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NOTICE.

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NOTES BY THE WAY.

OURSELVES.

The proposal, made in our last issue, to increase the size of the *I.T.* by four pages, and raise the price to 3d., has been favourably received by the majority of subscribers, who have communicated with me on the subject. These alterations, as will be observed, begin with this number. At the same time, I take the opportunity of returning thanks for the very felicitous terms in which most of the letters were written. Those responsible for the outlay connected with the *I.T.* were weak enough to look for some results in justification of the somewhat heavy expense. Nor have they looked in vain. One correspondent writes:—“I always read your paper with the greatest interest, and I know that what you say, and the way you say it, is both attractive and helpful to others.” So, with your help, dear readers, “we go right on.”

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NEW FEATURES.

With four more pages to fill, I have naturally been thinking over the best way to utilize them. I thought of the children, and felt there was a growing need to devote some of our attention to them. Some unexpected correspondence with Mrs. Cooper Oakley, who has lately been interesting herself particularly in this branch of activity, confirmed my opinion. A beginning, therefore, has been made in this number. Needless to say, such a feature cannot be successfully carried on without the co-operation and support of parents. I ask their kind attention and consideration to what has been said on the matter on another page. Then there are those who are children in quite a different sense, *i.e.*, as regards membership in the T.S. It occurred to me that a service might be done for them also. There exists a store-house of “good things” they have not had access to, so far, at least. For instance, in old numbers of *The Path*,

and elsewhere, there are many articles by H. P. B. and others, on very varied subjects, full of useful and practical teaching, which probably most of them have never seen at all. An effort will be made to gather together the best of what has been written, from time to time, on these different subjects, and in the hurry of modern life, I have no doubt this feature will be found helpful to all. Those who have time and opportunity can aid greatly in this work by sending me what they consider the most interesting extracts on the subject on hand for each month. The subject for next month will be 'Elementals.'

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THEOSOPHY AT THE
WORLD'S FAIR.

The report of proceedings and documents, in connection with the Theosophical Congress, at the Parliament of Religions, held at the World's Fair, is now before me. Glancing over its pages, I am not surprised that some of the Chicago newspapers spoke of the T. S. Congress as a competitor of the whole parliament. Speech follows speech in orderly sequence, covering the whole field of Theosophy. It is a record worthy of a great occasion.

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THE RESULT.

The Rev. H. R. Haweis, writing to the *Daily Chronicle* on the Parliament of Religions, says: "The experiment, endorsed by the Pope, discountenanced by the Archbishop of Canterbury, embraced by the Heathen Chinese, welcomed by Hindu, Parsee, Cingalese, and the chiefs of almost every acknowledged religion of the world, has resulted in a demonstration the like of which has perhaps not been seen since the days of Constantine, Arius, and Athanasius." And again: "On the whole, the message to the world from the World's Parliament of Religions has been peace to all that are near, and all that are afar off. It is time to proclaim the essential unity of all religions—they conflict only in their accidents. The "broken lights" bear witness to the true Light which lighteth every man that cometh into the world—nay, are parts of that Light as much as the colours in the prism are parts of the sunlight. Henceforth to accept Christ the rejection of all the teachers that went before Him is not necessary, and to receive Christianity need not carry with it the dogma that all other religions are in all parts false."

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The following extract from the same article is not without its significance from such a source:—
"Vivekananda, the popular Hindu monk, whose physiognomy bore the most striking resemblance to the classic face of the Buddha, denounced our commercial prosperity, our bloody wars, and our religious intolerance, declaring that at such a price the 'mild Hindu' would have none of our vaunted civilisation. 'You come,' he cried, 'with the Bible in one hand and the conqueror's sword in the other—you, with your religion of yesterday, to us who were taught thousands of years ago by our Rishis, precepts as noble and lives as holy as your Christ's. You trample on us and treat us like the dust beneath your feet. You destroy precious life in animals. You are *carnivores*. You degrade our people with drink. You insult our women,

You scorn our religion—in many points like yours, only better, because more humane. And then you wonder why Christianity makes such slow progress in India. I tell you it is because you are not like your Christ, whom we could honour and reverence. Do you think, if you came to our doors like Him, meek and lowly, with a message of love, living and working and suffering for others as He did, we should turn a deaf ear? Oh, no! We should receive Him and listen to Him, just as we have done our own inspired Rishis' (teachers)."

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Here comes a strange contrast. *The Irish Church Weekly*, of 25th ult., in a leader on "Spiritualism" complains of the manner in which newspapers chronicle the vagaries of "Spiritualists, Mesmerists, Theosophists, Swedenborgians, Mormons, Amateur Buddhists, and the like." "The ordination," it continues, "of a number of pious men to be Christ's servants, and to pursue the holiest of callings, is described in the same style as that in which the silly utterances of a Theosophist are narrated—thus giving the same authority to true and false."

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A REPLY. In reply, we cannot do better than cull the following paragraph from *The Northern Theosophist*: "To quote MaxMuller, 'It should be known, once for all, that one may call oneself a Theosophist without being suspected of believing in spirit rappings, table turnings, or any other occult sciences and black arts.' A Theosophist's time is not devoted to 'taking afternoon tea on the table lands of Tibet,' nor to promiscuous journeyings 'on the Astral plane.' He believes in human brotherhood, not as a beautiful ideal, but as an actual fact; and to him ethics are demonstrable laws of being. Repudiating the supernatural he recognises the metaphysical; and by scientific methods, as exact as those supposed to be the peculiar possession of physics, he reaches a knowledge of spiritual things of greater potency in the determination of conduct than is possible under any 'belief' founded only upon authoritative teaching."

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OLIVER WENDELL HOLMES ON OCCULTISM. Mention of Mr. Haweis reminds me of an interesting character sketch, of Oliver Wendell Holmes, appearing over his name, in the current number of *The Young Man*. Relating how the Bishop of Gloucester, Dr. Samuel Smiles, and himself, formed a little social party one afternoon, at a London Club, he writes: "The talk wandered freely over all sorts of fields—literary, and scientific, and social—until it got entangled inevitably in 'occultism'—ghosts, double psychic phenomena—on all which questions the Bishop keeps a singularly fair and open mind. Talking of brain waves, Oliver Wendell Holmes went off in his best style. 'I think we are all unconsciously conscious of each other's brain-waves at times; the fact is, words and even signs are a very poor sort of language compared with the direct telegraphy between souls. The mistake we make is to suppose that the soul is circumscribed and imprisoned by the body. Now the truth is, I believe, I extend a good way outside my body; well, I should say at least three or four feet all round, and so do you, and it is our extensions

that meet. Before words pass or we shake hands, our souls have exchanged impressions, and they never lie."

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I have to herald the appearance of a new Theosophical *The Northern Theosophist*. Monthly. It hails from the Middlesboro' Lodge; is entitled *The Northern Theosophist*, and sold at the popular Penny. The contents are interesting, chatty, and varied, and it promises to be an excellent propagandist. I extend the hand of fellowship, and hope the *Northern Theosophist* will meet with the success it certainly deserves. Subscription—1s. 6d. per annum, post free, which should be sent to 10 West Terrace, North Ormesby, Middlesborough.

D. N. D.

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THEOSOPHY IN PLAIN LANGUAGE.

XII. WHAT IS KARMA ?

THERE is, perhaps, no term in the whole of our Theosophical vocabulary which calls up such a host of complex and far-reaching associations as that oft-used and much-discussed word, *Karma*. The idea itself, for which the word stands, is one of those elemental conceptions like *life*, or *mind*, or *will*, or *consciousness*, which we use constantly and freely without stopping much to reflect how little we actually know about the real meaning and essence of any one of them. It is easy to say that Karma is the "law of ethical causation," the law of Justice which secures that "whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap." Or we can define it as that tendency or trend in nature that is the cause of all evolution, growth, or progress. Karma is all this, and more, for in the last analysis it is Action itself, the principle of Cause and Effect that prevails throughout the entire universe, and, in fact, makes it a Uni-verse at all—a Cosmos and not a Chaos. But in the end, in any attempt to really explain and account for our belief in that principle of harmony and adjustment which we call Karma, we find ourselves at last falling back upon one of those primary perceptions or intuitions of the mind, out of which all philosophy takes its rise, and beyond which our thought cannot reach—upon the simple idea of law itself. Nobody can tell exactly what law is; or rather no two persons can be relied upon to give you quite the same account of what they mean by the "laws of nature." All are agreed that these laws exist. Disagreements arise when we try to interpret them, to trace back their origin, to ascribe to one set of causes or another the various facts and phenomena by which we are surrounded.

Now, one great characteristic of what is called occultism, or occult philosophy, is that it asserts the influence upon human life of forces and laws which are not recognised at present by normal perception, though their effects are felt by all. In the East especially, where men have always cultivated a habit of steady attention and analysis directed, not as here to the external phenomena of nature, so much as to the internal, unseen world of mind and consciousness—there has ever been taught the existence of certain hidden agencies affecting the destiny and development of human souls—forces which are as constant and as resistless upon their own plane as are the laws of gravity or electricity or chemistry upon this; and as capable of verification by proper methods. So great, indeed, has been the influence, in the East, of this subtle

occult view of life, that whole nations of men no more think of doubting, for instance, the certainty of the law which rewards each man "according to his deeds," and apportion to us joy or sorrow according to our conduct in former lives, than we would think of doubting the existence of gravitation. True, these people are believing in something which they have not discovered, or always verified, for themselves. But did *we* discover for ourselves even what seems so obvious when pointed out—that attractive force which acts on things and makes them "fall"? Should we in fact have ever thought of asking for a reason *why* things fall, content with knowing that they *do* fall, had it not been for the intuitive genius of Sir Isaac Newton? That great man had a habit of observing and reflecting upon what he saw—even if it were such a common and familiar occurrence as the falling of an apple. He saw with the *mind* what other men saw only with their *eyes*. By a precisely similar habit of observation and reflection, directed inward to the problem of life, consciousness, being itself, the Eastern mind arrived at the cognition of that evolutionary law, that principle of infallible justice or desert controlling human destiny which is known as Karma. And just as the difference between Newton and other men of his time, consisted in the fact that he demanded a *reason* for what they took as a matter of course, so it is with Eastern and Western thought when dealing with the familiar facts of everyday life and experience.

For example, we talk constantly of things "happening" to us, and whatever our state of mind, whether contented with our lot or the reverse, we are always attributing the cause to something outside of ourselves. Of course, the "personal factor" is recognised to count for something. We all know that the same event will affect no two people in quite the same way. This is commonly explained by saying, that so-and-so has a "morbid temperament," while such another is "naturally cheerful"; but how few go further than this, and ask, *why* these differences of character and disposition exist which all exhibit from very infancy. Simply to say with a shrug, "Oh! people are *born* that way" does not explain matters, for, unless we reject the idea of soul altogether (and with that position we cannot here turn aside to argue) the question must arise, *why* they were "born that way." To this question neither our Western theology nor our philosophy vouchsafe any reply. In the East the difficulty is faced and logically answered by the doctrine of pre-existence, and pre-existence leads us to the ideas of re-birth and of Karma. The former of these has been dealt with in earlier chapters of this series. To a more detailed examination of the Doctrine of Karma itself we shall devote our next article.

To be continued).

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GLEANINGS FROM THEOSOPHICAL LITERATURE.

. All who have time and opportunity are invited to send selections on the subject chosen for each month. These will be arranged, and appear under this heading.
Subject for January—"Elementals."

HINTS FOR OCCULT STUDENTS.

HERE is the key so much desired by enterprising—indeed all—students. It is by means of these correlations of colour, sound, form, number and substance that the trained will of the initiate rules and uses the denizens of the elemental world. Many Theosophists have had slight conscious relations with elementals, but always without their will acting, and, upon trying to make elementals see, hear, or act for them, a total indifference on the part of the

nature spirit is all they have got in return. These failures are due to the fact that the elemental cannot understand the thought of the person ; it can only be reached when the exact scale of being to which it belongs is vibrated, whether it be that of colour, form, sound, or whatever else.—H.P.B. "*Path*," *May*, 1888.

Countless myriads of forms are in that ideal sphere, and matter exists in the astral light, or even in the atmosphere, that has passed through all forms possible for us to conceive of. All that the adept has to do is to select the "abstract form" desired, then to hold it before him with a force and intensity unknown to the men of this hurried age, while he draws into its boundaries the matter required to make it visible. How easy this is to state, how difficult to believe ; yet quite true, as many a Theosophist well knows. The oftener this is done with any one form, the easier it becomes. And so it is with nature : her ease of production grows like a habit.—H.P.B. "*Path*," *May*, 1888.

The thinking of *oneself* as this, that, or the other, is the chief factor in the production of every kind of psychic or even physical phenomena.—*Secret Doctrine*, ii., 59.

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 * * * May we confine our thoughts to universals, our loves and hates to principals.—*Julius*. "*Path*," *May*, 1887.

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 upon your passive mind.—*Jasper Niemand*. "*Path*," *June*, 1887.

The symbol of the living fire is the sun, certain of whose rays develop the fire of life in a diseased body, impart the knowledge of the future to the sluggish mind, and stimulate to active function a certain psychic and generally dormant faculty in man.—"*Glossary*." Page 119. *Fire*.

The popular prevailing idea is that the theurgists, as well as the magicians, worked wonders, such as evoking the souls or shadows of the heroes or gods, and other thaumaturgic works, by supernatural powers. But this was never the fact. They did it simply by the liberation of their own astral body, which, taking the form of a god or hero, served as a medium or vehicle through which the special current preserving the ideas and knowledge of that hero or god could be reached and manifested.—"*Glossary*." Page 330. *Theurgist*.

For such states (dual consciousness) 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 we have incautiously left the body of our own will.—*Julius*. "*Path*," *June*, 1887.

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.

Quoted by Julius. "Path," June, 1887

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THEOSOPHY AND COMMERCE.

(Concluded).

THE disputes between capital and labour, which now occur with such painful frequency, is a result of our modern industrial system scarcely within the scope of my paper. They constitute one of the most striking pieces of evidence that we are on the verge—aye in the very throes—of great social changes. The practical Theosophist will do well to note carefully the trend of modern ideas, and the certain effect of economic law. King Demos has come, and with the balance of political power passing into the hands of the sons of toil—men of many needs, but little knowledge how to best supply them—there will be plenty of work for the man of calm judgment, keen human sympathies, and a determination to secure the rights and liberties of the individual, even in a state recognising the benefits of collectivism in every department of social life. But I must not wander into the interesting region of politics and sociology now, although it is closely related to what I consider the aim and scope of Theosophical Ethics.

It is scarcely necessary for me to particularise any of the numerous shams connected with modern trading, as they are familiar to everyone. The whole system is of necessity honeycombed with deception under the régime which obtains in the commercial world to-day—from the Stock Exchange down to the humblest distributor. It would, however, be unfair to assume that business life is on a lower moral plane than any other part of our present civilisation—we all know that our whole social system is excessively artificial from root to branch. Nor would it be just to assume that because the outcome of centuries of selfish trading is demoralising, every business man is necessarily a rogue. The present complex state of things must have been evolved, under Karmic Law, from a previous civilisation far from simple or altruistic, and a return to higher ideals can not be accomplished all at once, even by the most drastic methods. What we require is that the fundamental principles of exchange may be altered in the direction of gradually putting the interests of the community and humanity before those of individual gain and expediency. I am rather disposed to the opinion that on the whole, the middle class is the most moral in this country, although the reason may be that it is the least independent. Just now it certainly exhibits a desire for obtaining the luxuries of life scarcely in accord with the depression of trade which undoubtedly exists. It is a class which has given the world many of the noblest men who have illumined the records of human progress—and with the spread of culture, elimination of class distinctions, and a sounder knowledge of man's destiny, in place of the very vague belief in a future state of reward or punishment which most men now believe—there is the right material from which to expect a consideration for others which the present code renders almost impossible.

What, then, is the message of Theosophy, and its relation to the trading world of to-day—is it a gospel of peace and hope for the distracted man of business, or merely one more “idiom” thrust upon an age already weary of the strife of contending dogmas and creeds?

Now it is not claimed for Theosophy that it is a religion at all, for it is rather a philosophy which synthesises and unites Religion with Science. Nor are its concepts “new,” for they are the base of all the great religious systems of the world, and have been felt and expressed by many of the greatest poets, seers, and thinkers of all time—from Guatama Buddha to Tennyson. It directs attention to aspects of life too long neglected by the materialistic West, and claims that man is a spiritual being, with infinite capacity for self-development. We are invited to look *within* to solve the mysteries of life, and recognise each in our Higher Self that which makes for righteousness. “*The Kingdom of Heaven is within you*” is the Master’s truism of nineteen hundred years ago which must be resurrected from the weeds grown around his many golden words by modern priestcraft and ecclesiasticism. The knowledge of a past as well as a future immortality must supplant the conventional shibboleths and vague sentimentalities taught regarding the soul.

Widespread teaching of Karma and Reincarnation will be invaluable towards lifting the whole tone of our commercial system. I will go so far as to say, that a real faith in the Great Law will do more than anything else to check its most serious evils. Some such basis for conduct is our most urgent need: for

“ . . . virtue in distress and vice in triumph
Make Atheists of mankind.”

It might be trusted to strengthen the good influences which should follow our association with other races, who so readily imitate the white man’s vices, while ignoring his self-reliant qualities. Reincarnation is the key to explain how artificial is the barrier raised by society between man and man, and points to Brotherhood as an essential factor in human progress. The problems of wealth and poverty, genius and ignorance, happiness and misery, love and hate, here find a reasonable solution congenial to a shrewd, business intellect. Where is a system of thought providing a more complete rest and peace from the daily worries of life—or which provides so clearly for design and order amid all the riddles of existence so puzzling to every thoughtful mind? Popular religion generally exalts a particular profession to a position of spiritual authority which ultimately includes other social influence. The average business man is quite willing to allow the priest considerable prestige so long as he confines himself to purely church matters; but clerical interference in commercial affairs is usually resented, and their want of mundane knowledge is a common subject of ridicule. With the growing opportunities for culture, and it is to be hoped greater independence of thought among the middle class, it is reasonable to expect that a philosophy so free from cant as Theosophy will be eagerly welcomed if only because it fills up the gaps which are so objectionable in current theology.

Evidence of Karmic Law will be met by the business man in his ordinary transactions, and be more congenial to his trained shrewdness than such a doctrine as vicarious atonement—once he has grasped the elementary proposition. It will appeal to those instincts of the inner man which his experience has specially developed, and tend to soften the often harshly expressed criticism of competitors and dependents. The doctrine of Reincarnation will attract him as the only possible theory to account for the inequalities thrust upon his notice in every relation of life. It will also raise the tone of his thoughts and conduct by pointing to the desirability of completing the Ego’s trading experience in this

life by acting honourably in that capacity now, and by encouraging ideals of a wider influence in future lives through the effect of causes set in motion by service to others in the present one.

The practice of meditation, and efforts to evolve the spiritual nature, so far from proving incompatible with business duties, will serve as the starting point and stimulant to the daily routine, and ultimately will be appreciated as the most precious moments in life. There is nothing irreconcilable between the study of the Secret Doctrine and a busy life. The latter furnishes the facts upon which the former throws a brilliant light, giving an insight into the real soul of things which cannot be found elsewhere in English literature. In fact, Theosophy, rightly considered, so far from enticing us from the ordinary duties of citizenship, exercises a great humanising influence upon the individual, drawing him even nearer his fellows in the bonds of true Brotherhood.

I hope enough has been said to justify my conviction that Theosophical teaching and practice, added to the energetic self-reliant traits of the Western commercial mind, are calculated to evolve a type of man worthy of that heritage of wisdom we are so slow to claim—and also to produce principles of exchange and distribution, giving that confidence between nations and men which will make the commercial life of the future an occupation equal in dignity to those professions now esteemed in the greatest honour.

C. J. WHITTING.

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A TALK BY THE EUPHRATES.

PRIEST MERODACH walked with me at evening along the banks of the great river.

“You feel despondent now,” he said, “but this was inevitable. You looked for a result equal to your inspiration. You must learn to be content with that alone. Finally an inspiration will come for every moment, and in every action a divine fire reveal itself.”

“I feel hopeless now. Why is this? Wish and will are not less strong than before.”

“Because you looked for a result beyond yourself, and, attached to external things, your mind drew to itself subtle essences of earth which clouded it. But there is more in it than that. Nature has a rhythm, and that part of us which is compounded of her elements shares in it. You were taught that nature is for ever becoming: the first emanation in the great deep is wisdom: wisdom changes into desire, and an unutterable yearning to go outward darkens the primeval beauty. Lastly, the elements arise, blind, dark, troubled. Nature in them imagines herself into forgetfulness. This rhythm repeats itself in man: a moment of inspiration—wise and clear, we determine; then we are seized with a great desire which impels us to action; the hero, the poet, the lover, all alike listen to the music of life, and then endeavour to express its meaning in word or deed; coming in contact with nature, its lethal influence drowns them; so baffled and forgetful, they wonder where the God is. To these in some moment the old inspiration returns, the universe is as magical and sweet as ever, a new impulse is given, and so they revolve, perverting and using, each one in his own way, the cosmic rhythm.”

“Merodach, what you say seems truth, and leaving aside the cosmic rhythm, which I do not comprehend, define again for me the three states.”

“You cannot really understand the little apart from the great; but,

applying this to your own case, you remember you had a strange experience, a God seemed to awaken within you. This passed away; you halted a little while, full of strange longing, eager for the great; yet you looked without on the hither side of that first moment, and in this second period, which is interchange and transition, your longing drew to you those subtle material essences I spoke of, which, like vapour surrounding, dull and bewilder the mind with strange phantasies of form and sensation. Every time we think with longing of any object, these essences flow to us out of the invisible spheres and steep us with the dew of matter: then we forget the great, we sleep, we are dead or despondent as you are despondent."

I sighed as I listened. A watchfulness over momentary desires was the first step; I had thought of the tasks of the hero as leading upwards to the Gods, but this sleepless intensity of will working within itself demanded a still greater endurance. I neared my destination; I paused and looked round; a sudden temptation assailed me; the world was fair enough to live in. Why should I toil after the far-off glory? Babylon seemed full of mystery, its temples and palaces steeped in the jewel glow and gloom of evening. In far-up heights of misty magnificence the plates of gold on the temples rayed back the dying light: in the deepening vault a starry sparkle began: an immense hum arose from leagues of populous streets: the scents of many gardens by the river came over me: I was lulled by the splash of fountains. Closer I heard voices and a voice I loved: I listened as a song came

"Tell me, youthful lover, whether
Love is joy or woe?
Are they gay or sad together
On that way who go?"

A voice answered back

"Radiant as a sunlit feather,
Pure and proud they go;
With the lion look together
Glad their faces show."

My sadness departed; I would be among them shortly, and would walk and whisper amid those rich gardens where beautiful idleness was always dreaming. Merodach looked at me.

"You will find these thoughts will hinder you much," he said.

"You mean——" I hesitated, half-bewildered, half-amazed. "I say that a thought such as that which flamed about you just now, driving your sadness away, will recur again when next you are despondent, and so you will accustom yourself to find relief on the great quest by returning to an old habit of the heart, renewing what should be laid aside. This desire of men and women for each other is the strongest tie among the many which bind us: it is the most difficult of all to overcome. The great ones of the earth have passed that way themselves with tears."

"But surely, Merodach, you cannot condemn what I may say is so much a part of our nature—of all nature."

"I did not condemn it, when I said it is the strongest tie that binds us here: it is sin only for those who seek for freedom."

"Merodach, must we then give up love?"

"There are two kinds of love men know of. There is one which begins with a sudden sharp delight—it dies away into infinite tones of sorrow. There is a love which wakes up amid dead things: it is chill at first, but it takes root, it warms, it expands, it lays hold of universal joys. So the man loves: so the God loves. Those who know this divine love are wise indeed. They love not

one or another : they are love itself. Think well over this : power alone is not the attribute of the Gods ; there are no such fearful spectres in that great companionship. And now, farewell, we shall meet again."

I watched his departing figure, and then I went on my own way. I longed for that wisdom, which they only acquire who toil, and strive, and suffer ; but I was full of a rich life which longed for excitement and fulfilment, and in that great Babylon sin did not declare itself in its true nature, but was still clouded over by the mantle of primeval beauty.

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THEOSOPHICAL EDUCATION FOR CHILDREN.

AS the Theosophical Society grows day by day in numbers, the necessity of providing Theosophical Education for children becomes more and more evident. Complaint cannot be made of a lack of literature ; but the question arises, have the "little ones" had their fair share of our attention ? In America this question had to be met some time ago, and "Lotus Circles" for children were started, and have been carried on, we understand, with signal success. Lately, a step has also been taken in this direction in London, by the foundation of a Sunday class, conducted by Miss Stabler, who has had experience of such work in America.

A circular on the matter has come into our hands, from which we give the following extract :

A PLEA FOR THE CHILDREN.

"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 practise what they profess. Each branch could start one. We seem to be irresolute for want of a practical method. Catechisms could be compounded. . . . 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."—*The Path*, iii. 222.

This "plea" is a forcible one, and it is hardly necessary for us to say

more. We have decided to devote a page or two, every month, to this department of Theosophic work. It is practically a new departure in our magazine literature, and therefore quite in the nature of an experiment. Without the entire co-operation of parents themselves, much will have to be left undone.

We invite our readers, especially those who are parents, to express their views on the following proposals:—

1. A page, or more of *I.T.* to be devoted to articles on Theosophical Education for Children, and for parents to exchange their views and opinions.
2. To form a "Lotus Circle" for Children in connection with this paper, somewhat on the following lines:—
 - (a) Membership for boys and girls, either of whose parents are members of the T.S., or who are in sympathy with its objects.
 - (b) Members to do work at home for the benefit of the Crèche, Bow Club, or any other needful institution that may be selected.
 - (c) Members to send in little contributions on whatever subject may be chosen from time to time.
 - (d) Members to have their letters answered on subjects connected with Theosophy upon which they desire information.
3. A page or more of *I. T.* to be devoted to articles based on Theosophic teaching, and written in a form suitable for children.

Those who avail themselves of our invitation (and we hope they will be numerous) should state their opinions as regards offering prizes, and the most suitable class book to begin—Wonder Light? Golden Stars? or what?

In conclusion, we would ask our friends everywhere, to draw attention to this new departure in the proper quarters, and so help us in carrying out what we think will be a work of much usefulness. We may mention, also, that we hope to arrange with Mrs. Cooper-Oakley, for special colonial matter every quarter.

D. N. D.

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THE PLACE OF REST.

"The soul is its own witness and its own refuge."

Unto the deep the deep heart goes.
It lays its sadness nigh the breast:
Only the mighty mother knows
The wounds that quiver unconfessed.

It seeks a deeper silence still,
It folds itself around with peace,
Where all its thoughts of good or ill,
In quietness unfostered, cease.

It feels in the unwounding vast
For comfort for its hopes and fears:
The mighty mother bows at last,
She listens to her children's tears.

Where the last anguish deepens—there—
The fire of beauty smites through pain,
A glory moves amid despair,
The mother takes her child again.

G. W. R.

OUR CHILDREN'S PAGE.

OPENING WORDS.

WITH the New Year, dear children, we are going to set aside a whole page for you, which is to be all your very, very own; and in the children's hour, which comes just before the lamps are lighted, some one who loves you all will think of you, and try to tell you every month what will help you.

For you tiny, toddling mites; you babies, whose heads do not even reach the top of the study table, we shall send messages, which mother will tell you, and you will understand. You little ones who look around with wide, round eyes, and ask *why* so many wonderful things happen, and sometimes think the grown-ups are so silly because they don't understand what you mean; you must look out in this page for answers to it all. We will try to understand you, because so many of you whisper to us strange wonderful thoughts. And you growing girls, there is much you want to know about the wonderland from whence you came, about your present life, and about nature; and when you "fink and fink big finks," as sweet baby says, and cannot understand, write and ask all about it. You boys, merry, restless, inquisitive; you shall have your place, too, in our thoughts. We want to hear what you do in your play-time, in your country walks, and in your long holidays by sea or mountain. This page is for you all, small and large. We shall talk about what nature teaches; about the animal kingdom; and about many other things. We will also tell you, if we can, quaint tales about fairyland; those tales you so often ask for when the boys sit upon the hearth-rug before the fire, and the small girls, tired with play, nestle with their dear, soft faces close together, and coax for "just one story more, only just one."

Now, dear ones, if we could give you the gifts of fairy-godmothers, we would give you wisdom; and had we the wishing-cap, we would wish *one* wish for you all; just one only—that, be your years few or many, you might always keep the child-heart. The best gift we could wish you, would be the most precious of all precious gifts—the inheritance that Prince Rahula claimed, and about which we shall tell you some other time.

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THE GNOSTICS.

INTRODUCTORY.

IT is said that the period of Devachanic rest, between two incarnations of the same Ego, normally lasts from fifteen hundred to two thousand years. Accordingly we should expect to see reproduced in every age, the phases of thought, and life, that characterized the time somewhat less than two thousand years previously. In our own times we should look for a reproduction of the movements, and thoughts, that were peculiar to the first century or two of the Christian era; for the wheel has made one more turn, and the Egos now incarnate, informed the men that then lived, and through them impressed upon their age its characteristics. Many correspondences between present states of affairs, and affairs then, will suggest themselves to the reader. I shall content myself with briefly noticing the movement, that corresponded at that time, to the present movement of Theosophy.

The revival of the Esoteric Philosophy in our own days, is to be traced to the opening up of India, and the introduction to Europe of Sanskrit literature. In like manner, the birth of Gnosticism is referable to the grafting of Eastern culture, upon Western thought. The conquest of the East by Rome, opened up easy communication between countries, and races, that till then had kept themselves jealously separate, and to a great degree made common property the philosophies of Egypt, India, Persia, and Palestine. The Prophet of Nazareth had preached his gospel, and his followers who also adopted the mystic philosophies of the East are known to us as the Gnostics. Many of the tenets of the Gnostics are found in the system of Philo Indaeus, who was anterior to Jesus Christ; but his system leaves out necessarily the Christ principle, and redemption, which formed the thread that connects all the Gnostic schools together.

Most of our knowledge of the Gnostics, is derived from the writings about them, by the Church Fathers, who were invariably their opponents. Giving them every credit, for endeavouring to impartially describe the Gnostics, we must admit that it is not likely they succeeded in their task. Gibbon says that the Gnostics were the most cultured of the ancients; and the noblest and most learned of Rome and Greece belonged to one or other of the numerous Gnostic bodies.

At the beginning of Christianity there existed many schools of mystics, and philosophers, who sought to incorporate the new religion with the already existing ancient ones. Taking from the new sect, the Doctrine of the Christ, and the Redemption, they saw in all the other parts of the Christian religion, but another expression of the mystic truths which underlay all religions. They aimed to solve the problems, that then, as now, puzzle and perplex humanity; and in seeking to solve those problems, they trusted only to their own intuition, which they placed before all other means of acquiring knowledge—knowledge of the inner hidden life of things. As the first sect to be called Gnostics, the Naaseni or Ophetes, said “The beginning of perfection is the knowledge of man, but absolute perfection is the knowledge of God.” Hence Gnosticism is the knowledge of God and man; of God’s Being and Providence; of man’s origin and destiny. God, man, and the universe, were what they wished to solve.

J. E. PARDON.

(To be continued.)

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LIGHT FROM THE EAST.

I SHALL tell you the essential form of the supreme spirit, knowing which men freed from bondage attain true being.

An eternal somewhat, upon which the conviction relating to the Egoests, exists as itself, being different from the five sheaths and the witness of the three conditions, who during waking, dreaming, and dreamless slumber, knows the mind and its functions which are action and rest—this is the Self.—*Vircha Chudamani*.

The Self is that by which this universe is pervaded, which nothing pervades, which causes all things to shine, but which all things cannot make to shine. By reason of its proximity alone, the body, the Manas and Buddhi apply themselves to their proper object as if applied [by some one else].—*Ibid.*

This Purusha is eternal, perpetual, unconditioned, absolute happiness, eternally having the same form and being knowledge itself—impelled by whose speech the vital airs move. This unmanifest spiritual consciousness begins to manifest like the dawn in the pure heart, and shining like the mid-day sun in the cave of wisdom illuminates the whole universe.—*Ibid.*

Krishna—even though myself unborn, of changeless essence, and the lord of all existence, yet in presiding over nature—which is mine—I am born but through my own *Maya*, the mystic power of self-ideation, the eternal thought in the eternal mind.—*Bhagavad-Gita.*

Sri Krishna is the Lord of Lords; the King of Kings; his unthinkable glory irradiates all that is manifest and all that is unmanifest. Krishna reveals his infinity of attributes to his beloved worshipper, and yet he is devoid of attributes. Krishna is the sweet babe of Gokula, the delight of Queen Yasodá's heart. On all fours the little baby runs over the house; he will not be restrained; he steals the cream from the pots of the milkmaids. His lisping prattle draws people from far and wide, mad with joy, to clasp in their arms the late flower on the nuptial tree of his parents. And yet the sages sing him the Ancient and Unborn.—*Vaishnava Scriptures.*

When this path is beheld, then, thirst and hunger are forgotten; night and day are undistinguished in this road. Whether one would set out to the bloom of the East, or come to the chambers of the West, without moving, O holder of the bow! is the travelling in this road. In this path, to whatever place one would go, that place one's own self becomes! How shall I easily describe this? Thou thyself shalt experience it.—*Dnyaneshvari.*

Those who belong to us, whether living or departed, and whatever else there is which we wish for and do not obtain, all that we find there if we descend into the heart, where Brahma dwells, in the ether of the heart. There are all our true desires, but hidden by what is false.—*Khandogya-Upanishad.*

The Self abides in the heart. He who knows this, that He is in the heart, goes day by day into heaven, into the Brahman of the heart. That serene being which, after having risen out from this earthly body, and having reached the highest light, appears in its true form, that is the Self, thus he spoke. This is the immortal, the fearless, this is Brahman.—*Ibid.*



THE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY

AND HOW TO JOIN IT.

The objects of the Theosophical Society are:—

1. To form the nucleus of a Universal Brotherhood of Humanity without distinction of race, creed, sex, caste or colour.
2. To promote the study of Aryan, and other Eastern literatures, religions, philosophies and sciences, and to demonstrate its importance.
3. To investigate unexplained laws of nature, and the psychic powers latent in man.

Anyone who accepts the first object of the Society, without reservation, can become a member. The rules of the Society, and all information, can be obtained by writing to the General Secretary, Theosophical Society, 17 and 19 Avenue Road, Regent's Park, London, N.W., or to any of the Secretaries of Lodges or Centres.

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DUBLIN LODGE,

3 UPPER ELY PLACE.

The discussions to the end of January are:—

Dec. 20th	-	"Unity."	-	D. N. Dunlop.
Jan. 3rd	-	"The Buddhist Suttas."	-	P. E. Jordan.
" 10th	-	What is Mysticism?"	-	H. M. Magee.
" 17th	-	"Karma."	-	J. Varian.
" 24th	-	"Self Analysis."	-	G. W. Russell.
" 31st	-	"Theosophy and Common Life."	-	J. Duncan.

The group for the study of *The Secret Doctrine*, by H. P. Blavatsky, continues to meet on Monday evenings from 8.30 to 9.30. The strength and activity of the Lodge would be greatly increased by united study; and as this group, which meets but once a week, is the only opportunity of the kind, it deserves better support.

A pleasant social reunion took place on the 30th ult. at the headquarters.

FRED. J. DICK, *Secretary*.

All literary contributions to be addressed to the EDITOR, and business communications to the PUBLISHER, 71 Lower Drumcondra Road, Dublin.