time, Oh! would-be dogmatist, and see where your church or your creed stood then, ’ere you dogmatize as to your favorite crystallization of its teaching. For we see that when a Religion reaches its high-water

mark, rebels arise within it, much in the same way as segregations of unit-cells split up in the human body, and out of the protests of iconoclasts a new aspect of the doctrine comes forward as the latest and most efficacious form of belief. In our own day we have witnessed the rise of the "new Theology," which is the old, as Archdeacon Wilberforce, with others, points out. Nor can we be ignorant of the birth data of our Protestant form of Christianity; its name is its registration. The study of Comparative Theology, coming more and more into favor, has done us service in its comments upon the similarities between the religious ideals and symbols of Mankind. Although in this brief space it is not possible even to allude to them, yet it is one of the signs of our times that but few people will not know where to look for them, since they are even to be found in popular handbooks.

We come thus to see that we are really spectators, witnesses; we are looking on at the evolution of Religions and the religious Ideal. We perceive that there are, at different eras and in different nations, varying concepts of the nature of Being. These concepts wax and wane, rise and fall; now one is predominant, now another; the new vision becomes the old, is buried, and then again arises as newly conceived. Religions develop; the message of the Founder is expounded and expanded by his followers. In the passage of Time churches build up their creeds; can divine authority be claimed for each addition, made as it is through human beings? Reason and intuition join hands in revolt at the idea. The human mind, the wonder-spinner, has woven all these webs, extruding them out of its own texture. The prophet, the seer, the saintly revealer are succeeded by the priesthood, by authority incarnate and rigid; then the reformer comes, breaking the iron mold, and the religious spirit of the Movement pours itself out along some other channel of Consciousness. It would seem as if human Consciousness realized itself and its relations to Being, up to a certain point in a given Religion; then, saturated with experience in that direction, it seeks further self-expression and self-realization in some other ideal. Thus creeds are builded, and across the centuries we hear the muffled strokes of the mallet of the builders. Rock foundation, stately edifice, thus far fulfilling the vision of the Founder; but subsequent occupants have subdivided the interior into numerous rigid and non-essential compartments, from whose darkened "ancient lights" no perspective is visible and wherein all sense of proportion is lost, yet the original ideal is comparable to those fair and spacious mosques of Islam, shining jewels of architecture all glorious without and within, but containing nothing but the worshipper and his prayer, lest material objects should divert his mind from the contemplation of the Unity.

What, then, is the Unity underlying all Religions? Is it not this — that each offers to us some new aspect of the Supreme Power, and of the relation between that Power and the soul of Man? Each treats of the nature of Being. Each is an effort towards a realization of that nature, Divine and Eternal. The God — Ideal — that is the underlying Unity; the preoccupation of the religious instinct is with That, and with Its relations with Man. As the wave of religious experience broadens, we find men examining the problems of Religion now from this aspect, now from that; now dealing with the nature and attributes of the Deity, now with the will and nature of Man. The Pantheist, the Monist, the Theist, the Vedantin, the Mohammedan, the Christian, be he roman, Anglican or non-conformist; be he follower of the latest mode in Religion, or devoutly minded man of no creed at all — all these are viewing the one problem from the particular point of view to which their minds are most open at the time; each one of us is satisfying some need of his nature, is working at his own angle of the world-problem. So each is wise if he takes the key of his own Religion and strives to find the Truth underlying that particular form provided for him in first instance by his training and environment. If he be not an abject thinker he must come to see that a creed is of manifest insignificance before the spirit by which it is ensouled. Each Religion is, as it

were, an ark containing a living, spiritual seed; genuflections to the ark obstruct our perception of the seed. Not the dogma but the truths of Being underlying that dogma are the rightful food of the soul within us. Humanity must be studied in the collective sense if we would come to any just appreciation of religious phenomena and experience. Not for the student is a mind which, like an oyster, closes around the new substance and shuts out the magnificent surges of the ocean of Life. We must sweeten with tolerance and with sympathy that harsh, separative impulse. He who has once directed his thoughts to the conception of an Evolutionary Purpose ruling the religious development of Man can never again wear the fetter of a dogma nor entangle himself in the net of credal obligation. In the Great Teachers of Humanity he sees Avatar after Avatar of the Spirit Divine, leading men from stage to stage of religious experience and ideals, holding ever before the human heart a light of the Spirit after which the mere mind pants as the heart panteth for the water-brooks — and pants in vain. It is as we come to realize that we need not define too closely; that not learning but doing — *being*; living the life — is that which shall make us able to be called the “friends” of the Master. The Spirit to which the heart of Man serves as altar is guiding each one, by a different path, it may be, but to the same sublime goal.

In saying this we are not saying that the Truth is not with the churches. By no means. Each church is directly concerned with one or more aspects of Truth, however overlaid. The *essence* of all Religions is identically spiritual; they are all fragmentary truths, portions of the Truth which can never be known in its fullness until our human Consciousness more largely apprehends the Reality of Being. As the spiritual Consciousness of Man widens and deepens, more and more of the Truth will the temples of his faith enshrine. Our present ideals are based upon erroneous concepts of the universe and of the Life which pulses through it. But there is at the present time a Spirit moving through the churches, throwing wide many a long closed door. It is the same Spirit of Truth which reveals itself to Man — by infinitely delicate and intimate advances — within his own soul. Within all Religions, deeper than all non-essential forms and formulae we feel the breath of the Mysteries: always there have been grades of the faithful, and only those fitted by purification and training of mind and heart have been permitted (with the permit of their own inner power) to study the unveiled Truth. Such have drawn nearer to the Greater Self; in finding that, the lesser self has become responsive to the pulsations of a grander orbit of Being. The Saints have found that the out-breathing of the Greater Self in the human heart proclaims the unity and sanctity of Life; it proclaims that Life permeated at every point by the Divine Will divinely working — that same Will whose shadow the savage saw and worshipped after his fashion, and to which we too, each in his own fashion, do unconsciously turn. Around the Divine Life our natures revolve, as worlds around their central sun; only that which the Saints have done in joyful accord, we do as yet in struggle and pain, our circulation impeded, our revolutions incomplete. Religion and Life are one. It is indeed the Spirit of Divine Life which urges forward the evolution of the human soul. This guidance being our inheritance, we can the better understand why it has been said: “There is a natural melody, an obscure fount, in every human heart. It may be hidden over and utterly concealed and silenced — but it is there. At the very base of your nature you will find faith, hope and love.”

Faith; in our soul and its immortal destiny. Hope; in the nature of Being, its Justice and Compassion. Love; love of the Father towards us poor prodigals; reciprocal love on our part for Him. Life is indeed holy: the deeper we go the holier it must become, since it contains such actualities as these. Along what obscure channels may not the ecstatic heart pour its stream of prayer and praise? Are the channels defiled? This pure stream will cleanse them. Are they narrow? This current will widen them.

They are lowly, but the presence of Faith exalts them. Happy are we who live at a time when the Genius of Christianity is awakening the western world.

It is to the Spirit of Truth in all Religions and within all varieties of religious experience that the theosophist will turn; it is that which he is concerned to unveil in all modes of Thought, religious or otherwise. In fact, all Life being holy, all Thought should be religious in the sense that it should be reverent and sincere. Hence the true theosophist is he who endeavors sincerely, reverently and unremittingly to demonstrate on all sides and by the broad catholicity of his sympathy that the Theosophical Society exists — not for the promulgation of a creed, but for the preservation of a spiritual atmosphere. That atmosphere St. Paul has described for us in that pearl among sermons, his Epistle upon Charity. Charity, as he explains it, is the forerunner and prophet of Unity. It is by this light that the Unity of Religions is comprehended.

J.W.L. KEIGHTLEY.

## NOTES

1. A paper written for the Theosophical Society in England.
2. {"The Larger Hope" (1833-1850), Alfred, Lord Tennyson.}
3. {Matthew 11:28.}
4. {Matthew 16:25.}
5. {Now generally written Ammonius Saccas.}
6. {The exact "modern writer" or source is unknown.}
7. {Matthew 22:21.}
8. {Matthew 5:48.}
9. {*The Religion of Ancient Egypt*, W. M. Petrie, p. 90.}
10. {Likely *The Story of My Life*, Augustus John Cuthbert Hare.}
11. {The *Masnawi* of Jalâl-ud-din of Rûm: see *The Spirit of Islam*, p. 393.}
12. {Christian Bible (Apocrapha), Prayer of Azariah, 1:50.}

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## THE USES OF JOY.

JASPER NIEMAND

In a daydream I saw a man walking the narrow, thronged by-ways of an eastern city. So confined, so crowded and overhung they were to pass was almost impossible unless the street was empty. But it was not empty. So shrill the clamor, so loud the uproar, so fierce the tenacity of seller and buyer, of bird and beast and man; so strong the pressure of the oscillating tide that one who swayed not irresponsibly with it could barely hope to remain upright. Yet in this press one man stood firm. Through this heaving mass one man threaded his way. Undeviating, steady, without pause yet without haste, he pursued his unseen, undoubted path, his face turned to the outlet of the city wall, beyond which stretched the desert; the desert where sand-line met skyline and human eye might not discern where dun sand ended, and dun, brooding sky began. The palms rustled, the sellers called; the buyers chattered; veiled, fitting forms accosted and allured him; the camel drivers, squatted round their sullen beasts, shouted, mocking at his haste; there were even those whose mere weight blocked his way, and ever about him swooped and soared the offal seekers of the market place. Yet still he moved towards his chosen point, unattracted, unheeding; kind, withal, as he

passed, to the young, the frail, the aged; apt to small services; ready to meet a need — but still unstayed, unhampered, undismayed. And I, following in his wake, observing all that he disregarded, summing up the opposition that he evaded or avoided, broke down or turned aside — I moving with difficulty where he threaded his way as foam threads a cataract — I at length reached his side, and breathless, holding the while to his garment to avoid being swept away, I accosted him, saying:

“Friend, whither goest thou? Why movest thou so steadily through this maze, reckless of pleasure, heedless of pain? Hath some far voice called thee? Whither lies thy goal?”

He stayed not his steps. His eye never left the unseen point that held it; but he answered me:

*“I have a tryst with an Angel, at the Gate of Joy!”*

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I fell to thinking of Joy.

What is Joy? Do we know it? For Pleasure is not Joy.

Pleasure is that which we feel because of some attainment, some excitement or interest, something done which we love to do; some occurrence which stimulates our sense of Being, or which touches the subtler issues of our hope, our thought. Pleasure ensues on account of something. Pleasure depends upon something else. It is a partial payment of something overdue. We can always give a reason for Pleasure; her smiling face is hard and practical when the veil is drawn aside. Pleasure attends upon the senses and the brain; she travels not beyond the mechanisms of our thought.

And then there is Happiness, the vestal, the virgin, she who tends the sacred fires within the breast; she who pursues secret paths and illumines dim recesses of our being. Happiness! Prophetess of the first Spring morning; lover of Nature’s loveliness; Happiness! upspringing in our pure delights, our better hours, our truer loves, our rarest selflessness. Surely it is a fresh and limpid draught she gives in those cool, cupped hands of hers; and yet — she is not Joy! For Happiness, too, can trace her lineage; her descent is well known. Daughter of gods proud and conscious in their power, she too hath a consciousness of something possessed; she was not born in some lone mountain solitude of the fire and the dew; her wing is on the air, her feet still touch the earth. Pleasure! Happiness! Delight! With these we roam earth’s brightest regions. With them the loveliest haunts of Nature, the richest treasure-houses of human minds and human hearts are still explored; but their existence is always tangible, explicable, reasoned, based in the consciousness of possession. It is not to *their* side that an Angel conducts us!

Where, then, shall I look for Joy?

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Again I saw the wayfarer of my day-dream. Again I made my way to his side. Catching his garment firmly, I asked him:

“You, whom an Angel awaits! pause a moment to aid a fellow-traveler. Tell me: where is the Gate of Joy?”

For a moment his eyes held mine. He smiled. What a smile was there! Then he touched me over the heart. “*There* is the Gate of Joy!” he said. And the crowd had swallowed him up.

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How often now, in a day-dream, I see this wide-eyed, fearless Companion, his gaze fixed far, far beyond the low horizon of the earth, moving irresistibly forward, as water flows, as the wind marches through the cloud hosts of the sky. For he had indeed a tryst with an Angel, at the Gate of Joy — of Joy!

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If Joy be within the heart, why do I not find it there? When I turn me away for a time from Happiness, Pleasure, Delight — on all that comes to me through the gilded gateways of the senses, the emotions, or through the lofty, many colored portals of the mind; when indeed I forsake my first love, my true love, Nature, and dwell alone in my heart, I do not find a radiant Angel on its threshold, but only a stillness — and beyond the threshold my dead are laid away. It is Sorrow — she of the inverted torch; it is Silence — his warning finger on his lip, that I find; the grave, twin Guardians of my heart.

Can it then be that Sorrow and Silence are not finalities? That they represent some intermediate state, some knowledge through which they would lead me, and not the inner chamber of my heart? Is there something to be learned of them? Are they warders of a secret? Keepers of a treasure beyond and within? It may be so. But that fearless Companion told me of a gate — the Gate of Joy. Before I can reach the house of treasure there is this gateway to be found and passed.

If we look long into the faces of Sorrow and Silence, we find between those grave, august brows something which gives us pause. They have halted us in mid-career; they have pulled up the chariot of the senses; they have turned us out of the ruts, the beaten tracks of life. They have challenged us, bidding us go round some other way. On that other way, perchance, we have had encounters which have shaken us; we have seen sights and have heard sayings which have uprooted prejudice and habit as the whirlwind sucks up the giant forest trees. Storms have torn many a garment from us — garments of ignorance, of custom, of self. We are weary, outworn, and Sorrow, tenderly smiling, leaves us alone with Silence. Then Silence, her great twin brother, reaches down and enfolds us. Resting between the knees of Silence, forgetting to feel, forgetting to think and to reason, a premonition steals over us that all is well, very well, with us; that all proceeds by Law; that not a mote in the sunbeam falls unknown. Touched, moved to the deeps of us, we have an intuition of the stately, ordered processes of the Soul. Surrendered to stillness, the hand of Silence laid in blessing on our head, we hear that stillness parted by a sound — the sound of joy-bells, ringing in the heart.

For there arises within us a consciousness of Joy — Joy, pure and undefiled. Joy — not *from* anything. Joy — not *because* of anything. Joy — not related to, or born of, earth-life. Joy that is something in itself. Joy that is Being. Joy that is Consciousness: the Joy of a Spiritual Life stirring within the smile of the heart. It is there, that deep, pure, ineffable Consciousness — there in the heart that has cast all desire aside. Bled of desire by Sorrow; healed of Sorrow by Silence; having the unveiled and increasing perception of a guiding Law, a true Being, the heart uprises in its strength and sings as the morning stars sang together while the Sons of God shouted for Joy.

If then there be this unfathomed ocean within the heart — and it is there, for we have touched its limpid wave — it must be that we can find it often, and still oftener; that we can abide by its margin and adventure upon its waters, sailing at last for who knows what golden, spirit isles?

This Consciousness of Joy in its own unmixed essence — of Joy as Life in itself — is the greatest imaginable lever in human existence. With it, Archimedes could indeed have moved his world, and the fulcrum required for its base is finer than the finest atom, yet as great, as inexhaustible, as the widest sky, for it is a point of Consciousness. Fine and small though it be, it is not difficult to find. Vast as it is, it does not escape the human sight. It is the simple, the abiding knowledge that God is in us; that we cannot escape this holy destiny. That the All-Father encompasses us as the ether surrounds and interpenetrates the earth. That all — *all* is well; all moves towards

the rapt fulfillment of The Soul. Such is the certainty which evolves into the God-Consciousness which shall wipe away all tears from our eyes.

Hast thou not seen the bee secreting honey from the wayside herb? So is Joy to be distilled from every hour. It needs no sadness, no sense of loss. When we empty our hands at the feet of the gods, they give us crowns instead. And the whole value of the heavenly gifts lies in the fact that they, they alone, can redeem material life and aid our fellow men. Without Joy, we are not wise enough; we are not *still* enough to aid greatly.

An Angel of the Gate said;

“While you are practicing this patience, this complete resignation to the Law, and stilling what is so active within you, I ask one thing more, and this a difficult thing, but one which you can do. I ask you to be joyful in it. First, because of all levers joy is the most powerful; second, because only that which is joyful is true; sorrow is but the shadow of our personalities; and third, because complete resignation invariably brings joy, the first deep, real joy we ever know.”

Shall we not partake of this Joy which we find in Resignation as we rest between the knees of Silence, and with it sweeten the daily task; the human toil; the many lives we meet? Shall we not protect that Consciousness of Law from all contamination, bearing high in consecrated hands the Soul’s great chalice — the chalice of Joy? Oh! why move we not through life unhasting, yet unresting, singing as we pass; uplifting, sustaining, radiating, inspiring — so true — so *true* it is that we — each one of us — have a tryst with an Angel at the Gate of Joy!

JASPER NIEMAND.

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## THE VARIETIES OF RELIGIOUS EXPERIENCE.

J.W.C.K.

*The Varieties of Religious Experience.* This is the title of a series of lectures delivered by Professor William James, of Harvard, under his appointment as Gifford Lecturer on Natural Religion at the University of Edinburgh. Two courses of ten lectures each were thus delivered, the compilation making a book which must be welcomed by every lover of his kind. To quote the words of the lecturer in his preface, in his “belief that a large acquaintance with particulars often makes us wiser than the possession of abstract formulas, however deep” (would that more learned men were of this opinion), he has “loaded the lectures with concrete examples, chosen among the extremest expressions of the religious temperament.” We have thus before us a series of studies of religious temperament which of themselves and without further deductions are most interesting to the general reader. It would not be possible to present an adequate review of these studies unless one were as learned in psychology as is Professor James; what can be attempted by the unlearned critic is to point out the value of the work to the typical reader, “the man in the street” of literature and of life. For it would be idle to deny the significance of these studies. A glance at the table of contents shows that. “Religion and Neurology” is the first and one of the weightiest chapters. Its contention is that “all states of mind are neurally conditioned; that their significance must be tested not by their origin but by their fruits.” And this idea is frequently met with; that the test of a religion is the life led by the religionist is as clearly set forth by Professor James as it was on the sweet shores of Galilee. To-day as ever, it is recognized that he who leads

the life shall know the doctrine. The succeeding lectures are in turn entitled: Circumscription of the Topic, The Reality of the Unseen, The Religion of Healthy-Mindedness, The Sick Soul, The Divided Self and the Process of its Unification (a pregnant chapter, this), Conversion, Saintliness, The Value of Saintliness (which our author says "must be tested by the human value of its fruits"), Mysticism, Philosophy, Other Characteristics, Conclusions, Postscript.

The range of the subject is thus seen at a glance to be a wide one. And what perhaps most strikes the general reader is the extreme and careful fair-mindedness, the human spirit in which the author has done his work. That such a subject has received such attention and recognition of such an order is a most encouraging sign of the times. We are far from the days of religious intolerance, when such work can be done and such a message be delivered in one of the elder communities. Never were lectures conceived in a more truly religious spirit. Take, for example, this passage: "If religion be a function by which either God's cause or man's cause is to be really advanced, then he who lives the life of it, however narrowly, is a better servant than he who merely knows about it, however much. Knowledge about life is one thing; effective occupation of a place in life, with its dynamic currents passing through your being, is another." The true position of the earnest believer, of him who seeks and who must seek to make his trust and faith operative if he would have it whole, is admirably set forth here. At another point the lecturer is considering the question whether the existence of "so many religious types and sects and creeds" is regrettable, and he answers as follows: "To these questions I answer 'No' emphatically. And my reason is that I do not see how it is possible that creatures in such different positions and with such different powers as human individuals are, should have exactly the same functions and the same duties. No two of us have identical difficulties, nor should we be expected to work out identical solutions. Each, from his peculiar angle of observation, takes in a certain sphere of fact and trouble, which each must deal with in a unique manner.... The divine can mean no single quality, it must mean a group of qualities, but by being champions of which in alternation, different men may all find worthy missions. Each attitude being a syllable in human nature's total message, it takes the whole of us to spell the meaning out completely." In this sentence we have at once a plea for a wider tolerance and a reason given therefor. But also this seems to be what might be called the high water mark of the religious belief of the writer; he does not seem as yet to discern the further step, that step which was thus rendered by the great Christian Teacher: "Be ye therefore perfect; even as your Father in heaven is also perfect."

The lecturer asks whether there is "under all the discrepancies of the creeds, a common nucleus to which they bear their testimony unanimously," and to this he makes an affirmative answer. He finds "a certain uniform deliverance in which religions all appear to meet. It consists of two parts: 1. An uneasiness; and 2. Its solution. 1. The uneasiness, reduced to its simplest terms, is a sense that there is something wrong about us as we naturally stand. 2. The solution is a sense that we are saved from the wrongness by making proper connection with the higher powers." Then he goes on to define the way in which "man identifies his real being with the germinal higher part of himself," and does so in these terms: "*He becomes conscious that this higher part is conterminous and continuous with a MORE of the same quality, which is operative in the universe outside of him, and which he can keep in working touch with, and, in a fashion, get on board of and save himself when all his lower being has gone to pieces in the wreck.*" (The italics are the author's.) He accepts the "subconscious self" as "exactly the mediating term required," and in an illuminating passage adds: "Apart from all religious considerations, there is actually and literally more life in our total soul than we are at any time aware of." The value, the test, the temper of true religion; the habitat of intuition; the trace of

the Knower; the fields of consciousness; the contact with spiritual atmospheres; the “immense elation and freedom, as the outlines of the confining selfhood melt down,” are all treated in passages of great charm and calm. Perhaps the apotheosis of the true test of religion was never better reached than in this passage: “The real witness of the spirit to the second birth is to be found only in the disposition of the genuine child of God, the permanently patient heart, the love of self-eradicated. And this, it has to be admitted, is also found in those who pass no crisis, and may even be found outside of Christianity altogether.” We are here reminded of an admission similar in kind at the close of the first section of *Light on the Path*. Perhaps the personal view of the lecturer will interest the reader, as it is stated in the Conclusions and in the Postscript: “The whole drift of my education goes to persuade me that the world of my present consciousness is only one out of many worlds of consciousness that exist, and that those other worlds must contain experiences which have a meaning for our life also; and that although in the main their experiences and those of this world keep discrete, yet the two become continuous at certain points, and higher energies filter in. By being faithful in my poor measure to this over-belief I seem to myself to keep more sane and true.” He believes that “in communion with the Ideal, new force comes into the world,” which reads like a glimpse at the power of Meditation. “As far as I apprehend the Buddhistic doctrine of Karma I agree in principle with that.” And finally we have this: “Meanwhile the practical needs and experiences of religion seem to me sufficiently met by the belief that beyond each man and in a fashion continuous with him there exists a larger power which is friendly to him and his ideals. All that the facts require is that the power should be both other and larger than our conscious selves. Anything larger will do, if only it be large enough to trust for the next step.... It might conceivably be only a larger and more god-like self, of which the present self would then be but the mutilated expression, and the universe might conceivably be a collection of such selves....” This idea would bring about “a return of polytheism.” To the further idea that there is no necessity for an absolute unity to be ultimately realized, we can hardly agree, if only for the reason that then the binding force and instinct of the religious tendency, as we view it, must prove misleading in its absence from the ultimate end. For the religious instinct has for its essence the satisfaction of a something within man which drives him inwards and onwards until a unity of experience is at last attained. So long as he cannot unify his experience, so long as it remains unrelated to life and the universe as a whole, so long will this driving instinct remain partial, unallayed, dissatisfied.

For those who wish to pass in review the field of religious experience, and this in a broad and quiet spirit; for those who wish to sympathize rather than to dogmatize in religious matters; for those who wish to pass delightful hours, and especially for those who long to realize a brotherhood, wider and purer than at present obtains generally, in religious matters, the work of Professor James has a value which must be realized through his pages rather than described. It suffices to say that we have known the strictest churchmen, the broadest protestants, the most eager Theosophists and earnest scientists alike under the charm of the generous mind which shines from the book like a human soul.

J.W.C.K.

## THE VOW OF POVERTY.

JASPER NIEMAND

Blessed are the poor in spirit: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

Blessed are the meek: for they shall inherit the earth.

— Matthew v, 3 and 5.

When first the disciple is recognized, it is because his heart is vowed to Poverty. This alone constitutes his discipleship.

The mystic Recognition is not had upon outward planes. Persons do not bestow nor receive it. The heart evolves it and the Law accepts it. When the Vow is evolved, a bloom spreads over the sphere; the heart has put forth its vital sap, soon to burgeon into deeds which are its blossoms. This bloom is seen upon interior planes, where the cloud of ever-living witnesses hail the first promise of man's redemption. By this new vesture of the soul the returning prodigal is seen while he is yet far from his Father's house. A toilsome path is still before him, but his face is turned towards his only home. Man has no abiding home in Nature, for there he wanders desolate, in the intimate and dreary companionship of his personal self-consciousness, which is but the dry husk of Life.

Where outward Recognition appears to be, the true is rarely present. The two may go together, for reasons of outer work and service, for the Divine require visible agents among men. Permission may be given to this one or to that to take some pledge which they so persistently offer, self-blinded, self-deceived: such pledges are received at their real value and not at the estimate of would-be disciples. Or the aspirant is permitted to look upon himself in the light of a disciple *so far as he can*. Such offers are accepted, such was received, even though Treachery, Failure and Ambition are the grim guides of the self-deceived acolyte. The Law of Compassion has written this truth upon every atom in space — that man has a right to all that he can take from the Spirit, and that Those who are One in that Spirit encourage every effort made towards It. Karma, which permitted both the making and hearing of man's demand, judges it by the light which it emits and provides a reply wholly just. External acceptance of service, promise of aid in return for help given others, these cannot commit the Law and are not in themselves the mystic Recognition; they are more often devoid of that enduring base. The disciple is only received upon that plane from which his offer really proceeds, and not upon that from which he thinks it proceeds.

Yet let us not imagine that the Lodge names actual agents, to abandon them, or for temporary purposes. If we judge these agents by our lesser lights we do but confuse ourselves. There will be but one in visible authority at a time — the senior one; the others, if there be others, are his junior brothers acting under him and with him, for such is the evolutionary hierarchy, and Law provides for the orderly reëmergence of its servitors. The juniors may fall away, but not the senior, who *is* senior because of this inability. This does not mean that his soul is sinless while still human. It means that, whatever his oscillations, he has evolved in his sphere a "holding center" from which he cannot break away. He is never more perfect than the age, the nation and, above all, those with whom he works admit of his being. When we are more perfect, then we have more perfect helpers. The helper is always in advance of those he leads; their greater attainment promotes his own. There is no waste of energy in that center of

conservation called the Lodge; this is why the perfect souls dwell not among us. Hence the occult crime of uncovering the fault — if fault there be — of the teacher or agent of this plane: it is in large part our own, for we have not as yet made it possible for the pure and perfect to dwell among us. We demand the greatest and are not ourselves the least. We judge not as the Perfect Ones judge. What, then, commands recognition? Only the true Vow of Poverty.

What is that Vow? Is it not giving up all for Truth, or for Peace, or for Mercy, as one sees these oneself, and abandoning all other beatitudes for self-indulgence in some favorite forms of virtue. The truth we see is relative; in embracing it we oft embrace some temperamental inclination of our own. Peace may be a false peace and the sword of lawful war the only mercy. Kindness to preferred men and objects is that partiality which a Master has declared to be “one form of black-magic,” the magic of self. Humility is the favorite wile of the elemental devil; and outward ambitions, burned away, have root and substance upon interior planes of life — aye, and a firmer grasp there upon the struggling soul. These virtues are still the possessions of the personal self; they constitute those riches of the human mind which inhibit the entrance to the kingdom.

The Vow of Poverty is a power. It is the power to say, at each instant and to the Law: Thy will be done! The power to abandon hopes, fears, plans, codes, thoughts. To see each moment dawn as ’twere the last, yet to live it as though it were eternal. To have no rights, no wrongs, no *mental* possessions. To see all things, even the innermost, appear and disappear as Life now forms and now dissolves. To lay claim to nothing save to patience, and then to abandon that for a supreme content. Careless of self-vindication, careless even of justification for causes or persons with which one is identified; ready to explain one’s self; equally ready to remain unexplained. Amid a deep interior peace to arise on outward planes, sword in hand, for the defense of principles and the maintenance of justice to others. Without aggression, to defend most earnestly; to strike home, when needed, to the heart of hypocrisies and ambitions, waging war with every ally of material darkness, and most of all with one’s own material mind; and all these while remote in spirit and calm in soul. On the outer plane there is no real peace, but only a base compromise, with which the flaming Christ-sword is forever at war. Not all who have taken the Vow wear an aspect of external amiability. The mendicant is a stranger to professions of sweetness and light; he neither rejects nor invites sacrifice and pain. He blesses the Law when it gives and when it takes. He takes hold and quits alike indifferently so far as himself is concerned, and for his erring fellows grieves in silence, not with that audible pity which is itself a form of self-complacency. Deep within his soul he has found the Unconscious. He knows that It possesses naught because Itself is all. He strives to merge his personal Consciousness into the Great Deep. His ever-widening mind becomes a breath and embraces the universe; the Vow has borne its harvest when it “inherits the earth,” which is the conquest of the personal thought, and at last for him the beatitude is more mystically translated:

“Immortal are the votaries of the Breath: because theirs is the Realm of the Over-World.”

JASPER NIEMAND.

## THE VOW OF POVERTY.

JASPER NIEMAND

Blessed are the poor in spirit: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

Blessed are the meek: for they shall inherit the earth.

— Matthew v, 3 and 5.

When first the disciple creates himself and is recognized, it is because his heart is vowed to Poverty. This Vow, rightly understood, constitutes his discipleship.

Who is the disciple? What is the Poverty to which he is dedicate? For we are dealing now with realities, not with words which so often obscure realities, and we must be careful interpreters.

The disciple is the Soul. That man, that human mind which has so aspired to the life and the service of the Soul that he has cast all personal desire aside and has begun at least to “live the life,” he is the outward vehicle of the Disciple-Soul.

And the Vow of Poverty? Is it a thing which drives a man to quit his place in the outward life, to change conditions and to violate all his natural surroundings and inheritance of whatever order? Surely not. Surely this were to court disaster. He who has so ardently aspired towards the diviner life; he who has glimpsed the Soul in himself, he knows well that he must *evolve out* from all the conditions which surround him as a human being and that all which binds him, as all that fetters and weakens the humanity of which he forms a part, is of his and their own weaving; it is a net spread by men for their own feet and it must be undone slowly and with pains unwoven; to break it violently asunder would benefit no one and would harm and delay many: the disciple knows he must patiently endure the net he has woven until he has evolved beyond it: then the Lords of Karma themselves release him: let him not usurp the functions of his Lords.

So also with the mystic recognition which constitutes the seal of discipleship. It is not had upon outward planes. Persons do not bestow or receive it. The heart evolves it: the Law accepts it. When the Soul is self-conscious and knows itself to be, then, then only the Vow is made in truth: then the human being must complete it: he must hearken to the silver voices of the Soul, putting aside in his turn all the wealth of personal desire, of personal expectation, of individual mentality; he must renounce upon earth as the Soul has already renounced in the heavens: he comes to long for the immortal essence alone and a bloom spreads over his sphere; his heart has put forth its vital sap, soon to burgeon into powers which are its blossoms. This bloom is as a light seen upon interior planes, where the cloud of ever-living witnesses hail the first promise of the new birth. By this new vesture of the Soul the disciple is recognized by his Teacher. By his attitude of selflessness — his “Poverty” — a poverty of the personal desire only — he may be recognized among men. He is not yet at the summit of the Soul life; he has but entered a gate leading to a path which he has willed to tread, a toilsome and even a dangerous path, but his face is now turned towards his true home in the heavens. His consciousness is lightened of a heavy burden. The ordinary man, he who still lives in desires, bears this burden about with him; that sense of self, that weight of limitation and of isolation in the midst of Nature which hedges him in, which bounds and binds him everywhere and from which there seems to be no escape. Compacted of desires, a prisoner of Fate, in the intimate and dreary companionship of

his personal self-consciousness, man feeds upon the dry husks of Life, finding no abiding home, no haven of rest in the Nature through which he wanders, alien to it as to himself.

But when the Vow of Poverty is taken, all this is changed. The man has transcended his personal self: he has entered a diviner order of Being; henceforward the Law of that new order guides and enfolds him.

A something has come to the birth within him which has altered the very texture of his mind, has shaped anew the mirror of his brain. And this hidden power, indescribable but more real, more vital than anything the man has ever known, this power makes for unity; the man finds himself woven into the warp and woof of things, finds that his consciousness forms part of a coherent and universal Whole. He no longer desires anything for himself, he has taken the Vow of Poverty; for he has found his own Soul, and finds it to be both poor and lonely, because it has nothing of its own and is nothing in itself, has no life snatched from the great Whole and peculiar to itself, but moves with the moving ocean of Being.

Thus the man has become an integral part of that Life which issues from the heart of the world, issues purely, fresh as the dawn and as yet uncontaminated by the separations and divisions of material existence. As some creature of the waters might move along the little banks of some small rivulet, might slowly and with struggles find its way into a larger stream, into a river, then a bay, then a great gulf and then at last rush with joy into the great ocean and mingle with its kind as never before, so the man has at last entered the vast and primal waters, has touched the Source and finds himself to be the Soul.

Yet it must not be imagined that he who is now the disciple has in this moment of mystery and power reached perfection. Not so. The newfound light within himself has shown its glory and radiance upon the shadowy background of Nature and has for a space unified his consciousness. But now, no sooner is this great issue reached and its prize secured, than the new order of Life begins, and with that, new trials of strength, new ideals and unimagined efforts. The man has indeed become the Soul, but that Soul is not as yet the Spirit. The hidden path has opened before the gaze of his heart and much that was dim before is clearer now, but the shining goal is still far away, there is still much to dare, to conquer and to live.

For him who has taken the Vow of Poverty there is toil, pain even, but also a great and ever increasing joy. For that which commands the recognition and the acceptance of the Divine Order, that which constitutes discipleship is indeed the true Vow of Poverty.

What then is that Vow? Is it, as some have imagined, the abandonment of all worldly possessions, the obliteration of earthly differences and distinctions, the return, perhaps, to the communal life? This cannot be the true Poverty, in so far as it repudiates all karmic debts, calls for quittance rather than make an honest payment, and refuses to work out *through* those conditions in which the Law has caused the man to be born. He has found himself, and in that moment he knows that he must not deny one jot or tittle of that Law of Cause and Effect which has placed him *just where he stands* in Nature, with duties which must all be fulfilled to the uttermost before he can pass on further within the Veil of Nature. Nor is the Vow, as still others have thought, the giving up all minor desires for Peace, or Truth, or Mercy as one sees these to be: it is not the abandonment of all other things for indulgence in some favored forms of virtue. It is not the reading of our own predilections into the teachings of the Soul; not the propaganda of our own beliefs at the expense of the belief of another: not the urgency that all shall see as we see, however our own vision may appear to us. The Soul in us is not to be cozened with the excuse that we have sacrificed so much for the

truths in which we believe. The truths which we now see are relative, are often modified by our temperament, hardened and limited by the action of the brain. We cry Peace, Peace, and yet this may be a false Peace and lawful war the only true mercy. Our Love — is it universal? Our Justice — is it impartial as the sunlight falling on the just and the unjust alike? Is our insight crystalline — or does the lens of our humanity split it up into colored light? Kindness to preferred men and objects — does it not rob others of their just due as a thief in the night, leaving some other department of Nature to pay our debt, as has been truly said? Humility; is it not too loud at times, a favorite wile of that elemental devil which lurks in every human being? Ambition; may it not undergo strange transformations and be ambition still, having its root and substance upon more interior planes of Life than we imagine, aye, and a firmer hold there upon the resistant Soul? As we review the field of attributes, we find the imprimatur of our personality and the seal of our possession upon them all, and we come at last to see that the Vow of Poverty excludes all personal sense of possession, even to the virtues in which the personal self has pride and which it loves, and the thoughts which constitute those riches of the human mind which inhibit the entrance to the kingdom of heaven. The rich man who finds it so difficult to enter is he who loves and clings to his personal self-consciousness, to the images and forms of his own mind.

The Vow of Poverty exists upon a plane deeper than that of the mind, higher than that of human love or human conditions. It is a power — the power to say at each instant and to the Divine Law, “Thy will, not mine, be done.” ... The power to abandon hopes, fears, plans, codes, thoughts. To see each moment dawn as ’twere the last yet to live in each as though it were eternal. To avoid all crystallization, the great danger of the disciple. To have no rights, no wrongs, no *mental* possessions. To see our ideas swept away like smoke, as Life now dissolves and now forms anew, and to grasp at nothing, but to look on with a smile. To be able to take or to quit, to learn and then to unlearn as the lesson broadens and the meaning unfolds, and all the while to grave within the heart that deeper lesson of charity, world-wide and gracious, whose exquisite toleration seals discipleship. To recognize finally that the Soul does not codify, builds no creeds, establishes no limits, but teaches each one freely according to its own Law manifested within each and accepting no other arbiter. To lay claim to nothing save patience, and then to exchange that for a supreme contentment. Careless of self-vindication, careless even — at right times — for the justification in the sight of the world of persons and causes with which one is identified; careless of all save that the Soul shall be obeyed; able to labor and to wait; ready to explain, ready as well to remain unexplained. Amid a deep interior peace to go forth on outward planes for the defense of principles, the maintenance of justice. Without aggression, to defend most earnestly all that is weak, poor, forsaken and needing aid. To strike home to the core of hypocrisies and falsities, yet never to wound a human heart. Never to be caught in the trap of apparent and material facts, but to look beneath the surface for our duty and to trust to the guidance of principles. To wage war with every ally of darkness within our own nature, most of all with the materialistic brain mind, and through all these to be remote in Spirit and calm of Soul.

It is evident that he who has accepted a program so wide as this, will have neither time nor wish to occupy himself with the errors of his fellows or the defects of organization in the surrounding world, the defects of the surface things. He will most earnestly work for the establishment of a better *entente*, a more *human* feeling among mankind, and leaving humanity to do its own work on the outer planes, he will do that which is his at a point nearer the source; he will put his trust in an effort to inspire those about him and the world at large with a belief in the reality and the power of great principles to uplift us, and to infuse into our civilization as it stands the breath of Life. This is to be done — and it waits, it wants doing — in every department of our

daily existence. On the outer plane as it stands today there is no real peace, but only a base compromise with which the flaming Christ-Sword is always at war.

Not all who have taken the Vow wear an aspect of sweetness and amiability; the mendicant is a stranger to professions, but his heart is sound and kind at core with the true kindness; he has passed through the thousand gates of Sorrow and has found an angel to welcome him at each; his bleeding heart is bled of anger too. He cares not how he stands; his whole concern is for the truths of which he is the bearer. He neither invites nor rejects labor and sacrifice, joy, pain or earth's delights: he sees all these as a means and fixes his gaze on That which *shines through* all. He lays hold and quits alike indifferently. The grief of another moves him, but not his own, and with him, to be moved is to unfold a deeper Compassion, to pour out more and more Love. If his fellows err, he sorrows silently; if he has erred, he arises and sins no more; without loud grief or poisonous remorse he amends his errors and passes on his calm and quiet way. He acts, not for results, but purely that the Soul may be served. He blesses the Law when it gives and when it takes. His faith is whole and serene; a deep contentment orbs him round. What though from the human side it may seem sad? He is not living from the human side; his source is in the heavens. He is companioned by the Soul and within that Soul which he knows to be himself he has found the Universal. He commits himself to the Eternal, to the Unconscious, to That which has no possessions because itself is All. He is merged into the mystical Deep. His ever-widening mind becomes a breath and embraces the universe. Whatever the seeming of the outer man, the Disciple-Soul moves on: we have no scale to weigh it by, no means of measure or comparison. Yet we may know that the Vow of Poverty has borne its fruit; the disciple inherits the earth, and at last for him the Beatitude is more mystically translated:

“Immortal are the votaries of the Breath: because theirs is the Realm of the Over-World.”

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Before the aspirant can become one of the Companions, he shall have taken the Vow of Poverty. Now this poverty shall be intimate and interior.

And when one of them is attacked the Companions shall defend him, because he is their brother. But they shall defend him without malice and without aggression, because he is their very Self.

In the Self are the aggrieved and the aggressor; the minute and the inexhaustible; the good, the evil and that which is the Cause of both.

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*The Path* – February 1888, Vol. 2, pp. 341-343.

## THE WAY OF THE WIND.

J. CAMPBELL VER PLANCK

It is one of the gratifying signs of the times, and a pleasing indicative straw to point the way of the wind, that we should find in the *Forum* of Dec., 1887,<sup>1</sup> such an article as the one by Professor W. H. Parker, entitled “Arguments for the Unseen.” Disclaiming both orthodoxy and advance thought as it were, this writer presents much evidence which might have fallen from the pen of an occultist — an occultist such as he himself would be if he realized the full inferences from his own statements. The Arguments are

clearly, even limpidly, put, and the article must do much good in opening such minds as will only hear those ideas which they consider “safe,” “sound,” and *acceptable to the community at large*. What it is they wish to save, or fear to lose, unless it be the consistency of ignorance, prejudice, or limitation, and what could be more “sound” than Truth, we do not know and will not ask of those who would be “*plus royaliste que le roi*.” We quote a few paragraphs of the article as its best recommendation to those who desire to think more, or to induce others to think more, in the direction of the Unseen.

“He sees not his fellow man, but only an outward manifestation of an unknown force, be that force vital or chemical or other. He who believes that man is made in the image of God, accepting our spiritual nature, realizes that every human assembly is an assembly of spirits unseen.”

The above might refer either to the presence of the “astral men” or doubles, or even to the existence of that entity known to many occultists as the “Higher Self of the unseen world. It often implies, however, that the inhabitants of that world were in ready communication with the earth, and this implication favors an inference that we are surrounded by an invisible world.”

“Without touching on the many debatable phenomena that come under the discussion of the old psychology and the new so-called psychical research, and without giving any credence to the claims of modern spiritism, we have the further fact that in life and health we are dealing with none but invisible beings. The materialist himself must acknowledge that the unknown quantity which constitutes personality amid all the change and degradation of bodily tissue, is beyond dissection, is deathless, and that some organizing force beyond his ken precedes and accompanies organism.”

Compare the above with the statement in *Esoteric Buddhism* that the 3rd principle guides the 2nd, or Jiva, the life force, in its task of building up the body.

“Facts suggest that a great exaltation of senses ... may sometimes bring to sight or hearing, not phantasms, but realities never perceived in our ordinary life.”

“Since, therefore, we know scarcely anything directly, our seeming direct knowledge of the outward world, and our seeming lack of such knowledge in regard to any spiritual world above it, are illusive.”

“Men of science least of all, should shrug their shoulders at mention of the Unseen. In their own way they deal more with the hidden, the invisible, the vanished, or the future, than with the tangible.”

“The great Unseen, for which we have intimations and reasons, is as real as the Seen, or more so. Enough that we know not the visible in itself, but only by some message it sends to us from afar, truly so when it seems nearest. There is no light, no color, as we apprehend these, outside of the mind. Let the vibrations cease, and everything vanishes; let the molecules cease to give forth resistant force, and nothing is tangible. Since, therefore, the physical world is so tremulous, shadowy, spiritual, it is no presumption against a hidden universe that it affects us as something dreamy and unsubstantial. Granting that matter is composed of atoms, still there is nothing solid except to our sensations. An eminent English mathematician has calculated that, in a piece of dense metal, the atoms must be as far apart as 100 men would be when distributed at equal distances from each other over the surface of England; that is, one to every 500 square miles. Surely no supramundane world could be much more at variance with all that we deem firm and substantial.”

“Brown Sequard observed that certain cholera patients remained clear and active in mind when their blood was becoming black and clotted in the last stages of the disease; a fact inconsistent with the identity of mind and brain, since the latter depends on the blood for its activity.”

“Analogy demands a destiny of boundless splendors and activities for those (mankind) who begin their career on so vast a material platform.”

“Man is the first of a new series — *the spiritual*.”

“If anything is temporal, it is the Seen; if anything is eternal, it is the Unseen.”

All the above are theosophical teachings, and are, moreover, elaborated and accounted for by those teachings. In respect to the statements concerning the uncertainty of sense-evidence and the debt which we are under to Vibration, the following quotation from Hartmann’s Experiments may interest the general reader. A metallic rod is suspended in a dark room: “Let the same be connected with some mechanical contrivance by which it can be made to vibrate and increase the vibrations gradually to a certain extent, and we will have the following result: ... When the vibrations rise to the number of more than 32 per second ... the drum of our ear then begins to vibrate in consonance with the rod, and we hear a sound of deep sonorous bass. As the vibrations increase, the sound increases in pitch and runs up through the musical scale to the highest note, when, at 36,000 vibrations per second, all sound ceases and the rod becomes imperceptible to our senses. All through the long interval from 36,000 up to 18 millions of vibrations per second, we can neither hear nor see the rod; but at this point it begins to affect our sense of feeling by emitting radiant heat. At a still higher rate the heat ceases, a dull red glow appears which becomes perceptible to our sight and runs up through all the colors of the solar spectrum; through yellow, green, blue, purple, and violet, until at eight billions of vibrations all light disappears and the rod, as far as our senses are concerned, has ceased to exist, although its presence can still be proved by its exhibition of chemical action.”

It is interesting to note that the above phenomena follow that order which occult science indicates as the creative order. Ether was first of the creative elements; its special property is sound. Air next; its special property is tangibility or affecting the sense of feeling. Fire third; its property is color, and it affects the sense of sight. Water and earth are the most gross; they affect the senses of taste and smell; the rod in its normal condition would be cognizable by these, and perhaps also in still more heightened chemical action. Professor Parker also alludes to the well-known fact that the optic nerve in ordinary men is blind to all colors below the red and above the violet. Professor Tyndall states this as follows, in his work on Light and Electricity. “The radiation composing the solar spectrum possesses a dimension much larger than that of which the eye can take cognizance. This spectrum is in reality composed of three distinct parts.

1st. Luminous rays, which, acting on the retina of the eye, constitute the spectrum of seven simple colors.

2d. Rays lying within the red ray, and which do not affect the vision, but the existence of which is scientifically demonstrated by their calorific power.

3d. Rays lying beyond the violet, equally invisible, but whose existence is not the less demonstrable by chemical tests. Thus the spectrum consists of three sorts of rays: Calorific, Luminous, and Chemical, the second of which only is directly appreciable by the organ of vision, the existence of others being ascertained by experimental observation involving an exercise of mind.” He further states that the rays beyond the violet “manifest their action, not in heat or light, but in the operation of composition, decomposition, and allied phenomena,” and that all these three orders of effects result from a variation in the vibrations of the Ethereal Medium. Clairvoyants and seers under an excitation of the senses also see through ordinary matter, which Professor Parker has shown us in his Arguments is far less “dense” than is ordinarily supposed.

J. CAMPBELL VER PLANCK.

## NOTE

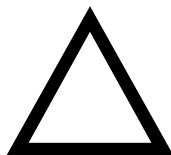
1. {*The Theosophical Forum.*}

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*The Path* – August 1891, Vol. 6, pp. 137-141.

### {WE ALWAYS HELP...}

JASPER NIEMAND



“INGRATTITUDE IS NOT ONE OF OUR FAULTS.”

WE ALWAYS HELP THOSE WHO HELP US.

TACT, DISCRETION, AND ZEAL ARE MORE THAN EVER NEEDED.

THE HUMBLEST WORKER IS SEEN AND HELPED....

To a student theosophist, serving whenever and however he could, there came very recently — since the departure from this plane of H. P. Blavatsky — these words of highest cheer from that Master of whom H.P.B. was the reverent pupil. Attested by His real signature and seal, they are given here for the encouragement and support of all those who serve the Theosophical Society — and, through it, humanity — as best they can; given in the belief that it was not intended that the recipient should sequester or absorb them silently, but rather that he should understand them to be his only in the sense that he might share them with his comrades, that his was permitted to be the happy hand to pass them on as the common right, the universal benediction of one and all.<sup>1</sup> The Divine only give to those who give. No greater cheer could well be vouchsafed to earnest workers than the assurances of which these sentences are full. Not a sincere helper, however obscure or insignificant in his own opinion, is outside the range of that watchful eye and helping hand. Not one, if he be sincere, fails to commend himself to the “gratitude” of the highest of the hierarchy thus far revealed to us. Every deed is noted; every aspiration fostered; every spiritual need perceived. If in some dark hour the true helper imagines himself forgotten, supposes his services to be slight in value or too frail for remembrance, these sentences reassure him in all their pregnant significance; they send him on his arduous way refreshed and strengthened with the knowledge that he can “help” Those who help all. Nothing but ourselves can shut us away from Them. Our own deeds are our Saviors.

How, then, can we best help? Another and much beloved Master — He who first communicated with the western world through Mr. Sinnett — once wrote that there was “hardly a member unable to help” by correcting prevailing misconceptions of

Theosophy and by clearly explaining its teachings to outsiders. There are comparatively few of our members yet able to do this, and reasoning along this line we see that the great want in the theosophic ranks to-day is

## A THEOSOPHICAL EDUCATION.

At the present juncture the theosophical movement exhibits, both in England and the United States, an astonishing activity, a tenacious and all-embracing vitality. Never before in its history has numerical growth been so rapid: one hundred applicants in ten weeks in the dull season here, and four new branches already since the "death" of H. P. Blavatsky. The moment of depression upon the departure of our great Leader from the objective world was so brief as to be scarcely noticeable. Then, all at once, as if inspired by gratitude, by fidelity, by all the promptings of full and loyal hearts, the Society made a bound forward, impelled by the efforts of its individual members towards Solidarity and increased usefulness. The tide of popular opinion is turning. Press comment has become more favorable and more reasonable in the better newspapers; more virulent and extreme in the lower ones, sure sign of our steady — and to them irritating — advance. Each day a swifter momentum is discernible. And on all sides theosophists are found saying and writing, "What can I do for the Cause?" This question is put forward out of lives hampered by care, limited in opportunity, wherein ease is scant and leisure brief, yet it comes so earnestly, so frequently, that reply must be made.

The pressing need of our Society to-day is a theosophical education, a sound grounding in theosophical teaching. Our members require clearer comprehension of theosophic truth. They lack, in large part, ability to explain the groundwork of the theosophic scheme in simple, direct language to inquirers. They are not able to give a terse, plain account of the faith that is in them, nor their reasons for holding it. Dazzled by the vastness of the universal plan which theosophic works reveal in glimpses only, they have not realized the desirability, the necessity, in fact, that they should be able to give a clear account of our belief, to themselves in first place, and afterward to others. The composite nature of man, for example, in itself so explanatory of the problems of life, they do not wholly grasp and cannot expound. They are vague,— and Theosophy is considered vague. They are tongue-tied,— and theosophical thought is believed to halt. Their shortenings are all attributed to Theosophy. Most of our students read discursively. Many are un-able to present a few fundamental ideas to the understanding of the average man, who inquires or listens, on the trains, or on the streets, at the close of a hard day and with brains already weary with headwork, a man whose life of fevered haste and effort at money getting is so crowded that he has not ten minutes to give to eternal salvation itself, if it were offered to him, while he is often as unconscious as a child to the importance of his thought as affecting his future destiny. Nor can we dispel this unconsciousness, or arrest his attention, until we are able to set before him a few well-digested and apposite facts. Practical, applied Theosophy appeals to him. Basic truths he is ready to understand. He does not yet aspire, perhaps. His devotion slumbers; his mental need is stifled: but give him plain facts, and he listens. The unity of Religion, the Law of Action and Reaction, the necessity for Reincarnation along the line of the persistence of Energy — here are things he will grasp, retain, augment, if they are explained in their bearings upon daily life and its inexplicable, haunting sadness and misery.

Here is a service more needed than any other, which any student can render. The study of the *Key to Theosophy*, as one studies a grammar, the mastery of some one given subject, followed by an effort to write it out, or to speak it, in one's own language for

one's self only at first, would assist the student to fix the chief points in his own mind, as well as to express them clearly. A few moments of such study daily, even weekly, would be of immense use to all. We do not need to read so widely, to think so discursively, to have knowledge so profound, or to run so far afield after occult mysteries and laws. We do need, and that urgently, to simplify our thought, to express it lucidly, briefly; to clarify our knowledge *and to live what we know*.

The opportunity thus afforded for doing good is incalculable. All about us are persons straining at the tether of their creeds, eager to break away to pastures of living Truth. Before the great mysteries of Life they stand dumb as the brute, but with enlarged capacity for suffering; endowed with the reason which in the brute is lacking, but which in the man of to-day receives little support, scant sustenance from all that he has been taught heretofore. If such a man be met, at the critical moment, by a theosophist willing and able to explain and give reason for what he believes; to indicate the bearings of theosophical truths upon the mental, social, and other conditions of the present time; to point out the relations of Karma and Reincarnation to universal law as partly known to the average mind; the value of the service rendered thus becomes evident, the need of self-education among our members is perceived.

The subject must be studied as we study any other. One branch after another may be taken up, each being the object of meditation and reading until we can render a clear account of it to ourselves in our own words, illustrated by our own experience. It is better to know a little very thoroughly, and to frankly say that we know no more (which always placates an inquirer and inspires confidence in our sincerity), than to seek to impress others by the wide range of our thought. We may incite wonder but we shall not convince or aid. It may seem an insignificant path to point out when one says, "Educate yourselves." It is, in fact, an initial step which is also the final step, for it never ends. And if the enlargement of our own minds, the amplification and serenity of our thought, the clarification of the nature, the knowledge that we have helped others towards these priceless advantages were not sufficient reward for the faithful lover of his kind, reward for labor, inducement for further endeavor, then surely the greatest, the final incentive comes when he remembers that he can help Those who "build the wall" to protect humanity, that he may become Their co-laborer, himself a part of that living wall. The truest way to help is by clearly learning and clearly imparting theosophic truths. It is only done by not straining too far, by educating one's self gradually and thoroughly from the root up, with frequent trials of our own definiteness of idea. Classes may be formed wherein the members examine each other: there are many ways when the wish and will are strong.

Hand in hand with this effort goes the higher Education. It is Patience. With Patience and knowledge he develops his full power of helpfulness; he becomes great by becoming a greater servant of his fellow-men.

Life is a sheet of paper white  
Whereon each one of us may write  
This word or two — and then comes night.  
Greatly begin! Though thou have time  
But for a line, be that sublime:  
*Not failure, but low aim, is crime.*<sup>2</sup>

Duty is the proper use of the present hour. This calls upon us to train ourselves that we may come to the assistance of our fellows who founder in quagmires of thought, in the musty accumulations of centuries. If we would help them, we must

show ourselves masters of our ideas and ourselves. There is a way to it:— that way is in steady self-education.

JASPER NIEMAND.

## NOTES

1. {*The Theosophical Movement 1875-1925* — E. P. Dutton & Co., 1925. Varies.

pp. 420-421:

We have earlier mentioned that at the meeting of the E.S. Council on May 27, 1891, all that transpired, with one exception, was covered in the circular of the same date sent to all members of the Esoteric School. That omitted matter was a message from one of the Masters received during the deliberations, and by Mrs. Besant read to those present. ... This meeting was under the pledge of secrecy, as was the circular sent to the E.S. members. Immediately following this, and while Mr. Judge was still in England, following H.P.B.'s death, *The Path* for August, 1891, edited during Mr. Judge's absence by "Jasper Niemand" (Mrs. Archibald Keightley, or Julia Campbell Ver Planck, as her name was then), began with a powerful article on "A Theosophical Education." This article was headed with a message from one of the Masters, and was signed by Jasper Niemand. It should be remembered that at that time no one knew who Jasper Niemand was except Mr. Judge and Mrs. Ver Planck herself. The article went on to say that the message had been received by a "student theosophist" *since* H.P.B.'s death, that the message was from H.P.B.'s Master and was attested by his *real* signature and seal.

pp. 645-646:

On July 6, 1891, less than six weeks after the Meeting itself, Mrs. Besant drew up a statement which she sent to Mrs. Julia Campbell Ver Planck at New York City — Mrs. Ver Planck then well-known Theosophically and after was married to Dr. Archibald Keightley, but who was then entirely unknown to Mrs. Besant or anyone else except Mr. Judge as being identified with "Jasper Niemand." ...

p. 647:

At Taplow, England, on the evening of June 15, 1893, Mrs. Besant met and talked with Dr. and Mrs. Keightley on the subject of this Council meeting, the incident being brought up by reason of the advance proofs from *The Theosophist* of "Theosophic Freethought." Dr. and Mrs. Keightley were both members of the E.S.T., and personal friends at the time with Mrs. Besant as well as Mr. Judge.

*The Theosophical Movement, 1875-1950* — The Cunningham Press, 1951, pp. 169-170:

In the *Path* for August, 1891, appeared an article that, in the course of later years, was to create turmoil in the ranks of the Society. The article began with this quotation:

"INGRATTITUDE IS NOT ONE OF OUR FAULTS." WE ALWAYS HELP THOSE WHO HELP US. TACT, DISCRETION, AND ZEAL ARE MORE THAN EVER NEEDED. THE HUMBLEST WORKER IS SEEN AND HELPED...

The text immediately following runs thus:

To a student theosophist, serving whenever and however he could, there came very recently — since the departure from this plane of H. P. Blavatsky

— these words of highest cheer from that Master of whom H.P.B. was the reverent pupil. Attested by His real signature and seal, they are given here for the encouragement and support of all those who serve the Theosophical Society — and through it, humanity — as best they can; given in the belief that it was not intended that the recipient should sequester or absorb them silently, but rather that he should understand them to be his only in the sense that he might share them with his comrades, that his was permitted to be the happy hand to pass them on as the common right, the universal benediction of one and all.

The article is signed “Jasper Niemand.” This pen name had by that time become known and respected throughout the Theosophical world as the recipient of the famous *Letters That Have Helped Me* from “Z.L.Z., the Greatest of the Exiles,” originally published in the *Path* during the lifetime of H.P.B., and supposed by many Theosophists to have been written by her. Not till some years later was it made known that “Z.L.Z.” was Mr. Judge, and “Jasper Niemand” Mrs. Archibald Keightley (previously Julia Campbell Ver Planck). The article quoted above was written and published during the absence of Mr. Judge in England following H.P.B.’s death, and without his knowledge, as Mrs. Keightley edited the *Path* whenever he was away. The article, and especially the message from the Masters, stirred Col. Olcott to the depths. He wrote to Mr. Judge about it in strong terms, as he saw in it nothing but an attempt to attract attention to H.P.B., Masters and Mr. Judge himself. Mr. Judge replied at length to Col. Olcott, and his letter was later published in *Lucifer*.}

2. {“For An Autograph” James Russell Lowell (1819-1891). Found version:

Life is a leaf of paper white  
Whereon each one of us may write  
His word or two, and then comes night.  
. . . . .  
Greatly begin! though thou have time  
But for a line, be that sublime,  
Not failure, but low aim, is crime.}

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## WHAT PROOF HAVE WE?<sup>1</sup>

MRS. J. C. KEIGHTLEY

Mr. Chairman, *Friends*: Before entering upon the question of the evening I shall ask your permission to make use, temporarily, of the pronouns “you” and “we.” By the use of the pronoun “you” I shall for the moment designate persons outside the Theosophical Society, who might or might not be enquirers about, or interested in, the Eastern Teachings. By the use of the pronoun “we” I shall designate all members of the Theosophical Society, and I will beg you to remember that I recognize in reality no such distinction; that I make use of this nomenclature for the purposes of clear illustration only, and that experience has shown full well that there are many devoted

Theosophists who have never heard that word, and many using the word who have not even grasped the outermost significance thereof.

The question of the evening is "What proof have we?" Now this question is being asked daily more and more, is pressing upon us from all sides. For this reason, before entering into any argument as to the nature of proof itself, I wish to examine into the bearing and the reason, in short the justification, of this question; I wish to see what reason there is in its being put to us at all. And above all it is necessary to know *why* it is put to us and who are the persons who bring it forward. For at the very outset of his entrance into the Theosophical forum (and by "forum" I mean that place wherein a man may speak of his convictions — and be heard), the Theosophist finds himself almost immediately confronted by this question of proof. Too often the question converts the forum into the arena; the place where the combat as if for life, or for that which is dearer than life, goes on. The rightfulness of this question naturally becomes our first concern. When we speak of our belief you press up to us demanding this proof. What right have you to make that demand? There are two things which constitute a man's right: first, there is his need of a thing — his real need; that constitutes a right in the eyes of any moral community; *secondly*, — and a bad second, — there are the rights of custom. Let us examine the lesser rights first, viz.: — the rights of custom.

Are you accustomed, then, in your daily life to demand the proof of things before you can accept them? Do you demand proof of the purity of the water you drink, of the food you eat, of the financial investments you make? On all these depend health, life, immunity from care. Do you go to the root of each subject, examining each for yourself, or do you take the asseveration of one or another expert on the subject? You do examine, I know, but do you examine to the very root? No! What journeys, what expense, what knowledge would that not involve! Hence the custom has arisen of accepting the verdict of an expert number of our fellow beings upon such points: each such person is supposed to have examined more or less into the subject, though he may or may not have done so. Have you ever heard the story of the aged gentleman who determined to take nothing without absolute proof and who was therefore found at midnight still longing to partake of his early cup of coffee, usually taken before rising, because the busy chemist called in had not yet had time to decide whether milk, sugar, and coffee were pure? Would you not, then, be quite as belated in your daily life if you were to undertake to obtain unimpeachable proofs for yourselves? It has hence come about that you believe many an improbable thing without proof. You trust your friends, your wives, your societies, your churches, your scientists, yes, even your theologians, at times, without proof. It would be rare to find a man who would admit that he did not believe the world moves round the sun, and yet what *proof* has he of that? None. He has not even the knowledge necessary to obtain the real proof, that proof which is found alone in a man's own experience. In the same way he has accepted the presence of life, or lives, in the air and the water. He has accepted many a problem, many a discovery in this scientific age; he feels that to deny these would also make him a laughing-stock. And if we ask him "What proof have you of this or that?" he gives us in reply some well-known name. To such a point has this practice been carried that Prof. Tyndall said some years ago in the United States that in his belief the testimony of a number of veracious witnesses constituted ample proof. We can give you this, and the world-known names besides if you will, in support of Theosophy, but you would not accept; you probably would laugh at it. In our opinion you would be quite right in doing so. Nevertheless I point out to you that in thus meeting us at the outset with a demand for proof, you are setting up as a right that which you do not ask of any other department of the world's knowledge, except in a very few rare circumstances which I shall specify hereafter. To take up another point of the subject;

not long ago I met a gentleman well-known in all English-speaking countries as a literary man of wide and varied accomplishment. He spoke to me of certain matters in which I felt deep interest. So deep indeed was this interest that later on I said to him "Can you give me any proof of what you advance?" What was his reply? It was this: "I did not ask you to believe the statements I was then putting forward, as matters of interest, of conversation, of what you please; I repeat, that I did not seek your belief, consequently you have no right to ask proof of them. Proof may only justly be asked of a man who is endeavoring to secure your adherence to what he puts forward."

This I believe in the common tenet. Consequently, the Theo-sophist, young or old, educated or non-educated, wise in experience or just entering upon that experience, official or non-official, has an entire right to put forward his belief with all the eloquence and earnestness he can muster to the task without laying himself open to any charge of dogmatism, without giving you any right to demand his proofs. In order to be dogmatic he would have to make two assertions, (*a*) "These are the lines of my belief and I will never alter them, never enlarge them; they shall never grow fuller or wider than they now are. (*b*) I insist upon your accepting this present statement of mine as the only truth." If he has not unmistakably done these two things, he triumphantly escapes the charges of biased minds who see dogmatism in his earnestness and narrowness in his eloquent definition. I think if you will follow out these lines it will be plain to you that custom does not sanctify this demand, so pressed upon Theosophists; no, not even that hallowed Custom which has been erected as a goddess in our midst but which changes her fashion and face with every year. Even the legal rule demands that the accuser, the challenger, shall prove his case.

In coming to a man's *need* of proof we touch upon deeper ground. I do not mean to say by this that the need is deep in every man; as we have in fact seen, it rarely is so. But let us suppose a man who has gone forth from all accustomed modes of thought, self-banished, as it were, from the normal realm of mind. Hungering for food, food for that man who is "the man that was and is and shall be, for whom the hour shall never strike," he comes and asks us "What proof have you of these things?" To *his* need we must perforce turn a compassionate ear. And yet, how little can we do; for, look you, we are not divided from him in thought, or heart, or experience by any will whatsoever of our own. It is the mere fact that we have touched what he has not touched, that we have seen where his eyes were closed, that we have heard while he listened to another voice, it is this fact which makes the difference between us. It is not a difference of higher or lower, of greater or lesser knowledge, of superiority or inferiority; it is simply the difference of experience, as colorless as the difference between rates of vibration; we have evolved to a different point, or by differing means, and our conclusions vary from his because the content of our consciousness varies from his. But in a moment, in the flash of an eye, he may see all his past by another light, by the inner light, and may find himself transported much further along the great evolutionary path than we ourselves now are. All our knowledge is relative, and where a point of time makes up the situation, another point of time may alter its uttermost foundation.

When, further, a man has a real need of anything in this world, what does he ordinarily do? Let us suppose that he wished to ask of a chemist, of the shoemaker at his awl or of the miner shut out from daylight and health in his pit; what would happen then? We can fancy him going to the miner and saying, "I want proof of the geological strata in which your ore lies; proof that yours is the proper method of excavating: proof that this ore which I see at the mouth of the pit has really been brought up by you and by no other and from the place which you describe." What is the answer? A jeer and a curse, perhaps. Or perhaps a question, "Are you a miner? If you be, come on down and see for yourself." And if you are not, a further jeer. So with the shoemaker. He shows you his finished article; but if you ask him to demonstrate to you that it was

made precisely so and so, from the skinning of the dead beast and the tanning of the leather up to the final fashioning that fits for it the child's dainty foot, a stare of surprise will be the least and the most courteous reply you can expect. Or fancy yourself entering the laboratory of Crookes or of Tesla or Edison and demanding proofs of his latest discoveries. Let us again take the Artist, the Sculptor, or any earthly creator you may choose, into this conclave, and let us in fancy ask him for the much-sought-for proof. They may show us the finished thing; they may demonstrate all its parts; is that proof? No! No! How do we know that it was made as they say; by the methods they describe; with the materials they claim; under the conditions that they assert? We would have to obtain their formula, or what science calls their working hypothesis, we would have to take that home with us, and, securing just the same conditions, just the same materials, work out by their methods, duly prescribed, to their exact results. This being so, the first question they would ask of us is this, "Are you a man of my trade?" and finding we were not, they too would turn aside from us with a more or less courteous putting-off as the case may be. It is clearly evident that every man who has attained, in any department of life, knows one primary thing, and that is, that no man can understand those results which are *his* proofs unless he also knows the working hypothesis and has experience of the trade.

What I am coming to is this. In order to have your proof, you must work for it. In all this great universe there is no proof obtainable except by work; whether work of the body; work of the eye; work of the mind, that great overseer which sums up the results of all other classes of work; work there must be or proof there is none. And, speaking for myself, I honor, I may say I revere, the man or woman strong enough, patient enough, determined enough to get proof. For the only proof lies in man's own experience. There is no other that does not melt away like the hoar frost on the mountain, like the foam dashed from the turbulent sea.

It thus comes about that the attitude of the Theosophist, or indeed of any really thinking person, is the attitude imposed by Nature herself. To know a thing you must be it; you must have experience of it. When the Theosophist quotes from the Christian Bible those most occult words, "Lead the life if ye would know the doctrine," he is not putting you off because of any lack of proof of his own, because of any want of power of speech or eloquence, because he cannot point out the work, the method of work, or the way. No; he is uttering one of the eternal verities, and great Nature herself sustains him. Experience you must have, before you know a thing in its depth and breadth and length. In matters of the mind this experience may be purely mental, as in matters of sympathy; but mental experience in certain souls is at once the most objective and most evident of all experiences. Hence when you ask us for proof we know well that you are asking what you ask of very few. We know well that you rarely put your theologians or scientists or great artisans or inventors or mechanics or laborers — no, not even your statesmen or your women — to this test. Nevertheless, the true Theosophist, recognizing that he is in part his brother's keeper, will not return the answer of Cain, who cried "Am I my brother's keeper?" but, on the contrary, he will meet you with a fact in nature — the fact that you must work for your proof even as he worked, and that without such work the facts which he may offer will never become an integral part of your experience, will never be accepted by the thinking man within you as a truth in which he has part.

And now let me ask, What is proof? In Western lands there is a maxim, "The law is common sense." Let us, then, have recourse to this embodied common sense in order to make out our reply. Last week I asked one of the ablest barristers in London for a definition of proof. After a little puzzlement he said that the best reply he could make me would be that proof was "evidence sufficient to satisfy the Court." That sounds well; but Courts vary. There are some inquirers who assert that the production

of phenomena would be sufficient proof of all the teachings of the East. This reminds us of the tale of the two Rabbis, the first of whom was endeavoring to prove to the second that he knew more of the Supreme Being than his friend. In proof of this the learned Rabbi No. 1 offered to cause the walls of the temple where they sat to fall down. The second Rabbi placidly remarked: "Friend, that would prove that thou didst indeed know how to cause walls to fall down, but it would prove nothing else." Moreover, a law of the human mind very often commented upon would render such phenomena valueless. I am again reminded of another tale, the newest parrot story as imported from America (with the profanity discreetly left out, for the parrot not being intentionally, or, as we may say, consciously, profane, I think this little attention is due to him in a Theosophical Lodge). My parrot lived in a shop of a seller of fireworks, and was used to seeing very brilliant specimens of coruscations set off for the benefit of intending purchasers. These gave him great delight. In fact, he became quite hardened to them and began to regard them with an air of cynical and accustomed habit. One day, however, the shop blew up; the parrot found himself landed in a distant and barren field, minus his feathers (for he did not take his wardrobe with him on that rapid journey). Scratching his naked head with his bleeding claw, he exclaimed: "Ain't it wonderful! What *will* happen next?" This attitude is that of the phenomena seeker who, witnessing more and more, desires the repetition of the same experience over and over, but a little stronger each time; as witness the Spiritualists, who with all their remarkable phenomena have built up no real philosophy. But I will not take up your time by enlarging further upon this head, but shall be happy if anything I may have said will serve as a text which you can follow out in your own mind. And to those to whom the whole discourse may appear dull I would offer a prescription embodied in two of George Herbert's most exquisite lines addressed to the Church-goer:

And, if the preacher weary,  
God takes the text and preaches patience.<sup>2</sup>

I am quite sure if you learn patience, Sovereign Patience, from my discourse, you will have learned a virtue greater than any I have within my gift.

Since, then, we find that phenomena are not proof, the nature of proof still remains unexplained. What proof does the Law offer? In almost all cases witnesses come forward and detail the narrative which Court and Jury hear. Take, for example, a murder case. Is the murder shown? No! Is it described? Not always. A tale is told by more or fewer witnesses. Told to whom? To what? To the minds of the Jurymen and the Court, and the Mind, the eternal witness, hears, weighs, sums up, judges, condemns or sets free. Here, then, we have the Law. The oracular embodied common-sense of the land recognizes that proof is subjective and not objective, and that the mind of man is the sole arbiter, the sole judge, and that the evidence upon which he makes up his verdict is evidence cognizable by the mind of man alone, valid to him alone; that mind is indeed the power behind the throne. For, mark you, if the minds of the Jury differ in any case, the Jurymen in the minority who have not seen the case from the standpoint of the majority acquire no condemnation therefor. They are not reproached — not justly reproached, at all events, because they have not seen the case as others do and have not derived the same conclusions from the same evidence. All that is said is that their minds have not acted upon the evidence normal to the majority. And yet even in the history of the Law these minorities have proved to be right with the passage of time. Innocent men have been hung on the verdict of a majority. Take another point: the Law itself recognizes the constitutional inability of two or more minds to see an event alike. Bribed and perjured witnesses always tell the tale exactly

alike; by this peculiarity the Law recognizes them. Veracious witnesses, being so many different minds, have each seen a different side of the occurrence. And in this guise we have the Law itself unconsciously acknowledging that every mind is at a different standpoint of evolution from every other. In this lies the reason why each person must gain his own proof through his own experience. To what, now, do these facts lead us? To this: in this highly civilized day, in our *very* Christian countries, you will take the life of your fellow-beings on subjective proof when you will not for one instant receive the same as valid at the hands of your fellow Theosophists.

If, then, the Theosophist chose, as I doubt not he would choose, to disregard the peremptory nature of this demand for proof and the fact that it is seldom asked except for argumentative purposes, which, as everyone knows, end in mere contention; if he chose, I say, to give serious attention to the question, his natural reply would be this: What is that for which you demand proof? Is it for the whole bulk of Theosophic teaching? Is it for the existence of Masters? Is it for the reality of phenomena? Now of the latter question I think we have already disposed, but there is one thing more which might be said, and it is this: If you are not yourself master to some extent of the laws lying behind nature, or operating through nature, you do not know whether any phenomena which may be produced before you consist in (A) mere mesmeric or hypnotic phenomena causing you to see what has no temporary existence at all, or (B) the actual phenomena in which something has been created by the use of occult or hidden Law, which something did not exist in objective form at all before. It is thus clear that only to the Adept, who needs it not, can valid proof of this kind be given, and that those who ask for it are ignorant in the deepest sense of ignorance. To be ignorant and to know it is a depth; but to be ignorant and not to know it is a greater depth still. Now again, as to proof, as to the existence of a Great Lodge or Hierarchy of Wise Beings. On this I purposely touch very lightly: and I may say, indeed, that if any one came to me saying that I had published my belief in Theosophical teachings and were to ask "Have you any proof?" I should reply: "For myself? Yes! Certainly I have proof. For you? No! For you I have none at all." You would mistake if you were to call this pride on my part. The reply would arise wholly from the knowledge that no man can in any sense be the savior of another man. Each man must arise and must get his own proof, with the help, perhaps, if he be working, of his fellow-workmen. But of proof as to the existence of the Elder Brothers of the race, I may permit myself to make one very common-sense remark, as it appears to me. Reverse the case. Say that I am living in Thibet and that I am asked as to the existence of certain living, very prominent, very highly evolved and able men, residents of America, but who have been known to visit other lands. I tell the Thibetans of these men; they ask for proof of their existence. I show pictures. They are not proof. I show letters. They are not proof. I call upon other men and women who have seen them to testify. Their word too is denied. I point to the religious and other books of America to show that a knowledge of these men has existed for a long period of time. This too is not proof. I call upon our learned men, who admit that the existence of such highly evolved men was always part of the belief of the residents of the country. My Thibetans shrug their shoulders at this mass of testimony and remain unconvinced. And any one of you, if you were standing by me, would no doubt say to me, "In heaven's name why not leave them to their ignorance?" Now this is precisely what I should do; in fact, I should never have proceeded so far as this imaginary picture points out. And why? Because it is part of my experience that no one gets any living proof that way, and I should not waste my time in attempting the impossible. It is not that I know more than the supposed inquirer. It is that the content of my consciousness is not the content of his consciousness and never can become so by any effort of mine. He will have to live and work and get the proof himself, as I did, if I have it at all. And when we add to this

fact, that the proof of a man's being a Mahâtma or Great Soul has to do with the interior and mysterious processes of the soul itself; that the soul alone recognizes the Great Soul; that such a Being is first met upon the plane of soul, and there only at first; I think you will concede that this subject of proof becomes a very difficult one, and that you must be content to leave me to what you may, if you please, call my delusions; or else you may accept the working hypothesis of living the life if you would know the doctrine, and work out thereby the matter to its ultimate conclusion. For other means than life and work there are none. Other proof of the existence of Great Souls, mastering the bodies in which they dwell, having communion with mankind travelling in pain on the one hand, and with the great boundless freedom of spirit on the other; other proof, I say, than that your soul first touches Their souls, there is none. There never will be any other proof until you have first mastered that truth and have learned to know the intangible eternal presences by a proof more sure than the presence of evanescent form.

Or, again, the proof asked may be that of certain fundamental propositions of Theosophy, such as those laid down in the *Secret Doctrine*. These are first, the existence of a boundless, eternal Principle of life; second, the universality of the law of periodicity, or Karma; third, the spiritual identity of all souls with the Over-soul. Such proof can be sought, and can, so far as my own experience goes, be found in every department of life. I admit that in this so-called scientific age the merest weaklings are so inflated with the rabies of science that they think they must have scientific proof of everything, and hence would deny what may be called proof by analogy. Science herself, laboriously great but often true, treats us no better. But permit me to take a case in point, an illustration from a lecture recently delivered in this hall on what are called "The Lives." In that lecture it was shown that science demonstrated certain action and reaction always taking place in the unit, as it is called, of protoplasmic matter. It was also shown that this series of action and reaction was precisely the same as those given in the *Secret Doctrine* relative to the action of the life-principle in regard to the Solar systems, worlds, man, and even the constituent cells of his body. Now, as I say, science would refuse us the right to this proof by analogy. But let us see if we cannot wrest it from her own utterance. For what says science further, after postulating this unit of protoplasm and definite actions and reactions taking place? Science shows at once this fact, that the whole visible universe is built up of a series of just such units. In this conclusion, then, she herself gives us that proof in regard to the universe to which we have laid claim. Or take another case. In the same lecture it was said that protoplasm, the basis of all life, was built up of certain well-defined chemical constituents, but that if you put those constituents together in their exact proportions, living protoplasm would not result. What would be absent? Life would be absent. The scientist claims that there is no such thing as life *per se*, life in itself. But may we not fairly claim that if the absence of life or motion prevents this chemical structure so carefully build up after the living model, from being alive, it is a fair conclusion that there is a something called Life whose absence makes the difference between a living thing and a dead thing, as science uses the terms "life" and "death." I speak advisedly of the terminology of science, for to the Theosophist Life and a change in the modes of Life alone are known.

Going thus rapidly over the whole ground of proof, what I would finally suggest to my fellow Theosophists is this: The proof that is wanted is proof of the great spiritual side of life and that which in all directions underlies the visible and material. Now the proofs of life are everywhere. They are found in all occupations, in all departments of life, in all sciences, in all arts; they are best found in the beings of whom life itself is composed. Take, for instance, the question of evolution, that great moot-point which is said to have been the chief among the discoveries (re-discoveries I

should call them) of this century. You may find it everywhere. You may find it in statecraft, in the tendency away from warfare and towards arbitration. You may find it in the trades, in the tendency away from monopoly and towards cooperation; yes, even in the limited co-operation of monopolists, which is its most dangerous form. You may find it in education; in the tendency, growing greater every hour, to give the same advantages to both sexes. You may find it in theology, in that these later days have seen the study of comparative theology, in part adopted, in place of that method where a man learned only his own form of belief and, at most, the best argument of other schools, in order to be able to refute. You may find it in the industrial life of cities; in the custom, growing daily greater, of embracing the sale of all manner of goods in one shop, instead of employing that shop as a place where only one species of goods could be obtained. You will find it in the drama, which, opening at the beginning of the century with the statuesque method of the Greek stage, and passing through the romantic, the melodramatic or intensely real, the ideal (as in some plays of Tennyson and others of his school), has finally culminated at the close of the century in a school of playwrights who show all the situations of life arising out of and caused by the complexities of character of that thing painfully created, life after life by man: I mean, the heart of man itself. That heart has built up the whole of life about us. It is responsible for all the strange alternations, struggles, differences, and tragedies of life. The latter-day dramatist has seen it; the prophetic seer has sung it for centuries also. If you turn to music, if you turn to painting, evolution is still plainly discerned. If, then, Theosophists wish to point out such proof relative to the ancient Eastern beliefs as may serve as sufficient basis for a man to begin to work upon, let them turn to the various departments of life and demonstrate the first faint clues of greater riddles in them. Not a mother among her children, not a workman by his bench, not a photographer spreading his film ready for the transforming fingers of the light to create some radiant image and cast it out of space upon the glass, not any man or any woman working anywhere but can bring some material from his or her place of life with which to build broad and wide the base of this universal temple which we can and will raise to the skies. Do not look abroad in things unknown to you for proof; seek that proof of the building spirit, the living spirit, the unseen all-powerful workman, in the Life of which you are part; and having discerned Him behind his customary mask, bring to us the faithful image of that which you have seen. The mother, observing the birth of character with the child, watchful of the development of the mere animal mind, joyous discernor of the first unfolding of the immortal soul, can put together argument for Reincarnation, for the belief that the strong character already shown in infancy — character dissimilar to that of all the ancestry perhaps — has been molded by many a prior life. In the inter-correlation of forces, the behavior of energy, its conservation and interaction, the scientist can find still other proof. When the microscopist can find no bacteria present in a speck of matter placed under his most powerful lens, the photographer, preparing a plate sensitized to the action of the rays of the ultra-violet only — the unseen rays whose action and existence can only be demonstrated by chemistry — the photographer, I say, photographing by these rays, produces pictures of living and moving bacteria to which the wonder-revealing lens was blind. The astral ray revealing the lower astral forms — is it not a fitting sequence? And H. P. Blavatsky said that the greatest proof of occult theory would be found along biological and chemical lines. The schoolboy reads in his Natural Philosophy the first law of motion: "Action and reaction are equal and opposite in direction." It is true of emotion as well. And it reveals the Law of Karma. H. P. Blavatsky pointed out the path. We should each seek to give our own proofs. No more is needed. No more can be asked. The proofs lie within yourselves; your daily acts fecundate them, your lives are their heralds. You have but to speak them. There is not one of us from whom all

the rest may not learn something of proof, were that proof but brought before them. And is it not a duty which we owe to our belief, to demonstrate the real amplitude of its base?

Or perhaps it is proof of our ideals that men ask. What kind of proof, think you, would hold good of an ideal? I can conceive no other proof than its action upon the life. Were I asked, "Who are these men who have attained in ever so small measure to some proof of these great truths?" I would make answer thus: They are those who have looked upon a far star beyond the tempest. They are those who have worked and toiled and waited, who being crushed have arisen, who having fallen have struggled and have arisen again and again. They are those who have done this for the sole and pure sake of the realization of an ideal which assures them that the salvation of one is inextricably bound up in the salvation of all. They are those who have seen the mighty image of Unity and Harmony far beyond the contemplation of the mere mortal mind, and who work on towards it regardless of themselves, caught up in the glory of that immortal ideal. For the proof of a man is his life. The proof of an Ideal is its life in the soul.

## NOTES

1. Address to Blavatsky T.S., London, by Mrs. J. C. Keightley.
2. {From "Perirrhanterium," (The Church-porch) by George Herbert. As found, Stanza 72 is:

Judge not the preacher; for he is thy Judge:  
If thou mislike him, thou conceiv'st him not.  
God calleth preaching folly. Do not grudge  
To pick out treasures from an earthen pot.  
The worst speak something good: if all want sense,  
God takes a text, and preacheth patience.}

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*The Wonder-Light, and Other Tales* – 1890, pp. 60-72.

## WHAT THE FOUNTAIN SAID.

MRS. J. CAMPBELL VER PLANCK

There was a fountain in the woods on the hillside. It was not like any fountain that Carlo had ever seen, but was a talking fountain, with a cool, soft voice of its own. Where it really lived, no one knew; high on the hill it came flashing out of a great wall of rock from its hidden home, falling into a bed of stone and pebbles with sound and churning, then leaping from this pool up into air again, scattering its spray over moss grown ledges. A wise man who found and loved it used its waters to heal the sick and weary, and had built a queer red hut about it below the thunder of the railroad track, which often came to drown the fountain's low voice. It is often so; the world's thunder often tries to drown the sweet, small voices of nature. The hut had a porch, overhanging the hill as an oriole's nest hangs from the branch. There Carlo loved to stand, watching birds and clouds floating above the distant valley below, where tiny men drove little horses hitched to small plows, and midges that were the town boys ran over the ball-grounds after something he could not see. Inside the hut was a little room with a barred and grated window looking into the prison of the fountain, shut up so

that no one should pollute its sweet waters. Carlo clasped the iron bars with his pink hands and peeped in, happy in the songs of the waters. Happier still he was when the Superintendent would come with his bunch of keys and let him into the cool rock room whose top was not roofed over, there to sit on a ledge, chin in hand, dreaming over the troubled water. Hands seemed to wave to him out of its downward fall, and airy forms to float in its smoke and spray. He was so used to seeing these fairies of the fountain that he was not surprised when he one day heard a voice speaking to him. He had been watching the waves of the pool running to the shore. A white blossom had drifted through the bars and into the pool, where the waves had great sport with it. It was carried to the shore, or stone edge of the pool, where Carlo thought its journey ended. But no; another set of waves seemed to catch it up and to carry it round, bearing it back towards the boiling center again, wind-driven and tossing. When it reached that place, Carlo hoped the poor, tired thing would be drawn up into the air by the up-leaping spray, but it was again driven away to shore, and so it traveled back and forth, poor wee waif, at the mercy of the stormy ripples. It looked so wet and wan; it had no rest or help; Carlo felt sad to see it.

"Oh! Fountain, let it go," he said; "do let it go again."

"I cannot do that," said a voice in his mind.

"Why, who are you?"

"I am the Fountain."

"I did not know you had a voice," Carlo said. "Please excuse me."

"Everything in the world has a voice of its own," the Fountain sang, "and everything speaks, although men do not often understand the voices of Nature."

"Why do I understand you, then?"

"Because you love me, and because little children have pure hearts. When men have such hearts, they too will understand."

"Tell me then, please, why that leaf can't get out."

"It is because the good Law forbids it."

"Now, Fountain, I act'ally don't understand. What is a law?"

"It is a commandment which men may not break, and for breaking which they are punished. Some laws are made by men to protect people. If a man steals, the law shuts him up in prison, where he cannot steal. That is man's law. Others are laws of Nature. If an apple is parted from the twig, it must fall. That is one of Nature's laws. That summer shall follow winter, that cold shall turn into heat, is another law. But while man's laws are only the copies, all Nature's laws are the Children of the Great Law which all the worlds obey."

"And what does that Law say, dear Fountain?"

"It says that what goes forward shall come back. That what falls shall rise up. That what you do will return. That what you sow you shall reap. It is the Law of Justice."

"You'll have to explain that to me, I fink, if you please," Carlo said.

"Have you ever thrown a ball against a wall?"

"Yes; it came back."

"Have you ever seen the ocean tide rolling to shore?"

"Yes; it rolled out again."

"Have you ever said an unkind word?"

Carlo hung his head.

"Yes, an' the boy I said it to was very cross at me. He hit me. And I hitted him back."

"All that was your angry word passing back and forth. It is so everywhere. Look over the valley. Have you seen the farmer sow his seed?"

"Uncle John showed me that."

"If a farmer sows corn, what comes up?"

"Corn. Didn't you know that, old Fountain?"

"Are you sure it isn't apple trees?"

Carlo shouted with laughter. Oh! you silly Fountain, you."

"Why do not apple trees come up when we put corn in the ground?"

"Because corn makes corn. And apple seeds makes apples."

"Then you see that like makes like. Anger sows anger, and love breeds love. But if an angry word of hate is spoken and you turn your heart from it and speak a word of kindness instead, only the person who spoke anger gets anger back, while you, speaking love, shall feel love return into your heart. Perhaps, too, your love can change that person's anger to love, for anger does not cease by anger — that keeps it up — it ceases only by love."

"I thought you said the law was that the same thing should always come back."

"I did, And it does come back. But a thing may be changed into another thing in time, because the law makes all things go to and fro. See your heart. It beats forward, then it beats backward. You breathe out, then you breathe in. After day comes the darkness; then day again. After the beautiful days, the storms. Wet after dry; heat after cold; after the strong man works and moves, he is tired, he is strong no more, until with rest his strength returns. Men sleep; then they waken. The earth sleeps under the winter's snows, and awakens in the spring. After a time comes a new winter and then a new spring; so on and on. The heart of man is glad, then sad; then joy returns once more. Suns and moons appear and disappear. Everywhere is this great Law of change, of what is called flux and reflux (like the ocean tides). Things change in periods, and return again to what they were before. Men die to live in 'devachan' or heaven. The soul enters a body, leaves it, returns to another body. Everywhere you find the same. Through all these changes the same thing moves; that is Life. Through all these changes, Life is the same. It looks out, like the actor, behind many masks, But as new harvests bring riper fruit and improved grains, just so Life mounts from form to form, ever seeking higher forms. And the soul of man can stop the journey of evil, turning it into good, just as you can pick up that drowned flower leaf from the pool."

Carlo picked it up and threw it into the air.

"Blow back, dear leaf," he said, "into the woods again."

But the leaf was so heavy with water that it fell back on to the window-sill.

"So it is with man," the Fountain said. "You may return a kind word for his angry one, but his heart is so heavy with the wrongs it has done and which have come back in his thoughts to live with him and hold him away from happiness, that he cannot rise. But see, your leaf has gone."

So it had. The hot sun had dried the leaf and a kind breeze had carried it away to the woods. Carlo was so glad.

"It was the sun helped it," he said.

"Yes. The sun of love helps all creatures to mount and rise to higher things. We all go to whatever we love. So if a man loves evil, help him to love the good by showing him how much happier that is, and he will change to that. For just as the world moves on to greater life through the changes of seasons and times; just as the child grows to manhood through going back and forth over the years, now in heat, now in snow; just as the rock life becomes the flower life, and as that passes on into the life of winged things, so the great Law moves ever *upward* through movements

backward and forward, and it is called Karma, or the law of action and reaction. Look at me, Carlo. I am the image of Life. I am the picture of the living soul. Out of the darkness I come; no man sees how or why. At the call of the Law, I fall. My waters plunge down deep, stirring up the sand and slime of the pool. They eddy backward and forward, shut into the narrow world they have found. Is there no way out? Yes. For the finer parts of me there is freedom, once they have cast back the sand and slime to the deeps where they were gathered. The light, diamond-pure drops of me will rise in spray into the air. They fall on tall rocks, they feed the moss flowers, the high skies drink them up, they are drawn into the sun. The drops that rise are, to the drops that fall, as wise men are to mindless babes. The falling waters know nothing of the world to which they come; senseless, they are hurled down. But the rising spray has learned all about that new world and mounts among rainbows to a place in the heavens, richer by all that it has learned. So it is with the souls of men. Down from the Infinite Dark they come. In the pool of life they drive to and fro. Like water-drops they enter many shapes. Now they live in the center, now sleep awhile on the shore. Then they are hurried into a shape again; back, back to the boiling center, and ever so, till they are free."

"That's what Uncle John told me something about. He calls it "Re'arnation when anything comes back into a new body after it died or slept. But tell me what can make a wave or a soul free."

"Its own nature can make it free. It is part of the Law. It has in itself the power to rise. Bye-and-bye, after long driving to and fro — or action and reaction — the wave becomes finer, swifter; it tries to rise. And the sun, shining down into the center of the dark pool, finds a little sun shining in every drop; it attracts or calls to those little suns which are its children, parts of itself."

Like the mother hen clucks to her chicks, you mean, don't you?"

"Yes. That draws the drops upward when they are pure and light enough. So the soul of man, when it loses the heaviness of this world, gives itself up to the divine Sun of Souls and rises into the higher Life. I will show you how this is. Watch this wave that is falling now."

A white wave came out of the darkness and dived to the bottom of the pool. When it bubbled up again there were scum and sand upon it from those deeps.

"That scum is like the dark acts and thoughts of man, gathered from his lower life," the Fountain said.

The wave was driven to the shore. It broke there and seemed to pause a little.

"So the soul of man rests in heaven after death is passed and the earth body divides and is broken," the voice spoke. The soul rests in the invisible world, like the wave, which you do not see as a wave now. Though it is broken as a wave shape, every drop of water is still there. So when man's body breaks up in the earth, the unseen soul lives on without that form. Look deeper now."

Carlo peered into the pool. He saw presently that under-currents took up all the water drops that had made the wave, formed them together again, and drove them below the surface of the pool, back to the center once more.

"So the life currents gather up the soul and propel it back into the visible world in a new form," the Fountain went on to say.

"I fink the drops are stupid. Why don't they jump up into spray when they get to shore?"

"Because the heavy scum and sand grains weigh them down and hold them in the pool. It is these earth particles that keep the drops imprisoned, and allow them to be driven back again. And it is the earth love of man and his evil deeds that draw his soul back to earth out of heaven where he sleeps."

"I do fink he has a hard time," sighed Carlo.

"Oh, no. Remember that his good deeds are there to help him. His soul is a part of that embodied Law which is the Sun of Souls. It is his nature to rise, just as it is water's nature to rise, both drawn by the sun. Now watch again."

Carlo saw the drops, formed into a new wave, rise up into the center of the boiling pool, among other waves. It was still heavy with earth grains. It struggled. It was lashed into greater life; it moaned like a thing in pain. It could not move fast. It was driven often from shore to center, from center to shore. It seemed to think and to feel, as it wildly tried to get free.

"Poor, poor wave," cried Carlo.

In its efforts, the wave threw down some of the heavy load it carried, losing part in every journey. Carlo saw that it grew lighter and moved more swiftly to and fro. When next the drops came into shape as a wave, it moved along with more speed, more joy. There were rainbow colors here and there instead of scum, and when it reached the center again, all the earth grains were worked off, it rose in a fine shining mist, released from the trouble of the pool, looking like an angel form as, with a low note of joy, it swept away. It would have done this sooner, only it jostled against other waves in those wild journeys. It hurt them, it broke them; it was hurt and broken by them, and this kept them all back. In much the same way men push through the world, all for themselves, never thinking that this really hurts them and others too, and so all are kept back from the higher, beautiful Life. Is it not beautiful to be strong, great, able to help all the world's suffering ones; to be full of knowledge and power, using them for the world? The just Law gives back what you have given.

"I see," Carlo said. "Like waves, people get low earth feelings from low lives, feelings what drags them down."

And these act and react (or go and come, come and go) all the time. But like the wave they can drop these one by one. The good Law helps, for it says all things shall come into life, shall go through every kind of life and form until the highest heavenly place is reached. They do not go straight up in a straight line. Life rises in moving to and fro. That is the easiest way to climb a mountain — to zig-zag up. Butterflies and swallows mount into the air that way. The lark's egg does not bring forth a robin; the apple seed knows nothing of the peach; the kind deed brings kindness and the evil deed brings sadness. But the bird's soul, in long ages, may become a child's soul. The life of the apple may pass into the life of the peach or the bee. Why? Because the life spirit is always the same, though it changes bodies. Because the soul in all things changes and learns. How does it do this? By moving on faster and faster with the Law. It is only if men love the low places of life and cling to them, that they cannot rise out of the earth pool. The Law brings them into life. Once there, they are free to sink or rise. They can try to do either. All things, too, have a life and a mind of their own, different from man's mind, but just as real. Do you not hear my voice in your mind? Do you not see my life? Hurt nothing, then. Stop no creature, no thing upon its upward way. Remember, dear child, remember that what you sow you must reap. The world is the field where man sows the seed of his thoughts and deeds. The harvests are as many as the lives. Death cannot free you from the scum of life. Death cannot change the Law. Death is only a sleep of part of the soul. When you wake up in the morning, you have the wishes and thoughts of yesterday. And when the soul awakens, the earth thoughts are there, drawing it back to lower places in life. That is why there are so many unhappy men and women who do dark, wild things. Try to help them, so that they may have kinder hearts, and have a better place next life. Try to throw away all unkindness from your own heart. Then great shall be your harvest. You shall reap

the seed that feeds the soul, that makes the bread of life eternal, and you shall give it to the hungry world. The just Law will bless you.”

Here Carlo heard himself called. Looking up, he saw his Uncle through the window bars.

“How long have you been here, my boy?” he said. “See, the sun is setting.”

He lifted the child on to his shoulder and carried him out to the porch. The red sun was sinking behind the hill, going to light another part of the world.

“I don’t know if I was asleep, Uncle. I was listening. The Fountain told me a story. It was about the beautiful Law. That Law drives everything backward and forward until it is made pure and clean. Then up it goes to the great Sun.”

He waved his little arms about like wings, rising on his Uncle’s shoulder as if to fly into the sunset, his face bright with joy.

“Stay with me awhile yet, my boy, and tell me the story,” said the Uncle, clasping him closer. He heard the whole story as they trotted down the steep, winding paths, and said that all the fountain told was true.

“Then, Uncle, I won’t plant nettles in my garden for to sting when I hit the boys with them. I’ll just keep honey blossoms for the bees.”

“And what will you plant in your heart, my son?”

“Heart flowers,” laughed the child, “and that’s just Love. Here’s one.”

And the trees all said they heard something very like a kiss as the two friends went into their funny red house.

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## WHAT THE T.S. HAS FORGOTTEN.<sup>1</sup>

JASPER NIEMAND, F.T.S.

GLANMAWDDACH, DOLGELLY, NORTH WALES.

April 14th, 1904.

TO THE SECRETARY OF THE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY IN AMERICA:

*Dear Sir and Brother:* Your fraternal invitation to address the approaching Convention in U.S.A. by letter has my grateful thanks.

While I am naturally reluctant to take up the time of the Convention with a communication from an individual without official status, yet your kindness permits me to think that I may, without undue presumption, send some thoughts which I have much in mind.

Your fellow members at a distance are best able, perhaps, to sense the great force for good which invariably flows from one of our Conventions in America. Each distant individual member overseas must thus feel gratitude to our American brothers, in that they do assemble yearly to deliberate on those matters which we all have so much at heart, and to renew the ties of good-will. Your mental labors, no less than the physical work involved, would be amply repaid — were you thinking at all of repayment — could you realize the help conferred upon workers in all lands by the knowledge that our American confraternity assembles and expresses the thoughts common to our united aspiration. A high and a real aid comes to us from these gatherings, and I am grateful to you for the opportunity to express the heartfelt recognition we have of this outpour of helpful thought which so greatly affects our work during the ensuing year.

These are truisms perhaps, yet I feel moved to express them in concrete form and to bring before your Convention this expression of our gratitude, a gratitude which lies far above the strata of verbal form — a gratitude which we hope bears fruit in our lives, and fruit not unworthy of the parent tree from which it springs. May the blessings which ever attend such fraternal work be felt by you, collectively and individually.

There is yet more in my heart. The good and tried workman, when he rests from the labors of the day, takes thought for the morrow in a retrospect of the work already accomplished; he throws upon the future work the light of the past and asks himself in the review of his experience, what he shall better, what he shall amend: as he thus lives and works he learns how to come into closer touch with the true heart of Life. So, too, upon the vast and trackless ocean. The good ship sails under skies of sun and star-shine, and then a storm enwraps her and all bearings are lost. Yet when the ship emerges from the enveloping tempest, the first care of the Master Mariner is to take again all his bearings to locate his vessel by the laws of Nature and by the fixed Pole Star. Should we not follow these examples? For we, too, have need to perfect our work. We, too, have a compass and a fixed star. The star is that of our faith; and according to our faith will it be done unto us. The compass — what is that? Is it not the principles upon which we are based? Is it not to be found in the three first objects of our Society.

These questions I have asked myself much of late, To my mind, at the angle of my personal refection they have come to have an increased pressure, a continual urgency. More and more there comes before my mental view an idea which takes on the form of this question:

*What has the Theosophical Society forgotten?*

It has come to me of late that we have reason to seek once more to locate our ship — the ark of a Covenant unwritten, but deeply graven upon our lives, the Covenant between ourselves and our souls, between our souls and The Oversoul. When first this good ship, which we call the Theosophical Society, set forth upon the memorable voyage of last century, the Founders placed a compass in our care. It is to that, to the original first Objects of the Society, three in number, that I would call attention, in order to examine into the present bearings in which our Society finds itself.

The three objects, briefly put, are these:

1. To form a nucleus of universal brotherhood, without distinction of race, creed, sex, caste or color.
2. To promote the study of all religions and sciences, and to demonstrate the importance of such study.
3. To investigate the unexplained laws of nature and the psychical powers latent in man.

There was only one of these objects which was vital to membership in the Theosophical Society. This object, as we all know, is the first. The first object was a necessary corollary to all that follows, for the worldwide objects outlined in the succeeding objects could not have been harmoniously pursued without the basis supplied by the first object. That there is more than one meaning to the first object is evident, and probably it has as many meanings as there are minds among us. But on the ground plan, as it were, of our work this meaning is the most obvious one, which strikes us when we begin to develop our intentions into action.

In this statement of our objects, we have a platform as broad as Life itself; a catholic platform where all can come and where all stand on an equal basis, where no one is “orthodox” or “unorthodox.” All the subjects that the human mind and thought

can ever grasp, from the highest in the heavens down to the natural laws governing the physical plane, all, all are there. And it is also seen that this platform of the Theosophical Society is based by the Founders upon ground specifically prepared — the firm and level ground of Equality. We were not licensed to take up the attitude of teachers, coming to offer our knowledge to an ignorant world, but rather as bearers of a common burden, companions in a search, students asking of our brothers the world over, aid, community, interest and share in our search after Truth. Not as discoverers of the Soul back of Nature, enshrined within Nature, were we sent forth; but as seekers who longed that others should seek also, knowing well the power and the joy that united search for Truth brings to all; understanding perfectly that each must make this search in the conditions nearest to him, dreaming the golden dreams of Realization due to the effort of united hearts. Yes, upon this sole ground of Equality were we based, and not alone the Equality of all seekers, but also the entire Equality of all subjects, of all objects of the search. We were not to seek one thing only: we were not to pursue a single branch of knowledge. We were not to confine our interest nor the budding hopes and thoughts of other minds: that were to blight the blossom, to circumscribe the harvest at the very start. In Equality, through Equality, to that perfect Equality which is the Soul, we were to open a search as wide as the world, as deep as the human heart, as manifold as the departments of manifested Nature. Behold the spirit of that earlier day!

Does that spirit obtain among us still? Is it in operation in our midst? Has it even a theoretical existence? Or have we lapsed in respect to this Equality, confining our interest and our action to a single object?

It would indeed seem that we have forgotten that which was and is our real base. And if this forgetfulness has come about, how and through what mistake on our part has it come?

It has come through the operation of a law which seems to lie at the root of Mind itself. For Manas has a fixed orbit; it circumscribes; it returns ever upon itself. And by virtue of this law we find that all ideas, even the broadest, come in time and on their passage downward through the ages, to be circumscribed, materialized and hardened by this action of the human mind. This constant tendency of the human mind to crystallize and to dogmatize, together with the rush and the eagerness of the work, has caused us to forget the Fundamental Principles.

Looking over the stage of Thought to-day, we find two ideas operative, two attitudes, one or other of which prevails among the followers of all forms of knowledge.

The first of these ideas is that of Conversion, of Propaganda.

The second of these ideas is that of Specialization.

The religionist desires to convert; in so doing he denies Equality. For he lays down in essence the principle that he has discovered the Truth, hidden from all but those who think as he does. The Truth of his discovering, then, necessarily obliterates and expunges the Truth seen by his neighbor, whose heart is as full as his own. He calls out: "See as I see, and you shall live indeed." But the voice of the Eternal, ever sounding, ever living, is that which calls to each within each human heart: "I am the Way, the Truth and the Life."

Then again, the scientist, starting out in the true spirit of research, soon comes to lay down rules to direct the search, fearing that his effort will otherwise pass from the gleam of light into the crowding shadows of the way. But the very rules he makes, while they may lend force and direction to *his* search on the lines peculiar to *his* powers, do also limit and at times crush out the effort of his fellows whose lines are not his own. The religionist worships Orthodoxy; the scientist exorcises a ghost —

Empiricism. And these two ideas, persisted in, poison the whole stream of research and knowledge, and alter the complexion of every fact discovered. Not *The Truth*, but *My Truth*, is the order of the Day. To relate our Thought to the Whole, to find a common Denominator, this would seem to be an effort which the men and women of our era have abandoned.

Is there no way out of the labyrinth which thus arises before our disconcerted gaze? There would seem to be a way out, and a simple way, one not far off. Union among the seekers; is not that the way? Suppose that each one met every other in the undivided spirit of research? Not with the undeclared object of enriching or maintaining that particular school of Thought to which he might belong, but with no desire at heart but the discovery of Truth per se, Truth in its universal relation; Truth unaltered by the conditions of the human mind? Were not that a grand highway along which humanity might advance as along a sunbeam — the united search for the Laws of Life?

Is not this in truth the highway pointed out to us by the founders of the Theosophical Society? Some of us think so, and it is for these that I voice the belief to-day.

Now mark what has taken place. At first the Theosophical Society found certain fixed conditions prevailing in the Thought of our time. Intolerance and fixation ruled the hour. In order to break up this condition we began by calling attention to neglected phases of Thought; to sciences forgotten and derided; to religions overlaid by Time; to facts in Nature and in Man locked away from the crystallizations of the West. The stream of our Thought filtered slowly at first; it percolated imperceptibly through the strata of Life, but at last, as with the thunder of many waters, it filled the world with the resonance of our Ideals. Many hidden truths lifted their heads. We permeated all departments of Thought. The impulse given by us achieved and triumphed in many a hard fought field, often under strange names and in a guise to us unknown. We do not know, we have not dared to dream how far spread the streams of force generated by the force and fury of our work. We broke the cold mold of nineteenth century Thought — we and our unseen comrades throughout the world — comrades unknown, but none the less living; comrades who worked wherever a germ of generous thought existed, comrades who labored whenever a germ of Love pulsed, some of whom were not seen of human eyes but were none the less filled with that spiritual power which alone prevails and saves. In fact we altered the balance of Thought by our search and our proclamation. But as we worked on, meeting obstacle after obstacle, and the worst obstacles in ourselves, we became gradually immersed *in one form of work*, in one range of ideas, and the love of the work, pure at first, became at last a form of self-forgetfulness; one more mode of change of consciousness; the love changed subtly to desire; desire of success, desire of the intense excitement of daily effort; we were drunk with action; alcohol is not the only heady spirit, nor the only form of mental stimulant which ends at last in weariness of the flesh, in lethargy of the over stimulated brain and heart. As the balance of Thought altered, it had been wise of us to shift our own balance at the same time, so that we might maintain the same relation toward our era. Instead of this, we persisted along the same lines of thought, gradually focusing our work to a single point. In this we erred as men may err when the storm and the tumult prevail, only to alter the course, as we may alter our course, now that the sun shines and the heaving sea is one more gentled to our needs. Like the wise mariner, we can again consult the chart and steer upon the appointed way.

The hour of victory is ever the threshold of the new danger. So to-day we are standing upon a verge, the verge of failure to realize that we have forgotten the Fundamental Principles, which the thousand veils of action have hidden from us, that path of action which is indeed so full of danger.

Yet we need not fear. How often have we not read that the disciple treads a hair line and must become accustomed to gazing down a precipice? So we, too, disciples of the Soul, may recognize the hair line, may tread the verge patiently, may steady the gaze down the precipice of Dogma and hold to the safe, sweet, sure line stretching far away — the line of Equality; not Equality of conditions and externalities, for here great Karma rules alone — but Equality of Thought, Freedom of Thought.

The recognition of this idea would place us upon the platform of our opening year, that platform which thinkers of original power did not disdain to join, which broad minds were attracted by. We may have a curriculum as broad as Mankind. In our meetings, in the halls of our fraternal endeavor we shall welcome every thinker, welcome every subject — and not as teachers, but as students shall we welcome them. Receptive to all ideas; adhering each to the light within himself, and granting the same adherence to every other; honoring the ideals of all men, following only our own. Offering to all a hospitality as wide as human Thought; giving to each a generous and an equal attention; striving to point out likeness rather than indifference; Unity rather than separation; speaking our own belief earnestly, simply; hearing the belief of every other in the same spirit; then we shall generate in our midst that impartial Spirit which is the forerunner of Love and Justice; then, indeed, we may hope to fulfill the high office of breathing into our time the breath of the Spirit, of giving life to our century rather than isolation and death. Whatever the religion, whatever the science, whatever the Thought, let us ask only that it shall be vital and true; let us ask only of the thinker who puts it forward that he shall believe it and shall live it and shall know why he does both; and we shall demand of ourselves the same. We hold no brief for specialization and limitation, of which our earth has had more than enough to confine us and our race in the limbo of formula and form. Ours it is to loose the fetters of the human mind. All that shuts out man from man, all that closes heart to heart and would sequester the Soul from the Oversoul is the constant search for disparity, the fierce need to find ourselves mirrored in the stream of Thought.

I have heard soldiers say, that at the termination of a long, long war the piping times of peace are hard for fighting men to bear. Human nature so easily fits itself into a mold. And so it was natural, indeed, that devotion to the work should blind our intuition for a time. Enduring the heat and the labor of the day, we were for a time most weary; were for a time wisely silent and quiescent at the root as Nature is after the flower and the fruit have come to fulfillment, But now that we rise refreshed, ready to go on with our work, shall we not recall the spirit of that earlier day? Shall we not go back to the original lines laid down by our Founders, lines to which we all assented? Shall we not strive by all the means in our power to lift the movement one plane higher, as the Soul lifts all Nature in its eternal effort toward perfection, round after round? It is not perfectly easy to do this, I know. We stand already in the eyes of our world for a doctrine, almost, if not quite, for a dogma. And our greatest difficulty will be our own heredity. But this is always so; the heredity of the past is the burden of every individual. Rightly viewed, it is his opportunity also. Our humanity, not our wisdom, attracts human beings to our side. As the rays of light come to a focus and then again diverge to carry an image to the eye, so now, we also having carried our work to a focus may diverge again and seek the Truth in ever widening fields, opening out again in order to carry our Ideal and its image into the new century. That Ideal is the Fundamental Principles, conceived in the spirit of free and equal Thought; those Principles no time, no chance can ever alter; they are in every Truth the Spirit of Life. In the hope that we may earnestly persist in the endeavor so to spiritualize the life of our time, and with fraternal greetings, I am,

Cordially yours,

JASPER NIEMAND, F.T.S.

## NOTE

1. A letter read before the annual convention of the T.S.{I.}A. at Washington, D.C. May 1, 1904.

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*The Theosophical Quarterly* – April 1904, Vol. 1, pp. 114-118.

## THE WHISPERER.

JASPER NIEMAND

In the name of God, the Compassionate, the Merciful;  
Say I take refuge with the Lord of man;  
From the malice of the lurking whisperer;  
From the genii and from mankind.<sup>1</sup>

Some years ago an oriental pot in the possession of the writer, which bears the above inscription, attracted the attention of a theosophical author, who also was the donor of the pot, with the result that the inscription has already done service in our literature. But I would once more transcribe this verse, giving its interpretation as I understand it, for there is much to be learned from the silent teaching of this treasured pot. As I translate the inscription it would run thus:

In the name of the Father, the Compassionate and Merciful Light of lights:  
Say I take refuge with the Inner Man, with the presiding Soul;  
From the malice of the lurking whisperer, whose seat is within the brain;  
From the elemental forces of the lower planes, and from material and animal  
man, whether myself or another;  
From all these, Lord of the Heart, deliver us!

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What then is the lurking whisperer? It is the brain mind.

The brain of a man is a wonderful and a complicated instrument; its identity is concealed; its function is misunderstood; its office and place are misconceived.

*The identity of the brain.* We take the brain and brain mind to be ourself; the man or the woman: we take its voice to be the voice of our own will and wish; it is neither. The brain is a congeries of elemental forces and lives — the lives resident in its cells — controlled either by:

(a) The individual to whom the brain belongs, or:

(b) By the unit of brain consciousness, the mass consciousness of the congeries of lives, often swayed by forces outside itself, and by the currents of Thought sweeping in tidal sequence through the astral light: these currents from innumerable sources surge back and forth and impinge upon all brains, excepting only those whose training is such that they automatically shut out these futile and intrusive currents. When untrained, the brain acts automatically in the other direction. The brain is an instrument; its identity is the identity of one among the many instruments of man. The term "brain" splits up into two parts: there is the material brain, the organ or vehicle; and there is the consciousness, which is the life. Man is the owner and director of this instrument; his command thereof should never be usurped. It is his duty to control this powerful engine which he has constructed — with infinite labor and pain — for himself.

("Stifle the voice of flesh, allow no image of the senses to get between its light and thine, that thus the twain may blend in one.")

*The function of the brain.* Its function is to mirror the material universe faithfully, neither coloring nor distorting, so that the outlooking Soul may have the means of forming a just and balanced judgment in regard to action on the material plane. The brain is the main sensorium where sense impressions are registered, and whence they are reported to the owner of the brain at his command.

*The office of the brain.* Just as its function is to mirror, so its office is that of transmission. As said, it reproduces the messages of the senses, but also it conveys the thought vibrations of man, the Thinker, from the inner plane to the outer ones; it assists him in the projection of these vibratory waves and images forward into matter. Attuned and governed by its owner, the brain is a receiver; a sounding board; a collector and recollector; a storehouse. It propels the thought images of the owner whither that owner wills: it receives and stores what he wills to remember and switches aside that which he wills to forget: it transmits his will to the organs and the senses; it repeats to his attentive ear those voices of Life which he wills to hear, the fragments of the universal song which he wills to understand on the planes of Nature, the notes of the human heart he wills to retain: it registers the facts he wills to collect and reminds him when he wills to be reminded: it is the chief agent of the will of man upon the material planes of action. The value of its service is determined by its docility, its sensitiveness and the correctness of its response to the attuning will of man.

*The place of the brain.* It is the head servant of man. But it is ever a servant. Often an usurper, often a tyrant, it is never rightfully a master. The master is the man. If the master allows his power to be usurped, he is ruled by a slave, the brain. For it is a slave to the playground of force in the ether — when it is nothing worse. And all that has been said of the functions and office of the brain must serve to show the frightful confusion which is set up if the brain be permitted to function automatically on its own lines, the fanciful and deceptive lines of the lower lives of which it is made up.

The following words fittingly describe the true place of the brain:

"Regarding this matter of *satisfying the brain*, upon which you have often spoken.

"I hold it to be useless, and indeed worse than useless, for it is a distinct expenditure of force in a wrong direction, and that comes close to being an occult sin. To begin with, it is impossible; the brain never can be satisfied; it can only be attuned and made submissive. And if not submissive it may become dangerous. My brain is my instrument, my servant, and has no right whatever to question my commands or criticize my actions. Its duty is the duty of all good servants; obedience: its privilege the training and elevation thus acquired. I hold that I have no more need to satisfy my brain than I have to satisfy my hand, which is my instrument on another plane.

"The secret of the trouble lies in the proneness to identify oneself with the brain, which is as much an error as to identify oneself with the body or with the emotions. As fast as we answer the brain one question, it constructs two others in its place: and for those two, four others, and so on endlessly. The brain acts quite automatically, being no more than a complicated and wonderful machine. It is my thinking, my judging, my calculating machine. It is neither myself nor something to which I defer, but something which I *use*. Some brains act as a powerful locomotive would act, if wrongly treated. The locomotive has a distinct, elemental energy, it is an entity on its own plane, with a spark from some man's mind for its soul: it can do and accomplish much, rightly treated and controlled. But let the engineer throw the throttle open and leave his post, and the mighty engine races on to its sure destruction. Yet this is what we do when we place our life under the dominion of the brain. The brain is our chief instrument on this plane; but until we have mastered it, it may be our greatest enemy. 'The mind is the

Slayer of the Real,<sup>72</sup> it is said. The brain often stands between the personality and the Soul — like a stone wall, sometimes like a thick fog.... your brain is always whispering questions and you whisper answers back, only to receive subtler and more puzzling questions, until you are bewildered and disheartened and weary, weary unto death. Silence for awhile these whisperings of the brain....”

The automatic action of the brain is a point worthy of strict attention. Once set in motion, the ungoverned and active brain acquires a momentum and an impetus difficult to combat. It then throws out image after image, an endless succession of mental pictures and impressions which it has collected — a stream of thought forms. These we apprehend, too often taking them for our own thoughts, and then for ourself, “thinking.” There is such a thing as an insane brain, from the occult point of view, when the man himself is quite sane. Little by little the brain acquires a habit of automatic response to the endless stimuli of surrounding life, much as protoplasm responds to an irritant and exhibits the phenomena of life. The owner of the brain, gradually taking these automatic life motions to be his own thoughts, by this endows the brain with increased power; he ends by accepting the brain mind as himself and his delusion is now complete. He is at the point described as follows:

“.... when beholding her image on the waves of space she whispers, ‘This is I’ — declare, O Disciple, that thy Soul is caught in the webs of delusion.”<sup>73</sup>

He who would resume his rightful sway over his servant has now indeed to encounter the malice of the lurking whisperer: as he tries to follow the advice given in the *Letters That Have Helped Me*. and to “drag out the lurker inside,” he finds that there is that within the brain which struggles madly to retain control. Uncounted are its whispers. It has a declaration for each event; an interpretation for every idea; a pronouncement on each occasion. It dissects, analyses, magnifies, distorts, divides, deceives, flatters, insists, argues, prophesies, grieves, rejoices, sentimentalizes and explains — all in whispers. It whispers separation into the Unity; it whispers discord into the Harmony; whispers the poison of self into the well springs of Life; whispers a glamour across the moon, a mist over the sun; whispers false names for every truth; whispers false gods into the heart. Its power lies in the soundlessness of these whispers. The man takes them for the voices of his own will because they come from within himself: he has forgotten that the unseen and inner planes of lower Nature are precisely the most insidious and the most dangerous. The acolyte has ever been warned; “dread the phantom most when unseen.” So these false brain images in time accrete and harden as into stone: or they accumulate like a dense and stifling fog in which the Soul can no longer freely breathe: the man no longer hears the warning which his Soul is now powerless to utter, and he is the miserable prisoner of his brain: the stealthy whispers have filched the spiritual color and purpose from his life. Though his brain make him a giant among men, on the spiritual plane his place is empty. And when the Soul, anhungered, asks for bread — the bread of life — it receives — what? A stone. It needs an angel now to roll away the stone and call the seeming dead to life; the angel of the Heart.

“To the one who has lifted the golden latch, the spring of sweet waters, the fountain itself whence all softness arises, is opened and becomes part of his heritage.

“But before this fountain can be tasted, or any other spring reached, any source found, a heavy weight has to be lifted from the heart, an iron bar which holds it down and prevents it from arising in its strength.”<sup>74</sup>

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If any one doubts the fact of this automatic action of the brain, he has only to try to hold his brain perfectly still, to fix his thought and to keep the mind absolutely quiescent and uncolored. He will then realize what he has to deal with. This obsession

by one's own brain is more common than is generally believed: it is safe to say that most of us take the brain for ourselves. On the purely material plane the effects of this undue action of the brain is daily to be met with. How many brains there are which worry, which fuss, which pass from one excitement to another ceaselessly: what has been called "this kâma-manasic stewing" is just as fatal to the physical well-being of the outer man as to his inner life. The body as such, has a given amount of energy to apply; each organ should have its due share for its proper functions; but when the brain uses more than its due share, as the worrying brain always does, then the other organs must suffer, and we have hysteria, anemia, nervous exhaustion, neurasthenia, and all the other ills common to the victims of the brain. The nervous system too suffers, and on the psychic plane, through this, the mischief continues.

In a Chinese scripture,<sup>2</sup> we find this beautiful delineation of the right use of the brain.

"When the perfect man employs his mind, it is a mirror. It conducts nothing and anticipates nothing: it responds to what is before it but does not retain it. Thus he is able to deal successfully with all things and injures none."<sup>5</sup>

And again, in a book we, most of us, know better:

"For mind is like a mirror, it gathers dust while it reflects. It needs the gentle breezes of Soul-wisdom to brush away the dust of our illusions. Seek, O Beginner, to blend thy mind and Soul."<sup>6</sup>

The whisperer is not to be all at once overcome. But if we cherish the aspirations of the heart, listening patiently for its sweet and earnest promptings, we shall thus begin to blend the mind and soul; the heart is the forerunner and the prophet of the Soul.

JASPER NIEMAND.

## NOTES

1. {*Qur'ân*, Chapter CXVI.}
2. {*The Voice of the Silence*, H. P. Blavatsky, p. 1.}
3. {*The Voice of the Silence*, H. P. Blavatsky, p. 4.}
4. {*Through the Gates of Gold*, Mabel Collins, p. 54.}
5. {*The Writings of Chuang Tzu*, Book 7, No. 6.}
6. {*The Voice of the Silence*, H. P. Blavatsky, p. 26.}

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*The Theosophical Quarterly* – October 1913, pp. 161-165.

## Why I Joined The Theosophical Society

J.

My reason for joining the Theosophical Society was that I believed the study of Theosophy would change the whole meaning I had of existence. Without the two doctrines of Reincarnation and Karma I saw and can still see little meaning in life, no explanation for the sorrowing and suffering of humanity, no real reason for living. With the acceptance of these doctrines a new light is thrown on the problem of existence; life becomes a thing of value, a privilege even, and "the joy of living" becomes something more than a meaningless phrase. In order to make clear the reason why Theosophy impressed me in this particular way, it may be well to go back in some detail over several mental and spiritual crises in my life,—

experiences which gradually formed the demand so fully satisfied by the Theosophical teaching. During my childhood I passed through several periods of strong religious feeling, times when I felt intensely, though uncomprehendingly, the call of something higher than anything I then knew; at these times also, I felt vividly the nearness, if not the actual presence of God. These experiences were too intimate and too sacred to be mentioned to anyone and I kept them entirely to myself, guarding them jealously. So far as I can remember they had no effect upon my outward life and there would be little use in mentioning them now except for the fact that by the time I was fully grown, an undercurrent of religious feeling, the existence of which I scarcely realized myself, had become a part of my nature, and religious values had become my highest standard. During four years spent in college I came into contact with a world of doubt and disbelief which stirred me deeply. My religious views at this time, were the result of a rather conventional orthodox training and they proved vulnerable on every side. Not realizing the dangers and pitfalls of a little knowledge, I began at once to apply what I learned, without waiting to get the larger meaning of the flood of new ideas which rolled in upon me. Physics, biology, psychology, metaphysics, everything, in fact, seemed either to tend toward atheism, or to be so contradictory as to confuse me utterly. In addition to my required work, I undertook to read Tolstoi's *My Religion*. This book added still another point of view to the numerous contradictions which were already overwhelming me and the result was almost disastrous. I was spiritually prostrated, groping blindly with apparently no way out of the darkness. Unwittingly I chose the worst way out, for I resolutely banished from my mind all thoughts on the subject and while this brought me calm for the time being it merely put off the struggle till another time. One of the most important influences in my life at this time,— without doubt the influence which made it possible for me to maintain even a comparative equilibrium,— was a course of study in which I read the works of a number of the nineteenth century essayists, and took up in some detail the work and writings of John Newman and others of the leaders of the Oxford movement in the Anglican Church. Of this reading, much of which was new to me, I was profoundly affected by Carlyle's *Sartor Resartus* and Emerson's *Over-soul*, the latter essay giving me an entirely different conception of religion. In this course I found the first promise of a realization of the dreams of higher things which I had had in my childhood; it gave me a firmer grasp on my ideals and opened up to me a new life,— the inner life. This course was my real preparation for the study of Theosophy; much of the thought was not in itself theosophical, but the interpretation which we received was distinctly theosophical. At that time I was not yet ready for the teaching and could grasp but dimly the significance of it; nevertheless it was then that the seed was sown which made it possible later on for me to make the truth my own. After leaving college I came to New York and took up social work. All day and sometimes far into the night I worked among the homeless and miserable, the suffering and the sorrowing. During some months of this work I lived directly opposite the Municipal Home where every night several hundred men and women, wretched outcasts of humanity, came for a meal and a night's lodging. At a late hour each night those whom the place could not accommodate were turned away, to take refuge in the Randall's Island police boat and return at dawn for their cup of coffee. Night after night, during one of the coldest winters on record, I listened to the shuffling of their ill-shod feet and heard their harsh voices, as they fought and struggled for

first place. It was the first time that I had come face to face with human suffering, with the real tragedy of life, and I was appalled by the awfulness of it. I lost sight of everything but the utter injustice of human, manmade institutions and the apparent injustice of the ruling of the universe. What difference was there fundamentally between me and the poor wretches in the street. Why was I warm and comfortable, possessed of blessings without number, while men, women and even little children fought in the cold and darkness for food and shelter for a single night. By what possible conception of justice could man be brought into being through no volition of his own, placed in an environment beyond his power to change, forced to live out an existence often worse than hell and then pass into "the unknown." Once again I was groping in darkness. If everyone had an equal chance in life, if the brotherhood of man which Christ had taught were something more than a mere phrase, then religion might be practicable,— religion and daily life might go hand in hand. What place was there, however, for a religion such as mine under the existing condition of things? Several of my friends had had similar experiences, had lost all faith in their former religious beliefs and had found considerable satisfaction in socialism. In many ways socialism did seem to be the solution of the problem; in actual argument it always won out, for matters of faith, particularly a weak and shaken faith such as mine, I could never argue satisfactorily. Nevertheless, socialism offered no immediate remedy, its ideal state seemed too hypothetical,— a matter of an altogether too remote future to be satisfying. Then, too, its principle of brotherhood seemed too largely political to be thoroughly satisfactory. The ideal socialistic state, it seemed to me, would be like a great machine, admirably put together, and possessing perhaps the dynamic force to make it run; but there would still be lacking the oil to make it run smoothly. That oil would be something deeper or perhaps it is better to say something higher than anything that I had found in socialistic doctrines. My early training and the several outbursts of real religious feeling which I had experienced remained too vividly in my memory for me to lose my faith entirely; I clung to my religious beliefs, to a certain extent satisfying myself with the thought that injustice in the part need not necessarily work out for injustice in the whole. I knew that God existed — nevertheless I was utterly unable to make any reconciliation between my life and my religion. They remained distinct and apart and I buried myself in the problems of the one or turned to the other for the moment, blindly and without either understanding or satisfaction. In this state of mind, I read Mr. Johnston's translation of the *Bhagavad Gita*. I had read the book before but had not been ready for its message. This time I was impressed by an entirely different aspect of its teaching,— the doctrines of Karma and Reincarnation. As a possibility of belief in the present day they were new to me, yet they took as firm a hold upon me as though I had always known them, like a truth learned long before and suddenly recalled to mind. I perceived that they afforded the explanation I had been seeking, that they were the one possible way out of my doubts and difficulties; through them life might come to mean light instead of darkness, hope and joy instead of despair. In my search for further literature on the subject I found that Theosophy embraced both these doctrines. It was about this time that I first had the privilege of coming into contact with the work and the workers in a mission in one of the congested districts of the city. Here I found a satisfaction which I had not experienced before, for the place was filled with that spiritual uplift which naturally accompanies the endeavor really to live the Christian teaching, to work into one's

life the true spirit of Christ. Shortly afterward I was invited to attend a meeting of the T.S., and in doing so met again the same people whom I had found active in the work of the mission. As it happened the subject for discussion that night dealt with the relation between Theosophy and Christianity, and here it seemed that the last of my former difficulties were taken away. The theosophical teaching filled life with a new significance, it made possible to me the religion which my nature had come to demand, and it opened up, and promised a realization of higher and nobler ideals than any I had yet known. The promise of realization appealed to me more strongly perhaps than anything else. Theosophy was not a mere theory, a beautiful vision, I had already seen proof to the contrary in the work of certain members of the society who were endeavoring to put the teaching into actual practice, to show forth in their lives something of its truth and beauty. Certainly the answer to my questionings had been found. And that answer was a veritable call to arms, energizing, uplifting, inspiring; a call which brooked neither delay nor refusal, but demanded at once the endeavor to lead the largest, fullest and most active life that one is capable of living. J.

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*The Irish Theosophist* – February 1896, Vol. 4, pp. 90-92.

## WILLIAM Q. JUDGE.

JULIA KEIGHTLEY

{1 of 4}

There are events common to human life, events small and inconsiderable in seeming, which, in their ulterior development and under the ripening hand of time, may affect the thought of the world or turn a nation's history. To leave a mark on the political or social life of a great country is, no doubt, the larger deed in the view of the man of action. But the thinker, more or less a seer by his use of the clairvoyance of thought, the thinker knows well that thought lies back of all action; that to give to that mightiest of tides a fresh impulse, a new direction, is to have impressed an individual mark upon life in its fluidic entirety; is to have propelled the Oversoul, by the energetic power of the personified spark, into combinations and inter-correlations whose field is practically boundless, whose unspanned area embraces Time and Space.

One such embryonic event occurred at Dublin, Ireland, on April 13th, 1851, when Alice Mary Quan, wife of Frederick H. Judge, gave birth to a son. The parents were both Irish, the mother — a sweet and pathetic young figure, as now viewed by us — dying in early life on the birth of her seventh child. That other child, whose birth-date has just been given, was named William Quan Judge and was brought up in Dublin until his thirteenth year, when the bereaved father decided to emigrate with his motherless children to the United States, there to share in the wider activities and opportunities of American life. The impulse of the younger nation works swiftly in the Irish blood, and passage was promptly taken in the Inman Line steamship *City of Limerick*, which arrived at New York on July 14th, 1864.

Of the first thirteen years of the life of William Q. Judge we know but little, and may hence assume them to have been of that happy order which carves no deep, distinctive lines upon the memory. Life has its years of rarer vintage, which leave an aroma as of sunlight in the heart. The years of childhood should be such as these, that

mature life may still feel them as an afterglow. So it is in this instance; the lad was a happy one, growing, playing, studying, waiting for his future life and destiny. But he was not only waiting — as we all must — for his destiny; he was also *preparing* for that watchful Argus, as we all should do. For destiny comes to each and all, and we must either tamely accept her, or *make* ourselves, in her despite, using her opposition to develop our power of withstanding and overcoming. We cannot fashion the present fate, for she is the outcome of ourselves. We have earlier made her what she now is, and she stands before us, wearing our own unrecognized likeness — if we only knew it, at once a verdict and an opportunity. This the lad seems to have discerned in some dim way of his own, after a memorable illness of his seventh year, an illness supposed to be mortal. The little sufferer was moribund, was thought to be quite gone; but amid the natural outburst of grief it was suddenly found that the supposed dead breathed again, and that all was “well with the child.” That this was true in some mysterious but very real fashion the sequence appears to show. During convalescence the boy evinced aptitude and knowledge which he had never before displayed, exciting wonder as to when and how he had learned these things, these rudiments of art and of literature. He seemed the same, yet other: had to be studied anew by his people, and from his recovery in his eighth year we find him interested in religion, magic, Rosicrucianism, and deeply absorbed in the Book of Revelation of the Christian Bible, trying to settle its meaning. He also devoured the contents of all the books he could lay hold of relating to mesmerism, character-reading, phrenology and so on, while no one knew when he had so much as acquired the art of reading at all. The emigration to America did not interrupt these interests, but broadened his thought and experience as the era of definite work and training came on. Perhaps the magnetic link so abruptly renewed in his illness was never fully vitalized in the physical sense, for the lad never acquired a strong physique. Without being sickly he was frail, but indomitable and persevering beyond his years. An anecdote of his boyhood illustrates these traits. He was with other boys upon the bank of a stream. His companions swam to an island a little way off from the bank, from which vantage ground they jeered and mocked their younger comrade, who could not swim. The small William’s heart rose hot within him; he plunged into the water, resolved to get to that island or perish. When out of his depth he let himself sink, touched bottom, ran a few steps on the river’s bed, rose, of course, kicked, sank, took a step and another, repeated the process, and thus struggling, rising, sinking, scrambling, and, above all, holding his breath, he actually reached the margin of the island, to be drawn out, half unconscious, by his astonished playfellows. Nothing could be more characteristic of the Mr. Judge of to-day, as he is known to his associates, among whom it is a common saying, “Judge would walk over red-hot plough-shares from here to India to do his duty.”

The elder Judge, with his children, lived for a short time at the old Merchant’s Hotel in Cortlandt Street, New York; then in Tenth Street, and afterwards in the city of Brooklyn. William soon began work at a desk in New York, a clerkship having come his way, and his family being one of those whose members must all be self-supporting at a comparatively early age. This continued until he was induced to enter a law office as the clerk of Geo. P. Andrews, who for a long time has since been judge of the Supreme Court of New York. There he also studied law, living with his father, who died not long after. On coming of age he was naturalized a citizen of the United States in April, 1872. In May of that year he was admitted to the bar of New York, practicing law in that city steadily for many years, and only relinquishing this work and the excellent position he had made for himself in the strange land of his adoption some four years ago, when the rapid growth of the Theosophical Society demanded at once *all* his time and a fresh sacrifice. His conspicuous traits as a lawyer, in the practice of commercial law, of which he made a specialty, were his thoroughness and his inflexible

persistence, which won the respect of employers and clients alike. In 1874 he left the family roof-tree to marry Ella M. Smith, of Brooklyn,<sup>1</sup> in which city the couple continued to live until 1893, when they crossed the great bridge definitely to reside in New York city and to be nearer to the field of Mr. Judge's work at the T.S. Headquarters there.

That marriage gave no new complexion to the mind of the young man, and did not divert its course, is seen by his beginning the study of modern spiritualism in the scant leisure moments of that same year.

The period was a fateful one. The last quarter of the century was about to strike, and the specialized effort made in every century by the guardians of the Wisdom-religion was now due. At Rochester, New York, and at other points had occurred that first outbreak of raps and mysterious knockings which were later to resound round the world. The newspapers were full of the new manifestations; spiritualists were rejoicing and anti-spiritualists were denouncing; the air was full of sound and fury, and H. P. Blavatsky, taking advantage of the storm of public attention, was riding upon the whirlwind, seeking a point of vantage from which to guide events.

*(To be continued.)*

## NOTE

1. Brooklyn, connected with New York by a great bridge crossing the Hudson river, is really like an annex or suburb to the larger city, and is the home of a large proportion of New York business men who do business there all day, returning across the bridge at night, both on account of much cheaper rents and more open character of the building spaces, and also because it is nearer to the business portion of New York City than is the upper portion of New York itself.

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*The Irish Theosophist* – March 1896, Vol. 4, pp. 112-116.

## WILLIAM Q. JUDGE.

JULIA KEIGHTLEY

{2 of 4}

*(Continued from p. 92.)*

Already she had met, at the Eddy house, her future colleague in the person of Col. H. S. Olcott. Yet the triad was not complete. Each age has known a triumvirate of visible agents of the mysterious Lodge; where was the third point of the triangle? At that moment in a bookshop, very probably, for he felt the current impulse of the tidal wave of the nineteenth century, and being a cautious and a quiet young man, did not adventure forth, but bought a book for his information. That book was *People from the Other World*, by H. S. Olcott.

Its perusal interested Mr. Judge, who determined to investigate a bit for himself. He wrote to Colonel Olcott, asking for the address of a good medium. Colonel Olcott replied that he did not then know the address of any medium, but that he had a friend, Madame Blavatsky, who asked him to request Mr. Judge to call upon her.

The call was paid at 40, Irving Place, New York, and H. P. Blavatsky then for the first time in this life met her most devoted pupil and friend face to face, in a

relationship which continued unbroken and justified that which H. P. Blavatsky herself wrote of it — *"till death and after."* Storms there were, no doubt, as well as fullest sunshine; for the pupil was a powerful mind and the teacher was the sphinx of her era, so that intellectual tussles followed as a natural sequence, but whatever the pupil thought of the teacher was said *to her*, boldly; not a doubt or a fear concealed when these arose, as arise they must when the hour of occult teaching and trial dawns. That H.P.B. honored this openness is evidenced by her long letters — there are some of forty-eight pages — in which many a puzzle is explained with profound affection. There has been a recent attempt to make capital out of some such passing episode, turning it into a prolonged enmity on the part of Mr. Judge toward H.P.B. New, perhaps, to their odious trade, the slanderers were more silly than expert; they were unaware of the existence of these letters of H.P.B., which not only show how complete was the final understanding, but which also show through what arts, and of what individual, the temporary want of comprehension arose. It is indeed most instructive to find that one person, who, like the worm in the bud, acted as the hidden canker in two crises in India, as H.P.B. (and an official of the "Indian Section") bluntly shows, also played the same part in the recent troubles, now so healthily ended. Disappearing, now emerging, now again in stealthy hiding, never did leopard cling closer to its spots; never was paw more alert to caress, to strike, to propel its victims here and there; never was karmic line more plainly marked out or karmic tool more mercifully — yet plainly — exposed by H.P.B. But in this instance it met with complete failure; it was as vain as will be every other attempt to separate that teacher and that pupil. Even the outside public has grasped that fact by now, turning scorn upon it, unable to realize its hidden beauty. The final verdict of H.P.B. upon the relation is an ample one. It extends over the ten years previous to her departure from our midst and is replete with a noble gratitude constantly poured forth. The splendid friendship went on its rejoicing way, a thing of life immortal, destined to pass beyond the confines of the tomb, as beyond many a mortal life, and to look with large compassion upon the self-substitution, the weighing and counting, the trimming and checking and paring with which smaller souls, hemmed in "the mirror-lined prison of self-consciousness," adjust their balances and re-measure their gratitude when gifts have ceased to flow visibly toward them, swallowed up by the silence of the inner world. In our commercial era, there is a solemn rite known at each season's close, a rite performed with bated breath by the money-worshipper and called "Taking Stock." All errors of financial judgment are then corrected in the light of self-gain and self-loss. Can we feel surprised that souls not yet born into the free ether should thus readjust any instinctive generosity of theirs towards the dead which might tend to imperil their worldly standing? Not so; we had hoped other things, yet cannot feel surprise, but only a larger tolerance of the common human nature, which is capable, further on in evolution, of an instinctive trust, more swift than the lightning, more enduring than the everlasting hills. To have given proof of such a trust, in the teeth of all the lying testimony of material life, is to have done the world a lasting service, had no more than this been done by Mr. Judge.

After this first meeting, Mr. Judge became deeply interested in the work and teachings of Madame Blavatsky. He spent much of his time at her rooms, a witness of many of her wonderful phenomena, and ultimately, as we now know, became her disciple in the deeper arcana of Theosophy. Very soon after the acquaintance began, Mr. Judge was one of a gathering of people at the rooms of Madame Blavatsky, when she told him to ask Colonel Olcott, who was then on the other side of the room, "to found a Society." Mr. Judge did as he was requested, then called the gathering to order, assumed the chairmanship, and nominated Colonel Olcott as permanent chairman, on which he was duly elected. Colonel Olcott then took the chair, and nominated Mr. Judge as secretary. Mr. Judge was elected, and this was the beginning of the

Theosophical Society. How it continued and how it grew are matters of common knowledge. When Madame Blavatsky and Colonel Olcott sailed for India with their roving commission, they left Mr. Judge to sustain, as best he could, the parent body, the *three* being, as H.P.B. subsequently wrote, the only founders who remained true to the Cause and the Society.

Let us realize the situation. A young man, twenty-three years of age, newly married, poor, and at that time obscure, not of robust health, soon to have the future of an infant child added to his responsibilities, Mr. Judge was left virtually in charge of the interests of the Theosophical Society at its most important post, the land of which H.P.B. and himself were naturalized citizens, and for which each had given up all rights in other countries; the land where the century's effort was duly and well inaugurated; the land which was by cyclic law predestined to bear the new race, a race grander, said H. P. Blavatsky, than any ever yet born; a race not purely local, but wholly composite as to the physical and nervous bodies, the bearers of universal influences.

It was a position in which the young lawyer seemed quite overweighted, but he did all that he could. Much or little it might have been on the external plane, and at that time. We cannot say. He was a disciple under trial, soon to be accepted and recognized, but already, so far as this life goes, a neophyte, one of a band who have taken the vow of interior poverty, and whose unseen and unrecorded work is regarded as being of far more importance than exterior, visible work. The main current of such lives runs underground. Already H. P. Blavatsky had written and said that he had been a part of herself and of the Great Lodge "for aeons past" (her exact words), and that he was one of those tried Egos who have reincarnated several times immediately after death; assisted to do so, and without devachanic rest, in order to continue his Lodge work. It is a matter of record that, when the seven years' probation of this life were over, the Master best known in connection with the T.S. sent to Mr. Judge, through H.P.B., His photograph, inscribed upon the back "to my colleague," with a cryptogram and signature; and, a little later, a letter of thanks and advice, delivered to Mr. Judge in Paris by H.P.B. A message sent to him through H.P.B. in writing from the Lodge at about this time ends by saying: "Those who do all that they can and the best they know how do enough for us." Hence, though recent mushroom criticisms of that period of Mr. Judge's work have sprung up like poisonous fungi, it would appear that H. P. Blavatsky, and Those whom she served, passed quite other judgment upon it, as abundant evidence shows.

In this period, when the young man was left thus alone, there were, all about him, the ranks of materiality densely set; Science had just recorded some of her most brilliant verdicts against Religion; Religion, thus pressed, was fierce in denunciation of Spiritualism and Theosophy, classing them with Agnosticism and Atheism. Persons who had joined the T.S. in the hope of learning more of the unseen forces of Nature, fell away upon the departure of Madame Blavatsky for India, most of them being Spiritualists, many of them still active and prominent workers along spiritualistic lines. The parent body dwindled to a mere handful of earnest souls, but it kept alive; its records were kept up by the unflagging zeal of Mr. Judge — the secretary, as will be remembered — and the sustained devotion of General Abner Doubleday. This gentleman had been elected President of the T.S. on Colonel Olcott's departure for India. He was an officer of the regular army, and had served with conspicuous gallantry on the northern side during the war for the Union and was a man honored by the entire nation, an enthusiastic Theosophist and esotericist until his death about four years ago. He had a very great friendship and respect for the younger man who later outranked him in Theosophy, and was a representative of the type of men whom Mr. Judge then and later gathered about him, and who, without exception, are still his firm

supporters and friends. This refers, be it understood, to men of the same standing as General Doubleday.

In the Convention of 1895, some ninety persons out of four thousand or thereabouts, were found, after six months' active work and search, to sign a species of memorial unfavorable to Mr. Judge. Not half a dozen of these were active workers. With a single exception they could not be said to be persons of any marked standing. They had, as against them in judgment, men and women whose names are as well known in foreign cities, or upon the great foreign exchanges, or through the United States, as they are known in the cities of their residence. Commenting upon this fact, a party of such men were lunching in New York, just after the Convention, 1895, and said to an English guest: "Here are we, whose word is our bond in the communities where we live and beyond them; we can raise thousands of dollars upon our mere word at half an hour's notice, and that financial test is the great test of the present time. We know Judge intimately; we have seen him almost daily for years. He can have anything he wants of us, and he wants nothing for himself. We know his character and daily life; the whole community knows it, and we know these charges are untrue. A man is known where he lives as he is known nowhere else. We are by no means fools, as our business contemporaries can tell you, and we stand by Judge to a man."

*(To be continued.)*

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*The Irish Theosophist* – May 1896, Vol. 4, pp. 141-145.

## WILLIAM Q. JUDGE.

JULIA KEIGHTLEY

{3 of 4}

*(Continued from p. 116.)*

But at the period with which we are now engaged, Mr. Judge's industry had not as yet discovered and indoctrinated these and other Theosophists. As yet he stood, as we saw, the center of a small group of students. We have a glimpse of him calling a meeting of the Aryan T.S., finding no one present, opening the meeting, reading the minutes and the customary chapter of *The Bhagavad Gîtâ* with which the Aryan Lodge opened and still opens every meeting, just as if he were not the only person present, and so he did whenever this occurred. Will, such as this, makes its way through every obstacle.

Members began to come in, though slowly. Other Lodges formed; there was no very great activity, but the link was kept unbroken and correspondence with H. P. Blavatsky was brisk. Amid such external work as he could find to do, the young disciple still kept up the inner search. It was a period of darkness and silence, the period of probation. Through such a period had passed H. P. Blavatsky, and of it she said and wrote: "For long years I thought Master had quite deserted me." She had seen the Master in London, in the physical body, following, as if an official, in the suite of some Indian prince, and in an interview which was given to her in Hyde Park, the Master told her she might come to Thibet, but left her to find her way thither unaided, and also to discover where she should go when she reached that country, all of which she accomplished after several failures and some years of search and apparent desertion. Of such a period the author of *Light on the Path* wrote in some explanatory

notes in *Lucifer*, that though the Master might really be near the neophyte and might extend to him the utmost comfort which one soul could give to another, yet the neophyte would feel himself utterly alone, and that not one has passed through this period of suffering without bitter complaint. Complaint was wrung from this strong soul, whose portrait is feebly attempted here, in letters of sacred privacy to his teacher, H. P. Blavatsky, and to Damodar, his fellow-disciple. After the death of H.P.B., and the departure of Damodar for Thibet, these very private letters were taken without the consent of either the recipients or the writer, and were given in part to the world in an attempt to show that Mr. Judge lied in claiming uninterrupted connection with the Masters, because of his despair at the period of seeming silence. It is difficult to believe that professors of philanthropy could be found, thus to rifle the correspondence of the dead and the absent, and to publish letters written in that relationship of pupil and teacher, which these very investigators professed to revere.

We have it on the authority of a much respected member of the Auditing Committee, called to verify the correctness of the prosecutor's quotations from these letters in the so-called brief against Mr. Judge, that several of that Committee asked to be spared the reading of letters so painful to hear. But the prosecutor insisted!

The startled mind protests at such sad misdirection of noble energies and vigorous purpose, and at an hour, too, when all the forces that make for materiality, as against evolution, press hard upon our little band; when every energy of every soul is needed, is drawn upon, to the last ounce of life-force. Thus to assail the hardest worker, the greatest sufferer! Ah, yes! But also he is our strongest soul. He is the one most capable of forgiveness; least capable of retaliation. It was perhaps his highest karmic office, as a helper, to undergo the trial, to stop the baleful vibration more quickly than any other could stop it by his final acceptance and pardon of injury, and to turn the Society strongly away from the grievous issue into new fields of work. Let us turn, with him, from this outrage upon the dead and the living. The shadow portrayed in those letters lifted, the disciple came to know even as he was known, and in 1888 we find H.P.B. writing in certain official documents of him as being then "a chela of thirteen years' standing, with trust reposed in him," and as "the chief and sole agent of the Dzian (Lodge) in America." (This, it will be remembered, is the name by which that which is called "The Lodge" is known in Thibet.) He had been in South America, where H.P.B. said there was a branch of the Great Lodge, and in that country he contracted the dreaded Chagrès fever,<sup>1</sup> which racks the system of its victims as by fire, often carrying them off in the twentieth year. Mr. Judge has always been a great sufferer from this torturing disease — though he never stayed his work for it — and he is now passing through the twentieth year. To Europe he went too, meeting H.P.B. in Paris and spending some little time with her there, and thence to India, where he arrived just after the outbreak of the Coulomb scandal. After a brief stay there, Mr. Judge returned to America and the duties of his professional and theosophical life. The moment was critical, a turning-point. As so often happens, the scandal attracted public attention to the Theosophical Society and letters of inquiry began to pour in. Mr. Judge seized the tide at the flood and carried the bark of the Society on to wider fortunes. The press took the matter up, reporters called, inquirers became members, the community became aware of the quiet, forceful worker in its midst. His method and his matter won the respect of those who heard him; the press began to accept his articles on Theosophy, and later on those of others; from scoffing and jeering and being unable to admit a theosophical item without insulting comment, it passed to giving these like other items of news. Later still, the personal influence of Mr. Judge induced the editors of a great journal to retract a libel which they had published against the T.S. and Madame Blavatsky, and a libel suit instituted against that journal by Mr. Judge was withdrawn. So it continued until the present day, when Mr. Judge can always

count upon a hearing from the metropolitan press. Meanwhile his work had begun to tell in other directions. The T.S. took on a third form, and passed out of the Board of Control stage into that of the late American Section, and the fourth stage was reached at Boston Convention, 1895, when the original parent body and branches voted its autonomy and became the Theosophical Society In America by an overwhelming majority. In each instance the Society outgrew the old form and reincarnated anew, in conditions more favorable to the work. Members of influence and standing began to come in, especially in Mr. Judge's lodge, the original parent body, the Aryan Lodge of New York, and their activity and devotion were stimulated by his own. He instituted *The Path* magazine himself, meeting its deficits and carrying it on unaided; he wrote unceasingly, books, articles, letters. He spoke whenever opportunity arose. Every spare moment was given to Theosophy, and taken from his meals and his rest. Finally, when the New York Headquarters were bought, and when the work had increased to large proportions, Mr. Judge relinquished his profession and gave his entire life and time to the Society. His health, always frail, continued to give way. A day free from pain was rare with him. Often he was in very real danger. But always he was scornful of every suffering, working when another man would have been prone, when his friends and doctors were shocked at his being about at all. As the T.S. grew, his working staff grew also, but he out-worked and out-tired them all. Dauntless, indomitable, he was ever inaugurating fresh plans of work. He sent timely aid and thought to India, to Europe, to England especially, and it was always by his influence and at his request — of late years through his *urgency* — that America, never helped by Europe or by India, so largely contributed, both publicly and privately, to the work of the two sister Sections.

Bringing this portion of my sketch down to the present day, we have Mr. Judge President of the T.S. in America, having lost not more than five branches, inactive as a rule, and having issued several new charters and a number of new diplomas. The work is now more active than ever before during the same period (the dead summer period) and new diplomas were going out steadily, while new lecturers have had to be sent into the field. We also have Mr. Judge as President of the new T.S. in Europe, composed of those European branches who have legitimized their connection with the parent body, and provided their own autonomy. During the twenty years a score of members has grown to thousands, primarily through the zeal and ability of the man who was able to inspire a similar devotion in others; the man whom the Master, writing to H. P. Blavatsky from Thibet and by the post in 1889, called, as she tells us in print and letter, "The Resuscitator of Theosophy."

We have hitherto considered Mr. Judge in relation to his profession and to the Theosophical Society. There are other relations which, of necessity, enter into the life of a man before it is bounded to our view.

The family life of Mr. Judge is restricted by reason of the smallness of its numbers. Mrs. Judge is at present, as is almost always the case, with her husband, who has at last been obliged to seek a milder climate and some degree of rest. His sisters are ladies of talent and culture, devoted to him in the fullest sense of the word. There is also a brother, Mr. Frederick Judge, resident in America. This comprises all the Family of William Q. Judge. His only child, a little girl of great charm and promise, died very early, and the sad event graved deeper lines in the heart of the father than is generally known. Friends of Mr. Judge are often struck with the great attraction which he has for children, who gather about him uninvited. If he sketches on the deck of a steamer the children sidle up, coming nearer and nearer, until they are leaning against him or perching wherever a resting-place can be had, often before he has seemed to notice their presence. The children of his friends always give him joyous welcome, and not infrequently he is dragged to the floor, the common playground, amid their toys. A child in the company where he is, is sure to find the haven of his arms at last, and

nestles there while the metaphysical discussion goes on above its curls. But however animated the argument, you will not find that small form, so gently cradled, to be ever so little disturbed. A friend who was once walking with Mr. Judge in the streets of New York at eventide tells the following story. It was a summer evening, the electric lamps were just lit, and a very beautiful little child, some three years old, had been carried out of the door of a hotel to get a breath of fresh air. Passersby, on the sidewalk, and one or two who knew the child, had stopped to speak to her, attracted by her beauty and merry chatter, just as Mr. Judge and his friend drew near. The little beauty would have none of her admirers; she turned this way and that, pouting and embarrassed, flung herself about in the nurse's arms, and finally, as the knot of people drew nearer, gave a piercing scream. At this moment she caught sight of the unknown Mr. Judge, over her nurse's shoulder. Struggling down to the ground and fleeing for protection, the little white form flashed past, and running to Mr. Judge held up imploring arms and tear-bedewed face, crying: "Take! take! take!" As he stooped and lifted the wee elf her tears gave place to smiles; she laughed, and pressed her cheek to his, her arms passed round his neck and gripped, and for a few moments the nurse's persuasion "to leave the stranger gentleman" was quite unavailing, so closely did the waif cling to her refuge. But the witnessing friend turned his eyes away from the look on Mr. Judge's face, and between them fell a silence as they walked on, the child restored, the arms she had instinctively sought once more empty, and always bereaved.

(*To be concluded.*)

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Whom no one knows as high or lowly born,  
 Or knows as deeply learned nor yet unlearned,  
 Or knows as of good deeds or evil deeds,  
 A child of the Eternal he, in truth.  
 Given to hidden duties well fulfilled,  
 In secretness shall his whole life be spent,  
 As he were blind and deaf, of voice bereft.  
 Thus shall the truly wise pass through the world.  
 — *From the Sanskrit.*

## NOTE

1. {Chagres fever is a form of malignant malarial fever encountered along the Chagres River in Panama.}

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*The Irish Theosophist* – June 1896, Vol. 4, pp. 165-168.

## WILLIAM Q. JUDGE.

### JASPER NIEMAND

{4 of 4}  
 (*Concluded from p. 145.*)

Theosophy teaches us that men are thinkers, that the real man within is the mind. So in dealing with a man we must closely consider that mind. The mind of Mr. Judge has a

very pronounced duality. It is immensely practical and also profoundly mystical. As a man of business he is successful; it was once said of him by a wealthy merchant that he was a man who could have sold anything he undertook to sell. His practical gift has its most brilliant exposition in his power of organization. He is indeed a master-builder, and to this faculty the T.S. in America owes its strength and its growth. He is far-seeing, prompt and resourceful in emergency, never deterred by expediency or mere public opinion, or by any consideration of a personal nature, from carrying out that which he has resolved to do. He fears nothing, except his own conscience. When plans of work are under consideration, he consults all the principal workers and members living in the districts for which the plan is proposed. He collates the opinions of all and is guided by those which are of worth, and thus, like an able general, he never moves far from his base of supplies, but carries his support with him. It has of late become a habit among some persons to say that Mr. Judge hoodwinks and rules the Americans. Facts should give them pause. It is manifestly difficult to rule some thousands of persons, many of whom are far better off and more highly placed in a worldly sense than yourself. Among American men and women the thing would be an absurdity, for independence of mind is a national habit, an instinct as well as a custom, and it is carried to a far greater degree than we find it in England. The union of States is built up upon it, and is welded together by it, a unity in diversity, and independence is the main fault of every American-born child. It is precisely because Mr. Judge is a born leader and consults those whose local knowledge or aptitude is greater than his own, that he has the confidence of his fellow-members. Whatever is done, the mass knows that the workers have been consulted and have agreed. It is to be remembered that Mr. Judge has never been paid for his services, but has always been a contributor, liberal beyond his means, in order to get this fact of his reliance upon counsel into proper focus.

But as a mystic, Mr. Judge has another office, simple yet profound, rarely visible on the surface yet luminous. In the years 1887-88 he wrote, by the order of the Master, and to two friends who are now husband and wife,<sup>1</sup> a series of letters since published under the title, *Letters That Have Helped Me*. It would be difficult to trace the lives in which these letters have been as a light to the soul. In them is found that gift which the occultist who has in any degree *become* must possess in rare perfection, the art of evolving souls. For only soul can call to soul and help it to struggle forth. Only soul can recognize soul under the manifold coverings of matter. Only soul can hear the deep cry of the crucified god within, bound to the cross and unable to pierce the dull mind and brain of the human brute, who at once houses the god and delivers him over to death. But the Brother, the mystic, has heard. He goes to the man; he looks in his eyes; he calls him Brother; he utters his secret name; and the man pauses, and he listens, and the light floods over him, and he turns his eyes inward to the hidden Christ, to the god-nature, and the song of the Great Self begins to be heard in the stead of the cry of anguish. And while the man, entranced, gazes at the inner light now so dim, but which shall wax so strong at his will, and while the hidden one begins to manifest more and more in the heart, the Brother, the mystic, the evolver whose magic has reunited the man and his soul, goes his way in thankfulness, and bears his light into still other lives that at it they may light their own and that his blazing heart may kindle theirs. For thus act the Bearers of the Flame, the Brethren of the burning Heart, from one generation to another. Such are the servants of Krishna. Such are the evolvers of soul. And those who have come into closer contact with that man of whom the Master wrote in 1887 through H.P.B., that "he of all chelas suffers most and asks or even expects the least," those who have worked with true devotion and in the true spirit with William Q. Judge, whether near or far in the body, they know well the uplifting, widening force which flows through him, ripening the character, developing the higher

nature and letting patience have her perfect work. But Mr. Judge has always set his face rigidly against every form of psychic practice and psychism, in public and in private. His copy-press books show hundreds of letters against it; his fellow-members are unanimous in their testimony of his aversion, and only European members in whom he has discouraged it, and whose written instructions in psychism he has torn to pieces by his powerful analysis and ridicule, have ever ventured upon an accusation which is met by hearty merriment even from the outside American public. The powers of the soul are not found in its lower faculties, any more than a man's power is found in his animal propensities, but only those who have felt the touch of the Bearer of the Power upon their inner life, can know the mystic flower that touch unfolds.

Working thus on varied planes, the life of William Q. Judge goes on its quiet way. Its depths lie hidden, but from them wells an irresistible force that stimulates to devotion, to self-denial, to unsparing, unceasing activity for the world. A friend to all men and women he is yet impersonal always: personal flattery or personal following he meets with impatience and soon sets the offender upon his own feet. To him, the ideal friend is one who teaches us to stand on our own base, to rely upon the inner self, and this is the part of friendship as he himself plays it. To the numbers who wrote him for advice in the late crisis he replied: "Work! work! work for Theosophy!" and a lady, being recently asked if she had not received psychic teachings from Mr. Judge, replied: "I will tell you the kind of psychic teaching he gave me. It was this: '*Cast no one out of your heart.*'" So we find him ever accepting all, as in the One Self, closing no door to anyone; leaving the way always open to all who may wish to return to him or to the work; excluding none who are in that work, whether friend or foe; offering a hand to his adversaries, and ready to offer it again when it is rejected; conquering personal animosity by the sheer force of his character as he goes steadily on with that work from which it sought to remove him. Seeing in him our most constrictive and most indefatigable worker, we can well understand that he was the towering mark against which every force subversive of evolution was hurled. To obliterate our trust in the "Resuscitator," to dim his reputation and impede his building hand, was to enfeeble the work. To deprive the nineteenth century of that wreath of success which it alone has so painfully gathered leaf by leaf, the success of seeing the living wedge of the Theosophical Society driven home into the new cycle — was not such deprivation a thing to work for, when success would sound the death-knell of those materialistic forces whose great antagonist he was? So every power that makes for hell was lashed on. But the light shone steadily, and thousands in all parts of the world turned to it for guidance, followed its leading, knew it true and faithful above all else, and he who has to-day more devoted friends than any other living man, has the assurance that the real Theosophical Society, shaking off the wanton hands that would tamper with its great principle of "forming a nucleus of Universal Brotherhood," will pass into the new century as such a nucleus, thence on and on! Not an intellectual abstraction, but a nucleus to inform and enkindle the life of everyday, one to which every man and woman shall have contributed something of self-sacrifice and love. Not merely a brotherhood of Humanity, exclusive of the teeming universe of creatures and sentient things, but a brotherhood of the Whole, recognizing the spiritual identity of all Being. For this he labors and already he has his reward. The nucleus of Universal Brotherhood exists to-day and cannot henceforward die.

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*April 13th, 1896.*

Since the above memoir was written,<sup>2</sup> the foreseen event has occurred. Our Brother and Leader, pausing for once in his work, has laid his body down.

He laid it down. Had the supreme will failed him?

There are those who know otherwise. They know that at the core of this apparent abandonment lay a last and greatest gift.

Since the summer of 1893, some will recognize this:

“Take yet more courage. We have not left you comfortless. The Lodge watches ever. A new day will dawn. But there is much darkness yet to traverse and Judge is in danger. You must watch, and stand, and *stand* and STAND.”

The latter half of this message foreshadowed the storm and lightnings that assailed our course. The judicial charges against W. Q. Judge;<sup>3</sup> the crisis of November 3rd, 1894;<sup>4</sup> the death of William Q. Judge<sup>5</sup> all followed. The three stands were made and “both Leaders seemed to leave us.” It remained to fulfil the first half of the message.

So, standing at the point where the new cycle intersects the old, we find a new day dawning, the Comforter at hand. The gates of heaven open to let a new Light through. There is an occult inheritance called THE MYSTERY, and the undaunted souls of the just never pass to another plane of work without leaving an heir, for divine Nature is one; she knows no pause nor gap.

The promises of the lion H.P.B. accomplish themselves. The GREAT LODGE has drawn nearer. Listen! you that have ears to hear. You will hear the music of its approach.

JASPER NIEMAND.

## NOTES

1. {Julia & Archibald Keightley.}
2. {The memoir referred to was on William Q. Judge.}
3. {The charges in what eventually became known as “The Judge Case.”}
4. {The “crisis” of November 3, 1894, was on that date W. Q. Judge issued a circular in response to Master’s orders, in which he announced he was the sole head of the E.S.T.}
5. {The death of William Q. Judge occurred on March 21, 1896.}

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*The Pacific Theosophist* – April 1898, Vol. 7, pp. 211-212.

## WM. Q. JUDGE, ADEPT AND PROPHET.

JASPER NIEMAND

“A great difference exists between the Theosophical Movement and any Theosophical Society. The Movement is moral, ethical, spiritual, universal, invisible, save in effect. A society formed for Theosophical work is a machine for conserving energy and putting it to use. ... Organized theosophical bodies are made by men for their better co-operation, but being outer shells they must change from time to time as human defects come out, as the times change, and as the great underlying spiritual movement compels such alterations. One can see that to worship an organization, even though it be the beloved theosophical one, is to fall down before form, and to become the slave once more of that ... which the T.S. was meant to overthrow. Some members have worshiped the so-called T.S., thinking it to be all in all, and not properly perceiving its *de facto* and piecemeal character as an organization. ... H.P.B. herself declared that it were better to do away with the Society than to destroy Brotherhood. ... We have not changed the work of H.P.B. but enlarged it. ... It is not Theosophy, nor conducive to

its spread, to make legal claims to theosophical names, symbols, and seals, so as to prevent, if possible, others from using them. Those who do not know true Theosophy, nor see the difference between forms and the soul of things, will continue to worship form and to sacrifice Brotherhood to a shell.” — *Theosophy*, August, 1895.

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*The Irish Theosophist* – April 1896, Vol. 4, pp. 121-122.

## W.Q.J. {OBITUARY.<sup>1</sup>}

J.

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W. Q. J.

O hero of the iron age,  
Upon thy grave we will not weep,  
Nor yet consume away in rage  
For thee and thy untimely sleep.  
Our hearts a burning silence keep.

O martyr, in these iron days  
One fate was sure for soul like thine:  
Well you foreknew but went your ways.  
The crucifixion is the sign.  
The meed of all the kingly line.

We may not mourn — though such a night  
Has fallen on our earthly spheres  
Bereft of love and truth and light  
As never since the dawn of years;—  
For tears give birth alone to tears.

One wreath upon thy grave we lay  
(The silence of our bitter thought,  
Words that would scorch their hearts of clay),  
And turn to learn what thou hast taught,  
To shape our lives as thine was wrought.

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About 9 a.m. on Saturday, the 21st of last month, our beloved leader left us. As we go to press no details are to hand. Meantime we cannot let this issue appear without a few words from one or two who knew that heart thought by many to be “something else.”— ED.

The claim of William Q. Judge upon us is impersonal and universal, for it is the claim of work, and of work only.

Not the man then, but his work. The Work was his ideal. He valued men and women only by their work and the spirit in which it was done; he held right thought to be the best work of all; he worked with anyone who was wishful or willing to do work in any real sense, whether such persons were enemies or friends.

Slowly, under the molding touch of time and suffering, his character evolved before the eyes of the community whose estimate is the estimate of twenty years' experience and is not to be shaken. If there be little said about him as an occultist, it is because such men, in such relations, leave no visible, material traces. Of them it may be said, in the language of paradox: They are known to be what they are because they are unknown; they are recognized because they are misunderstood; they are honored in the inner world because they are dishonored in the outer world; they have suffered that other men may rejoice; hatred is their portion because they have loved much; sorrow is their lot until that day when the whole world shall rejoice. Such men, in their unrecorded deeds, wear the likeness of the rootless Root, the unevolved Evolver, in the sense that, being themselves obscure, they are the source of greatness in others. Themselves silent, they are the cause of eloquence in others. Theirs are the thoughts which spur others to great deeds. Theirs is the quietness which overcomes everything, just as water, the softest thing, overcomes all hardness. They, and they alone, come into this world of ours with one idea, one ideal, which they carry out along a hundred lines with unwavering purpose, never pausing, never resting, never changing, knowing no alteration of mind, no lesser deity than the One Self, no other service than the service of that Self hidden in humanity; childhood, youth and manhood sees them pursuing the same changeless purpose, and when the wearied body falls and dies and the fire-soul frets through the frail, ethereal casing, these men, these Egos cannot rest in the grave of the ether: they know no heaven; Death itself cannot stay them; the blissful life of the spheres cannot give them pause; they return — they, the disembodied and free, turn from the free and glorious starry airs, they take again the fetters of the body, and for what? For what end? Only for this; that they may work, work, and serve the Self eternal.

J.<sup>2</sup>

## NOTES

1. {In *Lucifer*, April 1896, Vol. 18, p. 168, co-edited by Annie Besant and G.R.S. Mead, the only mention of Judge's death was:

### DEATH OF MR. JUDGE.

Mr. W. Q. Judge died at New York on Saturday, March 21st.

The body was cremated on Monday, March 23rd, at the Fresh Pond crematorium.

In *Mercury*, April 1896, p. 276, the journal of the American Section of the Adyar Society, published this obituary by J. Helen Smith:

On 21st of March William Q. Judge quitted this sphere of activity. The news saddened all for every heart kept a shrine sacred to the well-beloved co-worker of H.P.B. We remember only his virtues, which were many, his talents which were great, and we know that the good he did for the many years he labored as the Vice-President of the T.S. and Secretary of the American Section will bless his name for all time. All honor to his memory.}

2. {George W. Russell and Fred J. Dick's comments not included.}

## **“W. Q. JUDGE.” {OBITUARY.}**

JULIA WHARTON LEWIS KEIGHTLEY

In thinking of this helper and teacher of ours, I find myself thinking almost wholly of the future. He was one who never looked back; he looked forward always. While the activities of the body and the mind were engaged each moment in the duty of that moment, yet his heart was set upon the promise of the future and the song of his soul echoed the music of cycles yet to come. We think of him not as of a man departed from our midst, but as a soul set free to work its mighty mission, rejoicing in that freedom and resplendent with compassion and power. His was a nature that knew no trammels, but acknowledged the divine laws in all things. He was, as he himself said, “rich in hope.” This quality of his soul appears to be near to the root of much that has become so instantly, so largely helpful to us now; it seems the origin of the great leap which the Theosophical movement has taken during the last month. To those who were in some degree admitted into the orbit of that large mind, the scope of its plans seemed a wonder which the passage of time only increased. He wrote recently that we should now turn our attention to work in the United States in order to have there “a world compelling and sky defying place for Theosophy,” and to all who comprehended the forward stride of the movement seen at the last Convention, this prophesy seems very near fulfilment. How well he knew that the thought germ sowed to-day was the seed of a wider to-morrow. Continuously, habitually he sowed such seeds in every heart, knowing that like nature, he must oftentimes sow to waste a thousand seeds for every one that germinated, and so knowing, he calmly continued to sow. To the organizing, formative, building power possessed by him we owed much, and equally we found that the master builders must often demolish in order to build. While Mr. Judge organized on the one hand, he pulled down on the other, breaking up forms of thought, molds of mind, crystallizations of habit and feeling, quite regardless of the cost to himself. Looking at the work as he left it, his object becomes apparent. That object was to solidify, to unify; or rather to prepare for the unification which others mightier than he would bring about. In the fulfilment of this duty he was absolutely careless of misinterpretation, careless even when he inflicted a wound upon our surface natures, for he knew the occult significance of that saying: “faithful are the wounds of a friend.” When he wounded the lower forms of self it only caused loyal souls to seek refuge in that wider nature which is the Self divine. While he felt pain when friends turned against him, pain in that warm human heart possessed by him, yet he mastered that pain and unflinchingly did again and yet again his duty. If he gave such warnings, no man ever gave greater joy, wider delight to his friends. And all who would be his friends were that. It must then be clear, as we survey the past, that our leader prepared the soil, the human soil, for the harvest to be sown. Now soil must be harrowed; storms as well as sunshine must sweep over it; it must now lie fallow and now give birth. In all these functions assisting, as the husbandman assists the fields, he presided over certain offices to his pupils as preparation for the sowing of the grain; and that grain is not various but is of one species and origin. From it harmony and unity have germinated. In these continuing, who shall say what universal harvests shall not gladden the courses of the stars?

Mr. Judge joined another office to that of evolver. He was a conserver. When one came to work under him, one was at first surprised, perhaps annoyed even, at his

insistence in small things. It was, keep your desk thus; or, dip your pen thus; or, make your entries and copy your letters in this fashion, and not in your own way. Presently one found that the sum total of attention in these details was greater celerity with less waste of energy, or greater mental freedom often obtained by greater ease of bodily action. All he did had a meaning when you came to put it together. That change which men call Death has completed the puzzle; the picture stands before us perfect in all its parts. William Q. Judge was a teacher fulfilling a teacher's task. Before he left his body he was working in and for the future. Hence it is that we now feel him to be,—aye, let the truth be spoken,—we *know* him to be more fully alive, more freely working than ever. Rejoicing in his splendid freedom he still beckons us into the future.

That future as he saw and sees it is majestic in its harmonious proportions. It presaged the liberation of a race. It struck the shackles from the self-imprisoned and bade the souls of men be free. It evokes now, to-day, and henceforward forever, the powers of the inner man; it promises to these powers, still latent but drawing near to the birth, opportunity of education, of ordered evolution, assistance from men to mankind, from The Soul to all souls. Death, the magician, opened a door to show us these things. If we are faithful, that door shall never close. If we are faithful; only that proviso. Close up the ranks and let Fidelity be the agent of heavenly Powers. Down the long lines of history Freedom then shall march triumphant, her way paved with the fragments of great empires, and on her brows the trophies of the soul. Those empires were builded, every one, as forms of men are put together, for the use and self-enlightenment of the soul, and must give place to other and higher forms when that soul has expressed their essences and reaches forth to other heights of Being. To see America, the cradle of the new race, fit herself to help and uplift that race and to prepare here a haven and a home for Egos yet to appear,—for this he worked; for this will work those who came after him. And he works with them.

JULIA WHARTON LEWIS KEIGHTLEY.

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*The Path* – June 1895, Vol. 10, pp. 93-96.

## WITH THE DRUIDS.

J.N.

They were three wayfarers seated high on a curious rock. One of them rolled a cigarette and tapped the stone as he said:

“I wonder you fellows who are half-mystics anyway, don’t try and get something out of this old cromlech.”

Number One continued to puff his pipe phlegmatically, but his eyes might have been seen to wander to where Number Three lay prone upon his back on the slanting cromlech.

This youth had not spoken hitherto. He lay, as I have said, on his back, the huge cromlech for his bed, there in the high uplands of Wales. His eyes were fixed upon the misty frontlet of Snowdon, far in the distance, but whether he saw that noble outline may be doubted; his gaze seemed inverted; he looked as one who surveys the past, rather than the distance. His friends exchanged a nod, and then began again.

“Say, old chappie, can’t you get something out of this cromlech? How did the people get such big boulders up here, anyhow? And how did they raise them upon the two piles of smaller stones at each side?”

The youth held up his hand for silence. Then he spoke in a somewhat rapid and dreamy tone.

"I see," said he, still gazing skyward, "an altar; it is this stone. There is a deep groove cut in it; the groove is under my back; it is to carry off blood. There is an old man, one with a fierce face and shaggy eyebrows. He holds a curved knife and other men are fetching a kid {baby goat} to him. He feels the knife-blade and gloats on the kid, but he is thinking of a prisoner in the cairn under this rock. It is a dark and rough man, undersized, dressed in furs, with bare head and legs. The old priest waits for the dark of the moon to sacrifice him; he wants an omen to avert misfortune. Now he kills the kid and reads the entrails; he sees barques lost at sea; he is angry, for much treasure has been lost to the priesthood of late. Some of it is buried in the right-hand corner of the cairn below. It is in the days of Druidical degeneracy; this old man is one of the last of the Druids. Fah! what a brute he is!"

"But how did they raise the cromlechs?" asked his companions.

"I go back much earlier for that. What I see is the night, moonlit and beautiful. A crowd of men are gathered about this stone. On one side is a group of priests, robed in white: they are chanting. It is a singular song, monotonous, with strongly marked cadences, under which the ether pulsates and swells like the sea in a tempest. In front of them is a grand old man. He has a girdle, over his white robe, about his waist; a gleaming fillet on his white hair. On his breast is a sparkling thing — oh! I see; it is a divining crystal. He holds a rod of metal wreathed with mistletoe and seems to be marking the time for the singers. What —? By Jove! He is marking time, but it's funny, you fellows, for the singers are in a somnambulist or hypnotized state; they obey his motions like a single trained instrument and then when he gives a great upward sweep with his rod the song swells out in a large diapason and at the same moment the men lift this huge stone. It comes up lightly, easily, on the wings of the sound as it were; they guide it toward the two piles built for it; the song dies low; the stone settles in its place and the old priest breaks into an incantation of praise. These stones were lifted into place by *sound*!"

He rises eagerly on his elbow. One of his companions says: "Right you are, I shouldn't wonder.

Remember Keeley's cannon-ball."

"What did it do?"

"Rose in the air when the note of its mass was repeatedly struck."

"And remember one of Sinnett's lectures, where he says that the ancients levitated huge blocks of stone by sound."

The younger man broke in eagerly.

"What I see about the stone are atoms which are — how shall I phrase it? — they are *creatures*. That is, they have all kinds of forms and are half conscious; some are more conscious than others. Their forms are diaphanous, gelatinous. They are like sensitized plates. On each a picture is impressed, a picture formed by every brain of every singer; it is a picture of raising the stone. And when the sound reverses the etheric action, these creatures, the lives of the ether, reverse it in themselves and the stone, and so assist the levitation. In fact, many of these lives are a part of the aggregate of lives making up the stone."

"At what date was this?" asked one of his friends.

"Oh, in the earlier days of Druidism, when the priesthood had real power. Say about 500 B.C.E."

"And where did the stone — and others like it — come from?"

"They came from the mountains over yonder."

These mountains were some fifteen miles distant from the upland where the travelers then were. The ground was so bare that even the hardy Welsh sheep could scarce find sustenance from the short, woolly grass. In some of these high, bare spaces were circles of upright stones, like short pillars, all systematically grouped, with here and there a table-like cromlech, its flat bald top upturned, poised on two smaller stones, or a pile of them, like rude shelters, with sometimes a cairn underneath, a cairn with a fire-place and even a rude stone seat.

"Were the cromlechs brought from the mountains by the power of sound?" questioned the man with the pipe.

"Not always. Sometimes they were — a part of the way. But — it's curious now — but I seem to see that the earth has its circulation. It has currents which are its blood streams. In these, stones are carried from beneath the earth to its surface — or near it; then on and on. They travel just as drops of blood travel down the blood stream, and are indistinguishable from the surroundings as are the drops from the stream. Why? Because they — the boulders — are of far too gross matter to be visible to the human eye. The wizards see these currents; they see the travelling stones, moving in and then on the earth, gathering other atomic lives to themselves, assuming gradually a more objective vibration; finally they become visible, near the spot of their destiny. Then the wizards increase the vibrations of the current, the elemental lives help, the stones are assisted on their way. I see and feel it all."

Abruptly he ceased. A light gathered upon his face. He was away in the thought-world, far from the paths of men. Like a victim himself, he lay upon the altar of a by-gone faith, his arms outstretched in the form of a cross. An image he was of those sensitive victims who are stretched upon the sacrificial stone of the world, bearers of the cross of opposites, feeling cross magnetisms like a whip, unable to escape, tethered to a hard cold objectivity yet forever facing the mystic depths of the sky.

Behind him, one of his companions silently showed to the other the pages of a small local guide-book, one which none of the party had yet read or seen. He pointed, after a moment, to a couple of lines at the foot of the page. In a description of the cairn beneath them, occurred these words: "— and in its right-hand corner, at a depth of twelve feet, was found a pot of coins, rude bracelets and other treasure."

The men looked at one another.

"Come lad," said the one, knocking the ashes out of his pipe, "we must be going."

The other laid his hand upon the lad's shoulder.

"I'm jolly well puzzled to know where you get all these things," said he.

The lad smiled roguishly and, lifting his voice, broke into one of the ancient songs of Wales.

"I have been in many shapes  
Before I attained a congenial form.  
{I have been a narrow blade of a sword.}  
I have been a drop in the air.  
I have been a shining star.  
I have been a word in a book.  
I have been the book originally.  
I have been a light in a lantern  
A year and a half.  
I have journeyed as an eagle.  
I have been a boat on the sea.

I have been director in a battle.  
 {I have been the string of a child's swaddling clout.}  
 I have been a sword in the hand.  
 I have been a shield in a fight.  
 I have been the string of a harp,  
 Enchanted for a year  
 In the foam of water.  
 I have been a poker in the fire.  
 I have been a tree in a covert.  
 There is nothing in which I have not been. ..."<sup>1</sup>

His voice ceased. He glanced around at the lowering skies, then sprang over the stone wall on his left; heedless of his following companions, knowing nothing of the stinging raindrops or the rising winds, he breasted the hills, his rapt gaze fixed, while before him, unseen by others, to him more vivid than any objective sight, more real than any admitted fact, unrolled the splendid, the endless panorama of the Screen of Time.

J.N.

## NOTE

1. {Excerpt from the medieval Welsh poem "Cad Goddeu," ("Battle of the Trees") from the 14th Century manuscript known as the *Book of Taliesin*. Two lines were omitted and have been added back here. Interestingly, this was one of the manuscripts collected by Robert Vaughn in his mansion Hengwrt, near Dolgellau, Gwynedd in Wales. It is very close to where Julia died, while probably visiting relatives.}

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*The Wonder-Light, and Other Tales* – 1890, pp. 29-45.

## THE WONDER-LIGHT. MRS. J. CAMPBELL VER PLANCK

Once a lonely little child awoke in the night and saw a great Light coming towards him. He was not afraid, for, as the Light came up about him, he saw that it trembled; it was as soft as his Mamma's arms, as clear as his Mamma's eyes.

This child was Carlo. He slept alone because his dear Mamma was dead. He sat up in his wee bed to look at the Light, and it grew brighter as if it smiled at him; a silver voice seemed to come out of it and said:

"Carlo, I have come to take care of you."

"What can you do?" said the child.

"I can shine," said the Light.

Then it wrapped Carlo up, Oh! so softly, and began shining. It grew brighter and brighter; lovely light-blue waves rolled from it; they were blue as the egg of the robin. One after another they rose, fell, and rolled on, just as if they moved to sweet music; they broke against Carlo's breast very gently, and their spray was like blue diamonds scattered on the night. They made him feel so happy, so good, as if he loved all the world and it loved him; he seemed to see in those blue deeps the angels that help and pity the poor old world. Out of these waves yellow rays of light came flashing; one

touched him between the eyes, and lo! he saw more and more of the beauties of those waves. There were so many wonderful things there, they puzzled him.

"Light," said he, "Carlo can't understand all that."

"Some day you will," answered the Light. "Now you need only remember."

As the sunny beams sparkled about him, splendid dark blue lights fell from their tips, like blue bells from a high skyrocket. One fell into his mind, and as it slipped among his curls he began to understand; he knew then that the Light was his teacher and friend. He lay down again, nestling into that soft Light.

"Show me more, Light," he said; "shine more." Just then the Light changed all at once to a splendid green ocean, whose billows spread far, far over the earth. Carlo looked, and saw that this was a sea of green grass with the moon shining upon it. Every blade of grass danced, and on each was a tiny fairy-like creature; these tickled the earth, and more grass and flowers sprang up. Great numbers of these tiny fairies came and went; they were the earth-builders: some made the great trees full of glowing fruits, which made Carlo want to go and pick them. Others helped to build the mountains; still others tended the mosses; there were more who went to and fro among the animals and among people on strange errands of service which Carlo could not then understand. Troops of these little people were bustling about everywhere. They were not all like people; some were like specks of light with a dark ring or belt about them; others had other shapes, translucent as those of the sea creatures; some lived in water, some in fire, some in earth, but they were all busy, they all worked in the service of the world. The more they worked, the more they shone, the more they grew. All this was so interesting, so bright and bustling, that Carlo clapped his hands.

"I like this best," he called out. "Let me go and eat those fruits." Indeed, the fruits were so brilliant and glowing, they seemed to call to his eyes to see them and to his lips to come taste them: he could hardly keep still.

"Would you rather eat them, or see what makes them all grow?" said the voice of the Light. It was not a loud voice, it did not stir the air, nor yet did it come out of the air; it seemed to speak in Carlo's mind.

"I would rav-ver eat them," said Carlo, quickly. Then an odd thing happened. All the Light grew paler, darker, as if sadness came over it. It was still beautiful, but it did not shine so happily; it went under a cloud, and Carlo felt its shadow in his little heart."

"Ah! you are not wise," murmured the voice of the Light. That voice had been like silver bells before; now it was heavy as lead. It sank down, down deep in Carlo's breast; the deeper it went the sadder he felt, as if joy could never dance in his heart again.

"It feels as if Carlo had been naughty," he said. He looked again at the fruits on those splendid trees, hanging like star clusters from the boughs. I 'spose little children isn't werry wise, and those fruits must be puffickly 'licious." The light grew colder and darker; it began to go away. Carlo could not bear that. "Couldn't I have both?" he asked.

"You must choose," said the voice, far away.

Carlo made a great effort; he gave a big sigh, shut his eyes, clenched his dimpled fists, and shouted out fast, in a big, cross voice, as if he was afraid he'd change his mind:

"Show me how they grow, and be warm and glad again for Carlo."

At this, the Light kindled into new beauty. How it beamed! How it shone! It did not hurt Carlo's eyes, and yet it was so strong that he saw it through his forehead, when his eyes were closed.

"When peoples is good, does it make you shine more?" he asked.

"Much more," answered that silver voice.

A long ray stretched towards the tree and flowers, pointing at them, then touching them. They became luminous, inside and out, as a house does when big fires are lit in every room. Now Carlo could see into them. He saw that they were all made of the very tiniest specks of colored lights, moving fast in every leaf and flower and tree, and in all creatures too: they were like little currents in water; their motion kept everything warm and made everything live; an orange-colored light ran, thread-like, through all the rest. An orange-colored star was also sitting in the heart of every fairy, every stone, mountain, tree, flower, insect, bird, animal, child, man, and woman. Every star wore a crown; it moved to and fro just as the Light did, singing as it moved.

"What are those beautiful stars?" asked the child.

"They are my children; they are souls. I am the soul of the world; each soul is a sparkle of me," said the Light. "All are in me, each is myself, that makes all souls one."

Carlo looked again. The Light kept changing from pale to bright, and whatever change came over the Mother Light was felt by the child stars; they changed with it. Rays spread from each star out into the Light and to all other stars; these rays were veins and arteries like those in Carlo's arms; what ran in them was not blood, it was more Light, and that Light was the life of men. Lights of all colors ran to and fro, messengers of the Mother Light to her children, carrying love and peace from star to star. From those rays a rainbow mist rose up, then fell back again in a frozen rain which took the shape of all the things in the world; all the forms that ever were seen were there, made out of the colors of the Light. These shapes seemed like magnets, they drew Light and earth about them, and the fairies worked so busily on them that presently a heart-star was kindled in their center. A warm Breath, blowing out of the Light, set the heart-star to moving in time with the Light, and when that happened, the forms became alive.

Carlo was much interested and surprised. "Just look at them," said he; "it seems as if the world was all made out of Light."

"So it is," he was told, "All things are made out of me, the One Light; all things are made out of me. These are higher and lower Lights, all are not alike, but all, from earth's fires to the Christ-Light which is the Saviour of men, all are made in and from me; they are all one Substance, it is Light. Look again."

On looking closer Carlo saw a difference in the Lights. For instance, the heart-stars of the stones were small and pale; they hardly shone at all. The heart-stars of plants were brighter; those of the animals came next, while the hearts of people moved fastest and burned brightest of all. It seemed that the faster your star moved and the brighter it burned, the greater and better you were. The vegetables and plants lived more than the stones; the animals lived more than they, but were not so full of life and thoughts as the people. As for the earth-builders, they had not so many colors in them as the rest, and their heart-star had no crown; it was more like a dot of light than a star. Carlo wondered why this was, and the voice answered him as if he had spoken.

"It is because they have not received their souls yet; they only have life. Life is the orange Light you see running through all the rest."

"And has peoples got the biggest souls?"

While he said this he looked up, and there he saw a great Being, like an angel, moving in music across the sky. This Being was all of Light; he was robed in crystals and rainbows; he was all starry: moving tongues of rosy flame went before and after him, little love flames with singing wings. The heart-star of this angel was most glorious, larger and brighter than any Carlo had seen. By his face and the deep kindness of his eyes Carlo seemed to know that he had once been a man like other men. But now the splendor of the Christ-Light was in his heart.

"Light, how do you make everything? I wish you'd tell me, he coaxed."

"I make them as you make your thoughts in your mind. I am the Thinker. The worlds and all the things in them are my thoughts. When you think, when the Light in you thinks, that, too, makes forms in me, although you cannot always see them."

"When will I see them?"

"When my yellow ray has opened your eyes. That will only be if you are a very good man. Be careful meantime not to think bad thoughts, for that would make ugly things in the Light. Come! I will show you more," added the voice like falling water.

Again a golden beam touched his head; a violet cloud was all about his body; the Light put a golden bridle upon it; he mounted and rode away into the big world of things. He saw then that while the heart stars of stones were much alike among themselves, and all of about the same degree of brightness, and while the heart-stars of plants and animals were alike among themselves, each in its own kind, yet the heart-stars, or souls, of people differed very much indeed. While some were of a mighty brilliance and purity, others were surrounded by a thick black smoke, through which their stifled Light was scarcely seen, a smoke which prevented their shining. Though Light lit every man in the world, it could not always shine forth. This left some people in darkness; the places where they lived were like dark spots in the Light, so they stumbled and fell against each other. This made them angry, for their minds too were so dark they could not see the right of anything; they struck at each other; they shouted angry words. Those words were like poisoned arrows, they had a life of their own, they rushed through the Light, making confusion in its soft rays. Wherever their sharp sounds fell, a red fire of wrath sprang up, cracking and roaring, making new smoke and greater darkness. All the smoke in the world, smothering the heart-stars, came from red fires of wrath in dark minds, and many of the people cried out:

"What shall we do in this dark world?"

"Let your Light shine!" Carlo shouted back. He felt so sorry for them, and, as they did not hear him, he asked the Light why it did not speak to them as it did to him.

"I do speak," it answered, "but they cannot hear me because those red fires roar so. I am only heard in the quiet heart. My voice is the voice of Love. When they are kind to one another, when they shout no sharp words, then they will hear. When you were greedy about the fruit, you saw what a shadow it made in me. All selfish thoughts make a cloud and coldness in the Light. That runs along my rays and many heart-stars feel it. The rays are roads running from one part to another. Whatever is done by one person runs along those lines and is felt by all."

"Make me understand better, dear Light," said the child.

"Suppose you have a tub of water and you want to blacken one drop of that water. You pour ink in the tub; instead of blackening one drop, it blackens all. If bad, selfish thoughts are put into the Light which fills all the world, they run through that Light and cloud it; every heart-star is choked by the smoke unless it is so much purer and stronger that it throws the smoke off; hearts that move very much faster can do this, but weak hearts are hurt. Be good, *not* for yourself, but for the sake of others; then your Light will shine."

"Ess," said Carlo. He saw that the Light was like an immense spider-web, filling the whole world. Wherever the countless lines crossed, there was a point where something lived, whether star or man, or beast or plant or stone. Whatever it was, that point was its heart-star; if any of the lines were touched, all were moved. If touched with Love, that Love was Light; it ran along the rays and they trembled into music, moving faster, growing brighter. If they were touched with unkindness, that was a harsh red fire, smoking as it ran. What touched those lines? Not hands; oh, no. Whenever any heart-star moved, that touched them. Some moved with love and some

with selfishness. Some moved for all others; some moved to please themselves. That made the difference.

“But why is Love Light?” asked Carlo

“Because the Light is all in all and is for all. To live in all — that is true Love.

And why is selfishness a red, smoking fire?”

“Because it wants to take all for itself, just as fire burns all to feed itself.”

The child looked at the many dark hearts struggling like flies in the web of Light, the kindly web that was their home, if they only knew it. Tears of pity filled his eyes. It was too great weight for his heart. The voice whispered that he must not mind this too much, that dark hearts learned through pain, just as Carlo learned not to put his finger into the candle light after it had once burned him. Then the Light let down its pale blue curtain between the child and the world. He felt himself once more in his bed; the violet cloud was gone, and again he lay softly in the lap of the Light.

“What more can you do?” said the child to the Light.

“I can sing,” said the Light. “Listen!”

At first there was only a deep, sweet silence, such a silence as comes when you are going to sleep on the Mother’s breast. Then musical ripples arose in that silence, like waves on a moonlit sea. They gathered together, coming faster and faster, white crests on a storm of sound. On and on they rode, each sound sparkling as it came. There were sounds of all colors, more fragrant than flowers; they fell as sweetly on the lips as on the ears. Thick and fast they fell, shining snowflakes now from the dark dome of silence; they joined themselves together in radiant bands, singing a grand song. “All the morning stars sang together.” They flocked about the little child; he clapped his hands, he sang with them, he rose and danced in his small bed; his yellow curls, his white limbs shone among the shining jewel sounds; the Light gave him wings of violet and silver; it was the happiest hour in the world.

When Carlo was tired he lay down again and asked the Light what more it could do.

“I can make worlds with my song,” the Light replied. “See!”

Once more a golden beam touched Carlo’s forehead; he felt that he saw with all his body, which was full of Light. Far in the distance was a huge fountain of Light, a fountain with a dark center; the edges of this dark ring broke into the Light that sang, bubbling up with joy. Here, too, every ray of Light was a color, and as color touched color, as ray met ray, music leaped out as fire leaps when a match is rubbed upon stone. Where the red met the green, where the blue met the yellow, they were glad, they met like brothers, a grand song arose. These songs were the life of the Light. There was something still more wonderful. When that Light sparkled through a color, Carlo saw it was made up of tiny golden specks, like gold-dust or sun mist. These specks, or atoms, crowded together, calling out in joy at meeting; the sounds they made ran round and through them, drawing other atoms to the group; the sounds touched that group here, there, everywhere; they were like hands shaping it, just as a boy molds clay or putty into a shape, and soon Carlo saw that Sound was making beautiful things out of the Light.”

“Once I see Uncle John run his fiddle bow on a pane of glass what had yellow grains of sand on it, and the grains runned together at the sounds an’ made real pretty shapes on the glass,” he reflected. “Seems to me there’s an awful lot of things to know.” He saw stars made in this way, enormous stars that bounded off into the sky and wheeled about the sun with choral songs. Each star had its own color, each star had its own song, but all the colors together made pure white light, and all the songs blended into one song, the life-song of the sun. When the sun sang that, it warmed the earth; then it was that flowers bloomed, that trees arose, that birds laid bright eggs in

their nests, and children were born. The seas became full of fish; out of the air came all winged things. The snake came, too, and the owl, bird of night with solemn eyes, the fierce tiger, the elephant with his trumpet, the timid things of darkness and all the poisonous lives of the jungle were drawn to that grand Sound. They were tamed by it; the wildcat purred and the tiger crouched; the snake danced, the elephant forgot his lair; they all loved the Sound and Light; in them all were gentle and kind as children are at the mother's breast; they knew that the Light had mothered them all; they were wiser than many people are. Carlo saw that if men would do the same, if men would harken to the Light and would be filled with it, letting it shine, all things would be good, and heaven and earth would be one happy place of peace. The voice told him that there were no bad things, only the use to which things were put was bad. The creatures would not hurt men if the men had not made dark, evil places in the Light to darken all the weaker souls. All things are made for Nature's good uses, but darkened, blinded hearts do not always obey Nature's laws. All evil comes from darkened Light, from rays turned back, or twisted or broken, where the red fire swallows up their silvery beauty and they can no longer do their proper work.

While he thought this, which the light seemed to put into his mind, he saw the singing colors cluster very thick about a place larger than our world. The place became glorious with Light, full of angels that obeyed it and flew to do its will. Soon so many rays gathered about this wonderful place, they pressed so thick, they moved so fast, such fires were struck from them, such dazzling lightnings, such moving songs arose, they seemed to be doing some mighty work, All at once a last marvelous blaze shot up, the rays melted together, a bell note pealed to the ends of the universe, and lo! a Sun sprang forth in glory, bearing the angels in his resplendent heart. The Sound and the Light had made a new Sun!

Up rose the child in his little bed. He fell on his knees and clasped his hands as he had been taught to do in prayer.

"Light, I fink you must be God," he said.

"No, I am not God," answered the Light. "I am the spoken Word of God."

"He must be werry glad he spoke you, mused Carlo.

"Why do you call God *he*? God is not a man.

"Does she love little children whose mothers is dead?"

"God *is* Love, Carlo, but God is not a woman," said the Voice

"What is God?" the child asked.

"I do not know," the Light made answer.

"Why, I thought you knew everything."

"I do not know that. No man, no angel, no Being, however powerful, knows it. God is in me, for I feel the Breath of God and I tremble. That Breath, breathing in me, makes motion, sound, color, makes all that is. I only feel the Breath-which-is-eternal; I do not see God."

"I s'pose God is the hidden Mover Uncle John telled me about."

"No; the Breath is the Mover. "God is not known."

"What shall I call God, then?"

"Do not name the Unseen One at all," spoke the Light. "Let your thoughts rise to It in silence and in love. Such thoughts have wings of Light to reach the Silence where dwells the Everlasting One. If your thoughts speak, they lose breath, their wings are feeble, they fall by the way. Adore and be still."

"May I whisper something?" said the child in a small, low voice. "Often I heard peoples talk about God. Some tells all He finks about us, an' what He does, as if they knowed Him werry well."

“That is ignorance. They see some idea of their own minds, and they think God must be like it. Some think one of my angels is God. God means good, all the good in the world; but God cannot be seen or known even in thought.

“If nobody knows God, what tells them God is good?”

“The divine laws they see in Nature. Those laws are good, they are laws of helpfulness, they can only come from goodness. The chief of those laws is the law of harmony and love; you saw that law working in me; it rules me; I have mercy and compassion for every creature, and I make all by the will of the unseen, eternal God.”

“How do you know that will?”

“It is whispered in the Breath. Hark!”

The innocent child listened. He heard the song of the deathless Bird, the Swan of Time. He heard what it is given to few to hear,— the almighty Breath moving upon the Universal Soul. It cannot be described, but those who have heard it never forget, and none hear it but those who love the world more than themselves and cherish every creature.

“If you have all things, kind Light —” the child began. Tears filled his eyes; his heart swelled, he could not speak.

“What do you want, little one!”

“I want — Oh! I do want to see my Mamma,” wept the lonely little child. All the glories of creation could not fill his human heart. Even as he spoke, a beautiful woman stood at the foot of his bed; her eyes were dark and deep with tenderness like still pools of the river; his sobs were stopped, his sore heart healed. “Mamma!” he said wistfully.

“It is not your Mamma her own self; it is her picture,” spoke the voice that he had learned to trust. “Her picture is all I can show you; it is the sweet house in which her soul lived. The body is the house of the soul, and the soul is not to be seen after it flies out of the body at the call of God. You may always *feel* your Mamma near you, for the soul is always near all that it loves, though it lives for a while in a better place than this poor world.”

A feeling of peace and delight filled the boy, just as it used to do when his mother rocked him to sleep. That was the best thing about his mother, that feeling he had when he was near her. It made him so happy now that he was quite content; he did not notice that the lovely picture was fading away. His sleepy eyelids fell. What was that he saw? It was his own heart, with a crowned star in the middle. He remembered what he had heard one Christmas Day about the Christ-Light.

“I want my light to shine,” he murmured drowsily.

A trumpet called out. of the Eastern skies and a voice in the daybreak said:

“I shine in all. All are myself. In me all are Brothers. Who hurts his neighbor, hurts himself. Who hurts the dumb beast, hurts himself. Who breaks Nature’s laws, breaks his own heart. But he who helps the world is he whose Light shall shine until it becomes the Christ-Light and brings him to me.”

“Can a little child help?” asked the boy. From North and South, from East and West the Sons of Light answered:

“Of such are the kingdom of Heaven.”

# APPENDIX

## THEOSOPHY & THE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY.

GRACE F. KNOCHE

There is a wisdom-tradition that once was universally known by every people on the face of the globe, a common treasury of inspiration and truth from which the saviors and benefactors of mankind draw. Known variously in different eras as the perennial philosophy, the *gnosis* of Greek and early Christian thought, the esoteric tradition, or the Mystery-teachings of the sanctuary — it is this god-wisdom that Jesus shared with the fisherfolk of Galilee; that Gautama imparted to ferryman and prince; and that Plato immortalized in letters and dialogues, in fable and myth. Today the modern presentation of this wisdom is called theosophy.

What is this theosophy which has been passed on from sage to sage through untold ages — from Vivasvat, the sun, who told it to Manu, who in turn handed it down to rishis and seers until “the mighty art was lost”? (*Bhagavad Gîtâ* 4:1-3.) It is the core inspiration of sacred scripture, and the wisdom that we distill from daily experience. Theosophy has no creed, no dogma, no set of beliefs that must be accepted, because truth is not something beyond or outside us, but in fact is *within*. Nonetheless, it comprises a coherent body of teachings about man and nature that have been expressed in various ways in the sacred traditions of the world.

Whether theosophy will bring vision, insight, understanding, with its body of rich philosophical doctrines, depends upon ourselves. Blavatsky made clear at the outset in her first periodical, *The Theosophist*, that “The very root idea of the Society is free and fearless investigation.” This is why those who join a theosophical organization are not obligated to believe any of the doctrines; they are there for the taking or leaving. The only primal requisite is an acceptance of the principle of universal brotherhood and a willingness to try to think, speak, and act humanely in every circumstance.

The idea of brotherhood as a living, workable philosophy has surfaced time and again. All illuminati of the spirit emphasize it as their chief objective. Teachers and saviors have come among us and imparted the same challenging truth: that we cannot eradicate the selfishness and greed that are choking the soul of mankind unless we each root them out in our own character. The lives of the great teachers are an exemplification of this ideal. Way back in time Prince Siddhartha broke through the bigotry of the Brahmans and talked openly of these truths with the people. To him there was no greater rule than to love and to understand the brethren, and to him the whole of humanity was the brethren.

Of course, acceptance of the principle of universal brotherhood is relatively simple compared to *living* it. Clearly this is not readily done, but just the fact that it may take an entire lifetime or many lives to achieve, is no reason not to begin. All of us have difficulty at times living harmoniously with ourselves, let alone with others. Perhaps a first step would be to accept ourselves, to be friends with the whole of our nature, recognizing that when we do so we are accepting our lower tendencies along with our higher potentialities. In this acceptance we automatically are accepting others, their frailties as well as their grandeur. This is brotherhood in action, for it dispels those subtle blockages that bar us from feeling we all are units of one human life-wave.

Today it is as though the longing of the countless millions of human souls, who have ever yearned in past lives for a universal concord of peoples, is demanding that

this time we make it work. “I and Thou are One” has been sung by Hindu sage, Sufi poet, and the bards of every age. Now we must invest this truth with meaning; it must become a turning point in our aspirations. Our challenge is dual: on the one hand, we have steadfastly to be true to the mandates of our inmost self; on the other, we have so to widen our sympathies and the horizons of our understanding that Love wells forth without hindrance, to eradicate separatism and distrust. Then, and only then, will we know this oneness, this *Homonoia*, this union of hearts and minds — not as an intellectual or social accommodation, but as a living, breathing inflow-outflow of life-consciousness, enfolding suns and stones as it does every one of us.

This is the message of theosophy, a message of *hope*: that within every one of us is the light of divinity, “the true Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world” irrespective of ideology or theology, or materialist bias. Theosophy tells of our divine ancestry going back many millions of years — far longer if we reckon beyond this universe to previous universes; that we are not pawns of any god or devil, nor do we have need for anyone to intercede for us between our Father within and the Father without, because we are all sparks from the celestial fire at the heart of Being, brothers and companions of the stars and of the gods. Most wondrous of all, theosophy illumines what Plato spoke of, that the Soul — using the term for the spiritual self here — “is immortal, having been born many times, and having seen all things that exist ... has knowledge of them all,” so it really oughtn’t to be difficult to recapture “out of a single recollection all the rest,” if a person throws his heart and soul into it and does not give up — for, as he put it, “all enquiry and learning is but recollection,” remembering (*Meno*, §81).

The student is absolutely free to search and inquire and come to his or her own perception of values. The general tendency is to look for answers outside ourselves; we forget that no system of philosophical truths or of religious insights — including theosophy — is intended to provide specific prescriptions for every mental, psychological, or other symptom, but rather to reawaken us to the broad ethical and moral ideals on which the universe and every part of that universe is built.

Theosophists are the friends of all movements that work toward the amelioration of the human condition, and therefore are supportive of every enlightened effort. However, we must be realistic. Much as we would like to, it is impossible for us to send people into different countries to do this type of saving work. Some theosophists are involved in one or another benevolent activity, but as a Society, as H. P. Blavatsky well said, ours is a more difficult — even a more important — task: to work to uproot the *causes* of the difficulties (*H. P. Blavatsky to the American Conventions: 1888-1891*, p. 8). It is to the causes of human misery and illness and poverty that we would address ourselves most earnestly. It is on just this point where we have to question and reexamine ourselves, because quite unconsciously one could hide behind that facade and become selfish and even hardhearted, feeling “our work is not among the people, but simply in the realm of ideas.”

Our work *is* among ideas, but our work, to remain alive, has to be a continuous dedication of ourselves to seeing that only positive and constructive energies go into the thought world, into the sharing of these ideas. If this is truly an all-absorbing quality of the nature, we will find ourselves actually helping to relieve those very conditions in an *inner* way and, possibly without our knowledge, inspire others to work in an outward way.

If in truth the universe groans under the burden of selfish acts and thoughts, we are responsible insofar as we have individually contributed to that weight. Every one of us is human, every one of us has mixed motives to a degree, but we have a grand ideal of constantly endeavoring to make our lives truly altruistic. This is a goal that cannot be

attained in a single lifetime, but it is a goal that we must *never* give up. It must be the predominating and overruling influence in our lives and, if we can aspire toward this, then we can have confidence that at least a larger expression of unselfishness than of its opposite will flow forth from us.

Every altruistic thought and aspiration sends its influence into the thought atmosphere of our world, and every individual — whether known to us or not — who is in sympathetic vibration with that quality of aspiration responds in kind, and his life is ennobled and his surroundings irradiated.

Many today have a deep pessimism concerning our world; they see so many expressions of unbrotherliness, cruelty, and dishonesty being almost accepted as the norm. In fact, pessimism has eroded much of the confidence of our civilization. Part of our task is to replace that pessimistic outlook with its opposite — not a Pollyanna type of optimism, but with a confidence in the capacity of the human soul to open itself to the influx of its innate strength and light and purity.

It should be understood that neither theosophy nor the Theosophical Society as such prescribes specific remedies for this or that malady (mental, psychological, physical, or other). However, the rich philosophical teachings and broad ethical ideals of theosophy, when understood even in part, do have power to cast light on practically every problem we humans face — although in the final analysis each person must apply them to his own situation. All growth and advancement must be self-earned, and the overriding purpose of the modern theosophic effort is to encourage reliance on one's own inner perception and strength. It is well to dispense with crutches as soon as possible and stand on our own feet; dependency of any kind, chemical, emotional, spiritual, is debilitating and in the end self-defeating. At the same time, we must give aid and comfort wherever we can, for compassion is the very heart of theosophy as it is of every genuine religious system.

What, then, does theosophy offer? Vision, perspective, confidence in ourselves and in the majesty and ultimate justice of the cosmic ecosystem in which we, together with every atomic life in space, are evolving through the cycles into ever grander expressions of the Divine. As divinities working through our human phase we are bound to make manifold errors as we struggle to break our self-made chains of material desire. This is where nature's habit of recurring cycles of birth and death, governed by karma or the law that effect equals cause, provides unlimited opportunity for learning and enlargement of experience.

Even a little understanding of theosophy helps us to see our karmic lot from a broader and less personal viewpoint — not as an unjust fate but as an opportunity for growth, or for clearing the slate, as it were, before greater responsibilities can be assumed. In the crucible of experience we gain a deepening sympathy for those passing through the shadows, through their private gethsemanes, and are better able to help them find their own strength.

As coming events cast their shadows before them, we draw encouragement from the fact that in the midst of unprecedented turbulence in domestic and international affairs theosophic ideas are catching on. If given welcome, they may indeed become openers of heart and mind to nature's mystic secrets: truths that have been patiently recorded, verified, and guarded for humanity's benefit by those who had the stamina and compassion to undergo lives of preparation for this sacred charge.

(Compiled from her writings. © Theosophical University Press.)

For further information on theosophy, see [theosociety.org](http://theosociety.org)