

# THE THEOSOPHICAL REVIEW

(AMERICAN EDITION)

FORMERLY "LUCIFER" FOUNDED IN 1887 BY H. P. BLAVATSKY

EDITED BY ANNIE BESANT AND G. R. S. MEAD

MARCH, 1907

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To form a nucleus of the universal brotherhood of humanity, without distinction of race, creed, sex, caste or colour.

To encourage the study of comparative religion, philosophy and science.

To investigate unexplained laws of nature and the powers latent in man.

Any persons interested in the subjects treated of in *THE THEOSOPHICAL REVIEW*, or desiring information as to the Theosophical Society, which is especially occupied with these studies, are invited to communicate with any of the following General Secretaries :

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The Editors will endeavour to answer satisfactorily, but of necessity briefly, any question addressed to them in a spirit of serious enquiry, if pertaining to the subjects to which this Review is devoted.

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AMBORLIAO

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THE  
THEOSOPHICAL  
REVIEW

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VOL. XL

MARCH, 1907

No. 235

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ON THE WATCH-TOWER

THE General Annual Report of the Theosophical Society is a bulky document of 161 pages which should be read and studied by all members who desire to be informed on the present state of the Society throughout the world,—that is to say by all who have the larger feeling alive within them and are therefore capable of feeling the larger life of the movement.

The President-  
Founder's health

The thirty-first Anniversary and Convention was held at Adyar instead of at Benares owing to the exceedingly critical state of health of our aged President-Founder, Colonel H. S. Olcott. His strength was only sufficient to allow of his being carried from his bed in a chair, accompanied by his medical adviser and nurse, to utter a few words of welcome and of farewell.

The General Annual Gathering was thus saddened by the thought that in all human probability it was the last Anniversary Meeting over which our venerable and sole surviving Co-Founder would preside; but hope springs eternal in the heart of man,

and we still hope sturdily and steadily that the doctors may prove false prophets, as they did so often in H. P. B.'s case, and this in spite of the bad news that after the delegates and visitors had left, Colonel Olcott had another serious seizure.

In his absence the Convention was presided over by Mrs. Besant, who read his presidential address, which detailed the incidents of his recent long tour in Europe and America, and referred briefly to "one of the saddest duties I was ever called upon to fulfil." We all must sympathise with our President, and share in his regret; but the presidency is held for the carrying out of such duties, and this particular duty was unquestionable, imperative, and inevitable.

\* \* \*

THIRTY-THREE new branches have been added to the Society in the last twelve months, bringing up the total number of charters issued from the beginning to 893; owing, however, to secession and dissolution the existing number of branches has to be reckoned at 614.

The General  
 Report

It need hardly be said that if the Society consisted of these thirty-three branches only and these branches of fitly qualified members, the task it has to perform would be accomplished. Numbers and quantity are of no importance in Theosophy; quality and capacity are the conditions for forming a nucleus of that spiritual gnostic confraternity which is our main object.

We are glad to see that Hungary is applying for a sectional charter, there being now seven branches in that romantic country. The Society has now spread to no less than forty-five countries of the world, and includes branches in such distant parts as the Arctic Circle and West Africa, no less than six in the Dutch East Indies, also in Tunis, Bulgaria and Turkey, and three in Mexico. Indeed if we read the long list of branches, filling some seventy pages of the Report, we have ample evidence to show that we have numbers enough and to spare already. What we now require is training and education and self-discipline, so that the inchoate may become truly coherent, and the chaos an ordered and knowing cosmos.

\* \* \*

FROM the Report of the Director of the Adyar Library, Dr. Otto



Schrader, we learn that the Library has been enriched by a large number of Digambara and other MSS. and large purchases of books, and that a critical edition of the text of the hundred and eight Upanishads is in preparation. This is to appear in about one hundred and fifty numbers of the "Adyar Library Series," each number containing the text in Devanâgarî of one Upanishad followed by an English translation, with explanatory notes, and preceded by introductions. Our congratulations to Dr. Schrader on the choice of subject and good health to him to carry out this great task. It is pleasant to think that at last we are promised something of general utility from the Adyar Library. The reports of catalogue slips and mileage of shelving, etc., were getting monotonous. In regard to the Subject Catalogue of the printed books of the Western Section Dr. Schrader writes :

I have placed at the head "Empirical Psychology," which is now meant to embrace the whole of Occultism too. With respect to many Oriental works which could be called religious as well as philosophical, a separation of Oriental religion and philosophy seemed to be impractical. In "Theosophy" only such works are included which are professedly theosophical; not, e.g., *The Science of Peace* of Bhagavân Dâs (Philosophy), nor such works as might without hesitation be classed under "Empirical Psychology."

There are 542 books thus classed under "Theosophy"; we should like to see the titles of these 542 books. The Library now contains 12,562 MSS. and 14,326 printed books, excluding duplicates, and they are roughly valued at Rs.54,950.

\* \* \*

OF new literature there are no less than 113 titles set forth. We might suggest, however, that in future some attempt be made to

describe the new publications, for at present New Literature pamphlets are lumped together with large works with nothing to distinguish them. These

publications are in English, Dutch, French, German, Italian, Spanish, Swedish, Danish, Russian, Finnish, Gujerâtî, Hindî, Bengâlî, and Sanskrit. Of magazines there are twenty-one English, four French, four Dutch, three German, three Spanish, and also periodicals in Swedish, Finnish, Javanese, Bulgarian, Urdu, Gujarâtî, Canarese, Tamil, Sinhalese, and Sanskrit. Here, again, there is number and quantity enough and to spare ;

if the quality could only keep pace with the quantity we should "have our affair," as the French say. No one can complain of the "output," let it be soon impossible to complain of the "input." The "input" is improving, there is no doubt about it; but this is the direction in which we should now devote our main energies. We have compassed sea and land enough, and there are many hearers and not one proselyte only as the outcome of our propaganda; let us now make ourselves and our hearers children of understanding within the gates of true Theosophy.

• • •

RECENTLY, through the deeds of Japan, the East has spoken a language which the West can understand. To every other mode of language in the East the West has for many

The White Man's  
"Civilisation" a century been deaf. At last its ear has been gained, and great things will inevitably follow.

How rapidly the change in attitude is being effected may be seen from the following, taken from a leading article in *The Times* of January 15th :

It is not unfair to say that it has hitherto been the tacit assumption of the white races of mankind that the world belongs to them, and that actual possession and enjoyment are mainly affairs of their own convenience. They have quarrelled freely among themselves about the division of such portions as seemed convenient for immediate absorption, but, taken as a whole, they have not shown much respect for the claims of the natural possessors, or much consciousness that any of the ethical systems in vogue among themselves can apply to races of a different colour. They have always been ready to assume that it must be a virtuous action to "extend the blessings of civilisation," and to spread the knowledge of true religion among peoples who are not white, even when the process obviously tends to the extermination of these peoples. These beautiful phrases have frequently blinded the white races to the fact that they have not yet succeeded too well in bestowing anything but the dirty work of civilisation upon the masses of their own populations, or in raising the fairer fruits of practical religion. They have generally been too completely persuaded that civilisation can only mean their civilisation, and religion only their religion, to give a thought to the value of other civilisations older than, and, perhaps, as admirable in practice as their own, or to other religions in which men have lived and died with comfort and hope for centuries before they themselves emerged from what in any other part of the world they would call the rudest barbarism. The white man's civilisation has been called by some white cynic the assiduous invention of new wants, and white men have certainly learned to

want every discovered product of every country and every clime. It cannot be said that extending the blessings of civilisation has been a process bearing any very conspicuous marks of disinterestedness. The white man has always expected it to pay him handsomely, and upon the whole has made it pay handsomely. Except when stirred up by jealousy of another white race, or by the hope of gaining military or political advantages which will pay in the long run, a white race has rarely, if ever, spread its civilisation without immediate and substantial reward.

This is a terrible indictment of the ingrained selfishness and innate self-righteousness of the Christian nations, and no one who knows anything of history can say it is exaggerated. After a review of the present situation, for the most part from the industrial standpoint, *The Times* concludes :

Altogether it seems to be time for the white races to take a fresh survey of the whole situation, and to recognise that, in the changed conditions, the old haughty and dictatorial attitude stands in need of modification.

We should rather say that it will eventually have to be entirely abandoned. Our interest, however, is not so much in the industrial and political conditions as in the religious and social outlook. It is the improvement of the latter which we are specially pledged to aid, and it is exceedingly encouraging to note how the way is being prepared on a vast scale by the real Politicians and Political Economists of our world-order for the Great Alliance which shall unite Occident and Orient in the bonds of indissoluble friendship based on mutual understanding and respect.

\* \* \*

THE extraordinary archæological discoveries and explorations that crowd thick upon us are one of the most striking signs of the times, and indicative of the physical beginnings of the restoration of memory to a humanity that has for long suffered from the great "aphasia" which has rendered it inarticulate about itself; indeed in one lobe of its brain it had not till quite lately been able to find means to express a memory of more than 4004 years B.C.,—that is to say of the last hour only of its existence.

The Oldest  
Cemetery in the  
World

The desert tombs of Babrein in the Persian Gulf are known of by few, and yet they are probably the largest and most extra-

ordinary collection of tombs known to man. We confess our own ignorance and enlighten that of our fellow "aphasiacs" by the following from *The Times* of January 26th :

During the current cold weather season, Captain Prideaux, C.I.E., the British Agent at Bahrein, has been carrying on excavation work, under the instructions of the Government of India, on the fringe of the remarkable desert tombs which stretch for miles and miles in the interior of the island. A special correspondent of the *Times of India*, who has been touring in the Persian Gulf, visited the scene of excavation, and, in a deeply interesting descriptive letter, he describes these mounds, stretching away as far as the eye can reach, as constituting the most gigantic cemetery in the world; and as probably also the oldest, and the earliest burying ground of the human race still in visible existence on such a scale. Yet comparatively few people know of its existence; the literature dealing with it consists solely of a few allusions in the works of classical geographers, a report or two in the records of learned societies, and a chapter in a book by the late Mr. Theodore Bent. Mr. Bent thought the mounds were of Phœnician origin; but the correspondent gives reasons for holding them to be of still more ancient origin. Primitive civilisation first began in this region in all probability, and possibly this desert sepulchre is the oldest piece of man's handiwork now existing in the world. The mounds nearest to the village from which the necropolis is approached are 50ft. high, but the vast sea of mounds beyond is made up of tombs from 20ft. to 30ft. in height. The few excavations so far made, confined to the higher mounds, show that each tomb consists of two large chambers, one above the other, built of vast blocks of stone. There are side chambers and passages, and the interior is neatly covered with layers of cement. First, the chambers must have been constructed, and then the tomb was covered over with compact layers of earth and small stones, very many feet thick, thus forming a mound capable of withstanding the flight of many ages, and not giving the slightest hint of what lies within. The masonry is cyclopean in character and perfect of its kind, but no marks of mason's tools are discernible. Not a vestige of an inscription has been discovered anywhere. The work of excavation is very difficult, but, despite the obstacles met with, good progress has been made by Captain Prideaux, who has already accumulated a large collection of fragmentary relics. A scientific report will, no doubt, be issued by the Government of India in due course.

\* \* \*

SINCE the days when *The Secret Doctrine* was written, and H. P. B. valiantly clapper-clawed the swash-buckling heroes of the rabble of atheistic mechanicalism, mis-called Evolution, great changes have occurred; the heroes have fallen out one with another,

Evolution Old and  
New

and thwacked the dust out of each other's doublets. Those who are not acquainted with Prof. Rudolf Otto's *Naturalism and Religion*, which gives an admirable summary of the present position, may learn something of the more salient points at issue from the following table of antitheses, which was originally drawn up by the botanist Korschinsky in *Naturwissenschaftliche Wochenschrift*, xiv. 273 :

## OLD

1. All that is organic is capable of change. Variation is due partly to inner, partly to outer causes.

2. *Struggle of existence*.—This gathers, increases, fixes the useful properties, drops the useless. All the marks and peculiarities of a finished species are the results of a long process of natural selection. They must therefore conform to the outer conditions.

3. The species is subject to constant change—is abidingly the object of natural selection and *Steigerung* of properties. New species arise on this account.

4. The sharper and more strenuous the action of outer conditions of existence, the more violent the struggle of existence; and, hence, the quicker and surer new forms arise.

5. The main condition of development is, therefore, struggle of existence and natural selection.

## NEW

1. All that is organic is capable of change. This *capability is a fundamental, inner property of living beings in general, and independent of external conditions*. It is usually latently kept through hereditation. It comes to expression now and then in *sudden changes*.

2. *Sudden changes*.—Under favourable circumstances, these are starting-points of stable races. The characteristics are now and then useful, but also now and then entirely indifferent to use or injury. Now and then they are not in harmony with outer relations.

3. All species once firmly formed abide, yet new forms are split off through heterogenesis, thus shaking the vital equilibrium. The new is at first uncertain and fluctuating. Gradually it becomes fixed. Then new forms and races with gradually solidifying constitution.

4. Only under specially favourable conditions, only when the struggle of existence is small or does not exist, can new forms arise and become fixed. Under hard conditions no species arise. If they do arise, they perish immediately.

5. Struggle of existence only decimates the otherwise much richness of possible forms. It hinders the sprouting of new variations, and

6. If there had been no struggle for existence, there would have been no adaptation and no improvement.

7. Progress in nature, the improvement of organism, is only a more complex, ever more perfect adaptation to external circumstances. It is reached in a purely mechanical way, through accumulation of useful characteristics.

is in the way of peculiar new formations. *Of itself, it is a hostile, not a friendly, factor to evolution.*

6. If there had been no struggle for existence, there would have been no destruction of forms already risen or arising.

7. The adaptation which the struggle of existence effectuates has nothing to do with improvement; for the physiologically and morphologically higher organisms are not always better adapted to outer conditions than the lower are. *Evolution is not explicable mechanically. The origin of higher forms from lower is possible only on account of a tendency to progress, which resides in the organism.*

\* \* \*

IN the February number we published a fine fragment under the title "A Meditation." This was sent us by a friend, who said that it was being circulated as a leaflet without any author's name, and all he could learn was that it was "From the German." We made a sentence or two run more smoothly and printed it. We now learn from one of our colleagues that it is an abbreviated form of the poetical introduction to Dr. Franz Hartmann's *Jehoshua*; our correspondent further writes:

"In an abbreviated form (probably as you give it) it has been reprinted—without acknowledgment of its source—as a leaflet for use in High Church Missions! And I have heard it read from the pulpit with approval by a minister who got it in that form and was ignorant of its origin, and would not have looked at it at all if he had known its connection with Theosophy. The same minister reprinted it, but again not in its original form, because that contained the 'astral light.'"

We congratulate Dr. Hartmann on receiving such unwilling testimony to the beauty of his Introduction, and apologise to him for forgetting we had read it before when his book appeared nigh on twenty years ago.

## THE BASIS OF THE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY

RECENT events have caused much discussion and many searchings of heart as regards the true basis of the Theosophical Society, and it is clear that there is a division of opinion among the thoughtful members; this division is natural, for there is much to be said on the question: "Should a nucleus of Universal Brotherhood be, or not be, all-inclusive?" It may be well that members should consider what is to be said on each side, and that each should make up his mind as to the ground he occupies. Those who, on either side, airily dismiss the matter as though their own view were indisputably true, and the only one which any rational person can hold, show more prejudice than wisdom. To this question the words of the Lord Buddha may be said to apply: "You did right to doubt, for it was a doubtful matter."

The one side starts with the statement: "This is a Universal Brotherhood and is founded on a spiritual unity; spirit is inclusive, all-embracing, and a Universal Brotherhood founded on the spirit can exclude none; hence no one should be expelled from the Theosophical Society." This argument appeals to a very large number of people, and it has a convincing ring about it. But is it as convincing as it sounds? Is it not founded on an error? The Theosophical Society is not a Universal Brotherhood, but a nucleus thereof, and a nucleus and its cell are not co-extensive. The Universal Brotherhood of humanity is not made by the Theosophical Society; a man does not enter it when he becomes a member of the Theosophical Society, nor leave it when he ceases to be a Theosophical Society member. The Universal Brotherhood is a fact in nature, beyond our creating or our destroying; the purest saint and the vilest criminal are brothers in fact, in truth. Nor would there be any sense or object in making a "Society"

which should be co-extensive with humanity. The mere fact that the Society has objects, of which the applicant for membership must approve, differentiates it from humanity at large and makes a limitation. A man who denies Universal Brotherhood cannot be a member of the Theosophical Society, but he is, and must ever remain, a human brother. It is, then, not the *fact* of brotherhood but the *recognition* of it which entitles a man to membership in the Theosophical Society, to become part of the "nucleus," and a further guarantee demanded from two members, that the candidate is a "fit and proper person to become a member of the Theosophical Society," implies that the recognition is believed to be not merely a lip- but also a life-recognition. If these facts are so—and that they are so is surely undeniable—it follows that a member may be expelled if he ceases to be "a fit and proper person" to be part of the nucleus; conditions of admission imply the corresponding right to exclude when the conditions cease to exist. Admission and exclusion are correlatives; one who is admitted may be excluded. The fact that a man cannot be excluded from the Universal Brotherhood of humanity goes with the fact that he cannot be admitted into it. Hence the fundamental statement put forward by those who deny all right of exclusion from the Theosophical Society is founded on a confusion of thought, a false identification of a Society which is a nucleus with the Universal Brotherhood within which it lives.

It may be urged that, while this is so, it would be better for the Society to have a different basis, and to abandon the power of expulsion. That is arguable, though it is difficult to see how such a Society could formulate its conditions of membership; it would seem that it could have no conditions and no definite membership. However that may be, such a Society would have a different basis from the actual Theosophical Society, and we are concerned with the Society as it is. Those who wish to have a Society on a different basis are surely at liberty to form one, but it should be understood that it would be a new Society.

The next question is: "What constitutes fitness and propriety for membership in the nucleus, called the Theosophical Society?" A nucleus is a centre of vital forces, a centre from



which they radiate, causing organisation and growth in the surrounding body. Through this particular nucleus play forces which spiritualise humanity, and lead it towards the realisation of Universal Brotherhood; when that is realised by everyone, the use of the affirmation of Universal Brotherhood will be over, and the Society as a nucleus in that Brotherhood will cease to be; if it is to continue to live, it will have to be reincarnated with new objects.

The first, and perhaps we may find the only, fitness and propriety necessary to membership, is a recognition of the Truth of Brotherhood, the wish to help it to emerge from latency into activity. The desire to help in bringing about the general realisation of Universal Brotherhood, is the primary fitness and propriety which are sought. This makes a man a vehicle through which can work the forces that make for the realisation of Brotherhood. The Love-force in him makes him one through whom the Love-forces without him can play. And I think that this desire to help, evidenced by work which does help others towards the realisation of Brotherhood, is the only fitness and propriety that our Society can rightly demand.

I fully recognise and frankly confess that the acceptance of this view would occasionally keep among us members who would discredit the Society in the eyes of the ordinary man of the world, either by falling below the accepted morality of the time and place, or by rising so much above it as to be unintelligible, and therefore hated and suspected by the masses of average people. But I think that this temporary disadvantage is less than the introduction of the disintegrating forces of self-righteousness and contempt, which find their channels in the prosecution and expulsion of a member for a moral lapse. The presence in the Society of a man who falls below the accepted standard of morality in any respect can do little harm, when it is generally understood that the Society seeks to raise the level of morality by right argument and by the noble examples of its best members, rather than by the infliction of penalties on its worst. A man may do most evil things, things that deserve and that meet with sternest moral condemnation, and yet, having the root of the matter in him, in desire and effort to help, may remain a "fit

and proper person" to be a member of the Theosophical Society. If penalty is to be inflicted on wrong-doing, it is difficult to draw the line between wrong-doing which is permissible and wrong-doing which is not permissible in the Society; if profligacy be penalised, at what level of profligacy must the Society begin to exclude? an occasional lapse from virtue? fairly constant unclean living? "sowing wild oats," to the ruin of many a wife and maiden? will it authorise inquisition into the private lives of its members, encourage secret accusations or only punish those who break the eleventh commandment: "Thou shalt not be found out"?

A member may hold any theological opinions he pleases; he cannot be excluded for teaching everlasting torture, or the perpetual cremation of miraculously-preserved unbaptised infants, or the predestined damnation of souls presently to be created, or the small number of the saved, or the literal golden and jewelled gates of the New Jerusalem, or the physical immortality of Mrs. Eddy or of Hiram Butler, etc., etc. All these matters are left to reason and argument, and no penalty may be inflicted on a Theosophist for his religious views, however bizarre or erroneous. It is rightly held that error is better combated by reason than by penalty, and although it may be said in a way that this policy of tolerance opens the door to every form of theological licentiousness, it is yet felt that this risk is a small one compared with the introduction of a principle, the logical end of which is the stake of the Inquisition. Our religious liberty of opinion—irreligious licence, say dogmatists—is secure.

But may we not have religious liberty and the enforcement of a common level of conduct, above which members may rise, but below which they may not sink? Shall we give liberty of opinion on moral as well as on religious questions? Here some members call a halt. They would not allow a member to hold opinions leading to murder, theft, adultery, any sexual irregularity, or other evil ways. Does the Theosophical Society enforce on its members a moral code, the transgression of which is punishable with expulsion? I do not consider that the Theosophical Society has any moral code binding on its members. That such a code does not exist in fact is clear, for no written or printed copy

thereof can be produced. Does it consist in a common consensus of opinions?—though that would not be a code. If so, what are the opinions? Is polygamy moral or immoral? But many of our good members in the East are polygamists. Is polyandry moral or immoral? We have members who belong to a community where polyandry is practised. Is prostitution moral or immoral? I fear that the record of all our members is not quite clean on this point; shall they be expelled? On matters connected with the relation of the sexes some very great Initiates have taught most peculiar and, to our minds, outrageous doctrines in the past; should we expel Socrates, Plato, Moses, Vyāsa? We have no code; we hold up lofty ideals, inspiring examples, and we trust to these for the compelling power to lift our members to a high moral level, but we have no code with penalties for the infringement of its provisions.

Can we take the average social opinion of any time and place for a code? *e.g.*, in the West a polygamist should be expelled, and in the East should be regarded as fit and proper for membership? "Public opinion" would then become our moral code. But would this be satisfactory? It means stagnation, not progress; it means death, not life. Such a principle would exclude from our ranks the greatest martyrs of the past, the pioneers of every race and time. Is the Theosophical Society to be of those who kill the prophets in every age, and build their tombs long afterwards when the age has risen to the level of the martyred prophets? While it is easy for every age to be sure that it only kills and persecutes evil men, posterity often reverses the verdict and apotheosises those whom its ancestors branded. Never a Jew who, on the evening of the first Good Friday, congratulated himself and his friends for having purged Jewish Society by slaying a blasphemer, a deceiver of the people, and a stirrer-up of trouble, dreamed that a later Society would regard the martyred evildoer as its Saviour from evil. Such revenges has history, and wise men who study the lesson do not readily pick up the stones to slay.

Supposing a man oppose a triumphant majority, and seek to

\* I would suggest to Mrs. Besant that in a future number she should give the historical facts on which this startling statement is made; otherwise it may lead to misconception.—G. R. S. M.

gather round him those who think like himself, thus undoubtedly causing "agitation" and disturbance in a Branch or Section; what should be done with him? My answer would be: "Leave him alone for a time; if he force himself on Branch meetings, or behave in a way to make the Branch rooms unusable by the majority, then he may rightly be excluded from Branch premises, and compelled to carry on his agitation outside, but he should not be expelled from the Society. At the most he might be expelled from the Branch, wherein physical contact is inevitable, and where one may disturb a hundred." Every reform begins with a few, and if valuable extends till it becomes a majority. The workers against slavery in the United States were regarded as pestilent agitators, were tarred and feathered, and carried outside the limits of the townships. Yet in the long run those abused agitators abolished slavery. That which a majority brands as "causing agitation," a minority regards as the defence of a great principle. Time alone can judge, not the number of the moment. Better a temporary inconvenience than the violent stifling of opinion. If the opinion be wrong, time will destroy it—"Truth alone conquers, not falsehood." If it be right, time will crown it, and great the reward of those who saw it in its uncrowned days. "Let truth and falsehood grapple; who ever knew truth put to the worse in a fair encounter?"

H. P. B. warned us that the great danger of the Society lay in its becoming a sect. Above all other things, therefore, should we guard liberty of thought and speech, and, most zealously of all, when the thought and speech are antagonistic to our own. Truth is pure gold; it cannot be burned up in the fire of discussion, only the dross can be burned away. "The fire shall try every man's work, of what sort it is."

The outcome of this argument evidently reiterates the view that the fitness and propriety of a man for membership in the Theosophical Society depend upon his desire to help in bringing about the general realisation of Universal Brotherhood; and if this desire be questioned in any particular case on the ground that he teaches wrong doctrines or wrong ways, and, therefore, is hindering, not helping, then it would be cogent to enquire whether, as a matter of fact, he *has* helped any to realise

brotherhood, and the testimony that he has thus helped would be final.

I do not question the right of any Branch to exclude from its platform any person; it can choose as speakers on its platform such people only who voice the views of the majority on religion, philosophy, and ethics; this is within its right, whether its policy be wise or not. But it should not wish to exclude from all platforms of all Branches those with whom it disagrees.

I know that there are many in the Society, good people whom I respect, who will think that this article embodies a most dangerous doctrine, and who will ask: "Should not we shut out polluting influences from our families? Should we not keep the nucleus pure, so that spiritual life may play through it?" To the first question I answer: "Yes; because in the family there are children, who should be guarded, until strong enough to guard themselves; but the Theosophical Society does not consist of children, but of grown men and women, and it does not need the shelter rightly given to the young." To the second question I answer: "The purer the nucleus the more will the spiritual life pour through it, but is the nucleus rendered pure by expelling one here and one there whom we may manage to convict of some evil teaching or practice? We leave within it hundreds who are guilty of other evils, and we cannot extrude every one whose absence would make the nucleus purer, until we come down to the old woman who said of a community that hunted out heretics: 'There is only Jamie and me left, and I'm no so sure about Jamie.'"

I earnestly believe that we best do our share of purifying the nucleus by purifying ourselves, and not by expelling our brothers; that we can prevent wrong better by holding up lofty ideals, than by separating ourselves disdainfully from those we condemn; that the Society lives by the splendour of its ideals, not by the rigidity of its lines of exclusion; that it will endure in proportion to the spirituality unfolded in its members, and not according to the plaudits or censures of the world; that we strengthen it in proportion as we love and pardon, and weaken it as we condemn and ostracise. Thus believe I. I can no other.

ANNIE BESANT.

## THE VALUATION OF THEOSOPHY

**THERE is a time in every man's education when he arrives at the conviction that imitation is suicide.—EMERSON.**

OF all subjects upon which the human mind can engage itself one cannot imagine any of more vital interest to man individually, or to the race collectively, than the question of value. Upon it the whole range of our activities, practically, is based, yet, strange to say, it is a subject which, in principle, at any rate, we very rarely make serious attempts to understand.

The dictionary definition of value is: "Worth. The property or properties of a thing in virtue of which it is useful or estimable, or the degree in which such a characteristic is possessed."

Starting from this standpoint one may easily show that everything, every feeling, every thought, has a definite and specific value of a sort, but that really, and actually, this is the case only in so far as such thing, such feeling, such thought, is capable of being used.

The use of a thing implies a user. Every object implies a subject. That is, the degree, or amount, of value of anything stands in direct relation with, and is absolutely dependent upon, something other than itself. What is this other thing? What is the Standard of our standard? Upon this, and upon this alone, the quality of value must be based. For otherwise it is just possible that the very standards by which we measure all things may themselves be false.

Is it not here that the idea meets us with such overwhelming conviction: That nothing has any value at all, except in relation to a particular man; and even then only actually determined by that man's environment?

What is the value of a £5 note; of a piece of blank canvas

and a box of colours; of a scrap of archaic MS. ? Manifestly different, in accordance with the man into whose hands they fall, and the environment in which he is placed. In other words, they are dependent upon the use to which these things severally can be put. The worth or value of a thing depends upon the property by virtue of which it is useful.

But useful by whom ? and to what end ?

And if we are to take the first step in the direction of a valuation, either of Theosophy, or of anything else, clear ideas on these points are an absolute necessity. We must know the nature of the being for whom the valuation is made, we must know the end he has in view, something, also, of his environment. All this must be known, in addition to our information about the thing immediately under review.

Theosophy needs must be valued on the same fundamental basis as everything else ; there is no exception to the rule.

Unless Theosophy be useful, unless Theosophy be of service to me, unless Theosophy possesses a property or properties that stand in immediate relation with an actual need of my life, here and now, as that life stands related to its environment, then, for me, at the present time, Theosophy has no value at all.

On the other hand, if Theosophy be of use to me, if Theosophy possesses some property, characteristic or virtue, which one can *use*, then, to that extent, has Theosophy value, neither more nor less.

But what *is* Theosophy ?

Of course, one might easily yield to the temptation of giving a categorical answer to this question, by referring one's interrogator to Madame Blavatsky's *Secret Doctrine*, to Mr. Sinnett's *Growth of the Soul*, to Mrs. Besant's *Ancient Wisdom*, and like works, and add: " The doctrines therein expounded are Theosophy."

Sofar as it went, the answer would be perfectly correct. But would it be an entirely satisfactory definition ? Would it be sufficiently inclusive, sufficiently comprehensive, to cover the whole ground ?

The Theosophical Society, to say nothing of individual members, can hardly, in our present restricted environment, be

held to represent and embody more than a fragment of the universal Divine Wisdom.

Theosophy, in the true sense, must ever stand above and beyond any of its expressions, nay, above and beyond all expressions. In its fulness it is inexpressible by any man, or community of men, to-day. What the future may make possible, we may leave.

For let us never forget that along the line of evolutionary development there is no finality. Let us try to avoid setting limits to the possibilities of the future. Let us abstain from attributing to our definitions of what Theosophy *is*, the restrictive element of finality inherent in ourselves, consequent upon the measure of our immediate next step. Theosophy cannot be defined, for the simple reason that Divine Wisdom transcends definitions. It is infinite, as the nature of Divinity must ever be, and cannot be compressed into the Procrustean bed of our own mentality, try as we may.

If we are to form any estimate of the value of Theosophy, this truth must never be lost sight of; and if we bear it carefully in mind, the next step, equally important, nay, absolutely necessary, may be taken with safety: namely, to attempt to say what Theosophy appears to us to be, not necessarily what it *is*; to attempt to define Divine Wisdom, not as it is in itself, but as we individually comprehend it, in relation to ourselves.

At the present moment, it is our high privilege to be present in the world when great things are happening. Probably at no period of the world's history was any time more fraught with great possibility than this very day, this very hour. Great happenings stand out clearly in the sight of all men. They are significant. Other, still greater, movements are going on just beneath the surface. Few notice them. The dry bones of established order and custom are being turned over, tenderly or otherwise, as the case may be. Individual men and women are now, as never before, asking themselves questions—such questions, in fact, as our fathers, to say nothing of our grandfathers, would never dare think, let alone formulate and attempt to answer. *The world is coming of age.* Moreover, we are beginning to realise that we may not merely ask, but that the far greater responsibility



rests upon each one of us, to find for himself the answer to his own conundrums. That is the order of the day. "The old order changeth, giving place to the new." The scripture of to-day reads, "Take what you will; ask leave of no man." The scriptures of the past have been revered, and justly so. Let the words of the divine messengers of to-day also be given their due place; their mission is not to contradict, but to fulfil.

Leaving aside details, Theosophy would seem to include in its very essence, the idea that "all are but parts of One stupendous Whole, whose body Nature is, and God the soul"; that the whole bewildering multiplicity and contrariety of the universe is but the objectification of something that is in Itself a Unity; that this vast realm of existence, in which we are ourselves included, may conveniently, and in close correspondence with fact, be spoken of as threefold; that man, as we know him, is not the lord of creation, except in relation to regions reckoned backwards, over forms less evolved than himself; but, on the contrary, that above him stretches an endless vista of higher and ever higher beings; and that these higher forms of life stand in intimate relation with the same scheme of things in which man plays his little part; that man is, at root, and in essence, a potentiality, with infinite possibilities wrapt up within it (like the oak within the acorn), and that he is here and now in process of unfolding these powers and capacities into full and active manifestation; that the process is being worked out in three worlds, or upon three planes of existence, and not upon the physical plane only; and that the process goes forward under the domain of irrefragable law, which man cannot alter, let alone break—with a definite end in view, beyond man's power to frustrate; that by wisely co-operating with the great processes of nature, man may considerably hasten forward his own evolution, and that by and by he will come to see that the goal set for him is far greater, and grander, and better, than any he has as yet been able to conceive for himself; that this life of his is continuous, unbroken, but periodically alternating, now upon what he calls the physical plane, now in a region whose basis of consciousness is more rarefied, though no less real and objectively material because not evoking response in his present five sense-

centres; that there is a strict and logical continuity running through the whole, as of cause and effect; and that the heart of the so-called law, by which results, or effects, are determined, is wise and good—in other words, that it is the law of love, and operates only for man's good. Nay, even further than this may we safely go, perhaps, in our fundamental theses, and say that Theosophy proclaims, with no uncertain voice, that Man is, as God is, or if you prefer the paternal simile, that man is a Son of God, destined some day to attain to the full fruition and stature of Divinity.

One does not accept the ideas just epitomised as Theosophy, pure and undefiled. One does not accept them as covering the whole ground. We accept them, rather, as indicatory of the direction in which we must travel if ever the jewel of great price is to be found—glimpses, foreshadowings, segments, of the perfect Whole. And they can be traced, more or less, in all the great religions of the world. They are there, undoubtedly, one remove, at least, from the unitary source from whence they were derived. Whoever, in the light of this idea, succeeds in penetrating sufficiently deeply into the meaning and the heart of the forms and the formulæ of any faith (first having got to the core of his own profession, or creed) may entertain the hope of some day finding the basis upon which these divine structures rest.

But Theosophy must not be a thing merely of the future, a something to be attained, the goal; it must be of to-day, a present possibility, the path of life rather than life's goal. Religions in the past have sometimes quite overlooked (or at any rate some of their votaries have quite overlooked) the present tense of the soul; they have measured by a false standard. Many a man has held the belief that spirit and matter are necessarily and fundamentally opposed, the one to the other; and consequently, that only as we get away from the latter do we approach the glorious life of the former. The value of Theosophy, as I understand it, is that it very considerably modifies some of the old inferences and conclusions drawn from this so-called eternal antagonism between matter and spirit, between life and form. From this source has arisen that awful bitterness and

**hatred** that has produced an almost inconceivably cruel crop of **self-mortifications** of the individual, and has likewise given birth to every form of religious bigotry and persecution throughout all time. For wherever any form of belief is held as essential to man's salvation, or the absence of all forms of belief is held as prejudicial thereto, the acts of the dark ages of the past are only absent for lack of opportunity to manifest themselves; a very thin crust of conventionality hides them from view.

Only Theosophy, real Divine Wisdom, is capable of altering all this, by enabling us to get behind all the concepts underlying the various religions of the world, and by enabling us to understand these concepts in essence and in principle.

From this source, from Theosophy, arose religions in the past. Thence they will arise in the future, if they come at all. Go back as far as you will in history, at the beginning of every religion stands a Man, a great Teacher, expounding to his fellows the Truth *he* saw—the Divine Wisdom, the Heavenly Sophia, as She appeared to *him*, within the deep recesses of his own being. His words were dwelt upon, treasured up, placed on record, by those who heard them; and they have come down to us through the ages. But, what has reached us, in the way of scripture, in the formulæ, and the creeds, of the faiths of the world, is not the original thing. Our inheritance is an embodiment, an expression at a lower level. And even then, unfortunately, the very forms themselves have, by a slow and inevitable process of accretion, become encrusted with foreign elements, things added, tacked on, by later generations, until in some cases the original gem is completely hidden beneath the elaborations of its own settings.

But, while remembering the origins, the original fount from whence was drawn the inspirations of the past, let us never forget that that selfsame well-spring is still pouring forth its waters for the healing of the nations; its currents are *not* dried up, but are available, as of old, for those who are athirst for the Divine Elixir. As Theosophists let us never forget that the real value of Divine Wisdom immediately vanishes the moment we allow any individual presentment of it, other than our own highest conception, to obtain unquestioned mastery over us—even though the said presentment be hoary with age, and backed up by the

most reputable and respected name in history, or whether it reaches us by way of our most revered modern teacher, author, or friend.

Of course this in no way precludes, or forbids, our accepting, tentatively, the interpretations of another man, when that interpretation appeals to us as worthy of closer examination. But we must not stop there ; we must go forward. We shall never learn the value of Theosophy at second hand. If we prove ourselves such impotent creatures that we are unable to take Theosophy into our lives, and therein find out for *ourselves* what it stands for, what is its meaning, what is its use, in other words, what value it has, for *us*, let us maintain silence until such time as we feel ourselves compelled to say "Yea," or "Nay" to the spirit of life itself. Only he who is capable of setting a price on his own life, is in a position to declare the worth of Theosophy. If we think meanly of ourselves, our appraisal of Theosophy will likewise be insignificant. Theosophy accepts us, as we accept it, on the basis of our own valuation ; be that high or low. The world has suffered badly in the past, its greater, better, life has been held back by the craven and cowardly fear of "God," so-called, by man. The day is gone, and gone for ever, when any power, or powers, in the universe, demonic, human, or even divine, shall unquestionably command "Man" to prostrate himself slavishly at the feet of any "God." We now worship in our own way, fearlessly looking our God full in the face—and what do we see ? Our very Self, *the* Self, the Self of all. The spectral mists we erstwhile mistook for deity, the grim and terrifying spectres, the threatening, forbidding forms, haunting our child-imagination, are driven back by the ever-advancing light of knowledge, beyond recall—dissipated "like the baseless fabric of a dream, leaving not a wrack behind" ; and in their place *we, ourselves*, are standing, suffused with this very light. O the craven fear, the utterly ignominious meanness, that dares not face the products of its own diseased imagination !

The old impositions upon man in the past, of authority and dogma, must not be allowed to reincarnate amongst us, or who shall say that in some distant future we may not find ourselves in the terrifying presence of a Theosophical orthodoxy, with its

**text-books, duly annotated, capable only of being interpreted by specially qualified persons, self-elected, or otherwise, as the case may demand. 'Tis a sight too sad for tears, to see men groping in the dark, refusing light, lest it should lead them to forsake the strict and proper path, preferring darkness, not because their ways are evil, but because they are good—a more deplorable condition still, more hopeless, more difficult to combat. No truer words were ever spoken than those of Hegel, when he said : “ The true tragedy is a conflict of right with right, not of right with wrong.”**

Therefore, unless we live Theosophy, what shall Theosophy avail? Are we to parade before the world, as a band of mummers, dressed up for the occasion in temple garments, a set of buffoons, mightily wise in our own conceit, exhibiting the wondrous prowess of a St. George, slaying the Dragon of Superstition and Materialism, while all the time we are unable to exterminate a single evil passion within our own breasts? We may interpret symbols from A to Z. We may be perfectly familiar with the Chains, and the Rounds, and the Races, with all the wondrous detail of our teaching about the Birth and Evolution of the Soul, and of the System to which we belong. We may be perfect geniuses in the line of comparative religion, philosophy and science; be able to place a finger unerringly upon any given element, as it reappears, metamorphosed, on the dial of time; recognise all present forms as but the modifications of forms that are now past and gone. What shall all this knowledge of the processes of the Divine Becoming avail, unless we ourselves become—Divine?

The message of Theosophy seems as if it meant : “ *Be*—first and foremost. Later on, formulate your theories, classify your facts, if you must. But seek, first, Theosophy. The rest will follow in due course. Discriminate, weigh, judge—by the Standard of all standards—your Self. Let feelings go, disregard desires, intellectual concepts too; you may do so with safety. They are not It, but the activities of the forms in which It dwells. Actuate and ultimate, in life, your Self—in your own way, by your own standard, as men in the world realise their lives, by standards you can no longer accept. Don't whine. Accept the

world as it is. Be not deluded ; you *have* all you need. Ask no man aught. Be what you will, and let that satisfy ; or will to *be*, and rest in that."

Thus seems the message. Can one accept it? Again it seems to say :

All that you need is within your reach. Everything that could be done for you is an accomplished fact. The outcome is for you to decide. Elaborate preparations have been made on your behalf, beyond, and above, your wildest dreams, in accordance with high destiny. If you would be this, or that, the way lies open. If you take it, it is well ; if you refuse, who is to blame ? Upon whose shoulders shall fall the burden of failure ? No man lacks opportunity ; no facilities are absent to the end in view. But if you must complain, if you must find fault, if you must vent anger on someone, upon something, for what you have determined is a hard lot, a difficult task, let your lamentations be directed towards the right quarter. If you are not what you would be, it is your own fault ; not the fault of another. Look at home. Look within your own dwelling. The Good Law gives a fair field, and no favour. Is not that enough ? Would you have it otherwise ? Do you want what you have not earned ? That cannot be, in the realm of divine equality. 'Twould not be worth the having. You are not destined to be for ever a babe, carried about in the protective arms of a cosmic nurse, but a Man, with self-proprietary rights and responsibilities for what you hold. And you must earn what you are to possess ; produce what is to be yours ; and hold what you can against all forces that would say you Nay. Ask for nothing ; take what you will, the way lies open ; and be satisfied, as becometh a Man. If you are Master in your own house you need not trouble about the in-subordinates next door ; if you are not, find out the reason why, and have the matter settled forthwith. Should you come off second best blame no one else ; blame yourself. The way lies open. If you are not where you would be, or think you ought to be, proceed thither, asking no man's leave. Otherwise, remain silent, or, if you must complain, let it be into your own attentive ear that your complaints are poured. Let no man be deceived by the dancing fire-flies that flit across his path, by the will-o'-

the-wisps that beckon him on; they lead to the quagmires of disappointment, of wasted energy, of futile endeavour. You will reap as you sow, neither more nor less. Your own immortal Self, alone, is solid ground. Abide in that. There is naught else for you, never was, never will be. Do you know *that*? If not, make its acquaintance. Love it. Yes—love your Self! Why should you hate it? Do you find it unlovable, fit only to have showered upon it disparaging epithets? If such you deem it, make it otherwise. Why not? Make it the greatest, the noblest Self you can conceive, the most unselfish Self that ever was. Why not? By positive affirmation, Be what you would. Take no man's valuation of yourself. Take your own. And see to it that it falls not short, see that it be not inferior to the appraisements, to the valuations of other men. See *well* to it that it transcends these, all of them put together. See to it that it transcends in nobility, in grandeur, in gentleness, in love, in all the estimable qualities your brother would fain see expressed in you. Why not? Do this yourself, for yourself. Time and the Good Law are your servants. They will not fail you. See that you fail not your Self."

C. J. BARKER.

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## TRUE THINKING AND PSEUDO-THINKING

As a rule the assertion that the Universe is essentially the Divine Mind is viewed with wonder. Those who claim to have outgrown childish credulity in fairy tales, resent it as a personal affront to their intellectual enlightenment; and even those who profess to believe it, love to give it the air of an awe-inspiring mystery, which they do not presume to understand. The attitude assumed in both cases is to me an evidence that the nature of thinking *quâ* thinking is generally ignored. In order to elucidate it as briefly as can be attempted in a short article, I shall first of all demonstrate the rational insufficiency of what by contrast I call pseudo-thinking, *i.e.*, the ordinary modes of thought.

This so-called thinking attains its perfection in the science

of Mathematics. In order, then, to fathom its depth, let us examine an instance of mathematical reasoning—for instance, Lemma I. of the first section of Newton's *Principia* :

“Quantities and the ratios of quantities which in any finite time tend continually to equality, and before the end of that time approach nearer to each other than by any given difference, become ultimately equal.

“*Proof*: If you deny it, let them be ultimately unequal ; and let their ultimate difference be D. Therefore they cannot approach nearer to equality than by that given difference D. Which is against the supposition.”

It is likely that a clear-headed rustic, after taking in the full import of the supposition, would feel somewhat mystified at the turn of the proof. When somebody proposes to prove some assertion of his, we naturally look forward to its substantiation. It is naturally and correctly assumed that the proof will be carried from *another* standpoint than that of the assertion to be proved. Otherwise the proof amounts to a disappointing repetition ; and although, as advertisers know so well, even shrewd people succumb to the hypnotic influence exercised by a repetition *ad lib.*, a blind assumption remains blind in spite of its most widespread currency. That is, mere repetition cannot substantiate it. On questions of rational import it is the millions who are lighter in the balance than one who truly knows.

Now, it is true that Newton's proof is carried from a standpoint which is negative of that of his supposition ; as to form, he therefore complies with the stated requirement of a proof. When, however, we examine the content of the negative standpoint, we find that it is identical with its opposite. The distinction between them is thus purely formal ; an explication of the well-known and rational verity that all determination is negation, *i.e.*, implies its contrary. Therefore, the supposition is not proved from a truly other standpoint, but is only restated in a negative form which it implicitly implies. When a proof amounts only to such a restatement it is called an apalogy.

Without pausing to explain that in the sphere of rational passivity apalogy is the sole guarantee of correctness, I shall proceed to demonstrate that it is the Nemesis of the philosophising



pseudo-thinker. To this end I shall translate, or rather paraphrase, the first of Kant's antinomies of pure Reason :

*“ Thesis.*—The world has a beginning in time and is also spatially limited.

*“ Proof.*—Let us assume that the world has no beginning in time ; then any given moment has an eternity behind it. This means that the moment terminates an infinite series of successive states of things in the world. But the infinity of a series consists precisely in the fact that it never can be terminated. Hence an eternity could not have passed, and the world must have a beginning.

*“ Secondly, let us assume that the world is spatially limitless ; then it is a given whole of co-existing things. Now we cannot conceive the greatness of a quantum which is not given within certain limits of intuition in any other way but through a synthesis of its parts, and the totality of such a quantum can be conceived only by means of an accomplished synthesis or by means of a repeated adding of the unit to itself. Accordingly in order to conceive the world which fills all spaces as a whole, the successive synthesis of parts of an infinite world would have to be assumed as accomplished, i.e., an infinite time required for the counting of all co-existing things would have to be assumed as past, which is impossible. Therefore an infinite aggregate of real things cannot be viewed as a given whole, nor as simultaneously given. The world is consequently spatially limited.”*

It must not be thought that Kant really believed in this conclusion. It will be seen directly that he tried to prove its very contrary. He was concerned only with the to him inexplicable fact that pure Reason, *i.e.*, that which *he* called pure Reason, and which in truth is only the abstract intellect, is able to prove two contrary assertions with equal conclusiveness. For that the arguments employed with respect to the theses and antitheses of his four antinomies are irrefutable he had no doubt whatever.

Well, the proof of the thesis under consideration is introduced in both its subdivisions by assuming the contrary of the assertion to be proved. Seeing, however, that every statement

involves implicitly its contrary, could a *reductio ad absurdum* of the secondary assumptions mean anything else but that the thesis itself is untenable? The distinction between the positive and negative form of a statement is, as has been said above, purely formal; consequently they cannot be given a separable content. This realisation is sufficient to make one anticipate that the proof in question must be a fraud.

And, indeed, on looking closer into its line of argument, its fallacy reveals itself in this, that Kant is quite unconscious of the fact that in order to prove his point, he simply postulates it in a slightly altered form at the very beginning of his argument. "Let us assume," says he, "that the world has no beginning in time: then *any given moment* has an eternity behind it." But, then, is not the questionable beginning in time itself a given moment? In order to prove that the world has a beginning in time, he ought to have proved the rationality of crediting a given moment of time with absolute *per-se-ness*. Instead of which he assumed it; and, moreover, assumed it as having an eternity *behind* it, when it is obvious that this immediately implies that the given moment must then also have an eternity *before* it. For the notion of end is that of beginning. And if he himself based his proof on the impossibility of a moment of time having an eternity behind it, how then is it proved that the world has a beginning or is spatially limited?

Space forbids me to disentangle every twist of the presumably irrefutable proof of the thesis. Enough, however, has been said to make the reader realise its futility; the conclusion simply restates the proposition, *i.e.*, the reasoning is purely apagogical. And the same will be found to be the case with the antithesis:

"The world has no beginning and no spatial limits, but is in respect of both time and space infinite.

"*Proof.*—Let us assume that the world has a beginning. But as the beginning is a being contrasted with a time when it was not, a time must have passed when the world was not, *i.e.*, an empty time. Now, however, no thing can become in an empty time, because none of its [time's] parts contains a distinguishable condition of becoming (such a condition may be assumed to arise, either spontaneously or through another cause).

Thus it is true that many a series of things may begin in the world, but this itself cannot have a beginning.

“ Further, suppose that the world is spatially limited, then it is contained in an empty space which is limitless. There would be not only a relation of things *in* space, but also *to* space. But as the world is an absolute whole outside of which there is found no object, and therefore no *correlatum* with which to stand in relation, the relation of the world to the empty space would be its relation to no object. However, a relation of this kind, and, therefore, also the limitation of the world by an empty space, is nothing. It follows that the world is not at all limited in respect of space, but has an infinite extension.”

One cannot quarrel with the correctness of this assertion *per se* ; but it is easy to show that it certainly does *not* follow from the proof itself any more than the corollary assertion that the world cannot have a beginning. Analysing the way in which this is presumably proved, we find that the gratuitous assumption which was meant to deal the death blow to the contrary standpoint has vanished into thin air before even touching it. If the world has a beginning, says Kant, there must have preceded an empty time; but “ no thing can become in an empty time ”! Quite true; only why, then, assume that “ the beginning is a being contrasted with a time when it was not,” *i.e.*, contrasted with Nothing as *exclusive* of Being? In seeking a beginning preceded by absolute nothingness, we are obviously on a fool’s errand, because Nothing *is* thought, and consequently cannot be credited with absoluteness. Now, however gratifying it may be to find Kant cancelling the fallacy in the same breath in which he has uttered it (its definite repudiation occurs characteristically only by the way in the parenthesis, as if to illustrate that a sound view occupies with a pseudo-thinker only a secondary position, even when he happens to stumble against it), the pertinent question is: What bearing has the introduced fallacy and its immediate revocation on the professed object of the proof? The assertion to be reduced *ad absurdum* is all the time, as it were, standing by, waiting till its turn to share in action will arrive, but waiting in vain. Nothing is further from Kant than to interfere with its mute expectancy to be operated upon, to receive that

fiery baptism of living dialectic, without which no premise can flower into the splendour of a sound conclusion, and hand on its richness to its forthcoming progeny. This feat reminds me only of the fakir who makes his audience believe that he has vanished in the sky in the course of his rope-climbing, when all the time he has been standing still on the same spot! Surely it is only a make-believe that the death-blow has been struck and the victim removed from the arena amidst a world-stirring earthquake—in honour of the destroyer. The ludicrousness of the whole pantomime reaches its climax when it is kept in mind that all that is subversive of the assumption to be reduced *ad absurdum* must prove fatal to the antithesis itself. It is thus that Nemesis dodges the pseudo-thinker whenever he seeks the key to his problems in mere apagogy; he unwittingly is made to achieve just the very opposite of what was his original intention!

Lest it seem that I am unduly sarcastic at the expense of an earnest searcher for truth—for this tribute must be paid to Kant—I must point out that I do not indulge in personalities. Self-complacency is alien to him who understands. *Comprendre c'est pardonner*. Granted that to the pseudo-thinker his arguments are a matter of life and death, which, however, they never are; if, on entering into their dialectic, they suddenly assume the aspect of a badly staged pantomime, one cannot help laughing; and the laughter is then to be traced to the joy with which our enlarged insight fills us. Does not the eye brighten up with joyous laughter? Well, it does so because it reflects the spiritual unity which succeeds the painful diremption of self-forgetfulness. A flash of insight gladdens the heart; and when the heart is full of joy we shout for joy, we laugh. He who succeeds in rending the veil of *Mâyá* does not spend the rest of his days in haughty isolation from the rabble. "Brothers," he feels like rushing out and proclaiming the good news from the house-tops: "Brothers, rejoice I know the truth!" as if to say: "What is mine is yours; here, take it!" And ever after this most munificent of men keeps on inviting his fellow-men to share his spiritual riches, whilst the only revenge he takes over those who cling to their apagogical futilities is his laughter at their unconscious mental clownishness.

Now, to the extent to which I have entered into the dialectic

of Kant's so-called proofs of the first of his four (out of infinitely many) antinomies of the abstract intellect, I have already given an illustration of the nature of true thinking. It remains now to give it an undivided attention.

Above everything else it is obvious that true thinking must imply infallibility. There is no uncertainty whatever about the meaning of the word *true* or truth, as the modern, no less than the ancient, Pilate loves to fancy—probably only to enjoy for a moment the luxury of passing for profound in his customary shallowness. The statement that “the only truth is that there is no truth” is mere words; the soul knows it not! It is only the lips that chatter thus irresponsibly. We are convinced *à priori* that truth is the greatest of all boons, the grandest of all realities, the most ineffable of all facts, the worthiest of all goals, the most enduring of all ideals—and yet our indisputable birthright *here and now!* “I am a man,” means “I live to know the truth”; and this blessed word unmistakably connotes complete satisfaction of the keenest thirst for knowledge, perfect freedom from the taunting of insoluble problems as to the how, why, whence of all that is in heaven or on earth. To wish to discuss *this*, would mean to talk idly, because we are rational beings only in virtue of our innate certainty that *it is so*, and no one proposes to talk philosophy with a donkey. What really perplexes the unconscious blasphemers against the Holy Ghost is the question as to the criterion of infallibility, *i.e.*, the question: How to realise that that which this or that man asserts to be absolutely true *is* true.

And here I fully sympathise with the free-thinker. Such a question only betokens mental health of the ordinary consciousness. No sound common-sense man ought to cringe before the unseen and unverified; and least of all ought he to pocket his common-sense when he is asked to subscribe to statements backed by the mysterious authority of superhuman intelligences, the very existence of which is to him doubtful. To force authoritatively unproved assertions on one's fellow-men is the climax of insolence, because he who does so tramples down the most obvious of human rights: that of verifying before believing!

Now, to make sure that we are not dreaming we try to inflict

some pain on ourselves; and although even a pinch may be a part of the dream itself it is also part of the method which alone can settle the distinction between waking and sleeping. Namely, we must make sure that our objectivity is independent of our fancy because the world of the waking consciousness is governed by laws to which the individual must conform for all practical purposes. The business of experimental science may be said to consist in establishing the criterion of waking consciousness in the system of Nature's laws; all that sets aside these is traced to other than the ordinary waking consciousness.

The distinction between true and pseudo-thinking is settled quite analogously; sound common-sense rules supreme even here. It is obvious that infallibility means freedom from individual bias; its criterion is therefore the nature of mind. Isolated assertions may seem utterly incompatible, but their chaos must have some central principle, inasmuch as the most heterogeneous statements occur in one and the same mind, of which they are mere accidentalities. It stands to reason, therefore, that the final court of appeal must be sought in a comprehensive view of the law which maintains itself all through every shade of mental activity. This law can refer only to the working of the mind as such. Consequently, in order to prove to oneself or to others that such or such assertion is true, it is necessary to bring out the dialectic movement which it implicitly involves as its substance, and then see whether it fits into the periphery of the substantial mind. This periphery is nothing else but the exposition of the dialectic movement which links together the simplest and the most concrete of notions, *i.e.*, that of pure Being and God; which consequently provides a criterion for every possible shade of mental attitude. Generally speaking, reality is thus realised as the universal which particularises itself, gives rise to the pairs of opposites, and again reaches a comprehensive unity with itself in the conclusion, when the particularisation begins anew. But just as he who wishes to learn how to swim must enter the water and try, so also a full comprehension of the law governing the dialectic movement can be acquired only *in actu*. That is, one must throw oneself headlong into its living stream, and retain only just enough of self-consciousness to record its geometrically

utterly inexpressible course. Thus do we reach perfect self-knowledge, and, *eo ipso*, enter into the light of full truth.

I may add in conclusion that *de facto* every one of us already is in the stream. The time, however, which it will take us to reach the other shore depends on the intensity with which we strive to disentangle ourselves from the prejudices which cling to us like leeches. He who loves the God of Truth above everything else moves on with a gigantic stride, whilst the spiritually indolent find their way beset at every step with what seem insuperable difficulties. We must realise that there is no going backward or settling down in the mire. *On we must*; and the only rational solution of all difficulties is to cut the period of probation as short as possible by a courageous endeavour to digest every noxious prejudice. For in endeavouring to assimilate our present views we actually do appeal to the final court of mental dissensions even before we are able to anticipate its verdict philosophically. If every step in advance is found to follow only after the bitterness of a prejudice has been tasted in every fibre of the body, no wise man must be afraid of the suffering which a deliberate gulping down of the contents of his mental cup entails. In other words, he who wishes to progress swiftly, must try to *practise* what he professes to believe, even should such a practice mean the gallows or cutting his own throat. Suffering and despair are the Nemesis of the pseudo-thinker, and where is the man who can escape the fate which is of his own making? As a man soweth, so he must reap; as he thinketh, so he is.

FRANCIS SEDLÁK.

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OH, my Exemplar,  
 Thou who bringest all things to destruction and dost not account it  
 cruelty,  
 Thou who pourest benedictions upon all time and dost not account it  
 charity,  
 Thou who art older than antiquity and dost not account it age,  
 Thou who supportest the universe, shaping the many forms therein  
 and dost not account it skill!  
 —This is the happiness of God!

CHUANG-TZU. *Translated by H. A. GILES.*

## "THE PERSONAL FACTOR IN KARMA"

### A REPLY

#### I.

THE author of the article in the December REVIEW under the above title seems to imply that he has "dug out" of Theosophical literature an element or aspect of Karma that has been hitherto overlooked.

Now I do not think with Mr. Marsh that so very much has been said already about Karma from all points of view. On the contrary, I feel that most things are still waiting to be said on the subject. The Nemesis and Kismet aspects of the Great Law have truly been hobbies overdriven by some persons, but there is the danger in repudiating these points of view that they may come to be denied altogether. On the other hand, I would say, rather let us include them in our considerations. This *inclusive*ness is to me a more rational way for a philosophy of religion that is going to live and benefit all types of mind, and I would, at the outset, take serious exception to putting in relief any one aspect or any person's view-point to the exclusion of others. I would not make this statement here, however, were it not that I read (p. 349): "Free-will is a more hopeful belief to hold than Necessity, and although the truth may lie between them, yet more will be accomplished by the study of the Free-will aspect," and also: "It would be wiser for us to consider this aspect *almost to the exclusion of the other.*"

Plato has defined opinion as neither ignorance nor knowledge but something that lies between, more dusky than knowledge, more luminous than ignorance (*Republic*, v.); and since the above statement falls within what Plato calls the "mass of notions, current among the mass of men, about beauty, justice and the rest which roam about between the confines of pure



existence and pure non-existence,” I would put it in that intermediate category which is defined by him as “opinion,” excluding it from philosophical company.

II.

After defining what he means by the personal factor as “the part a man plays himself” (!) and correctly enough remarking that, “this is conditioned by the way he thinks,” our author broadly says: “*Many a Theosophist blames Karma for his condition when it is plain to an onlooker that if he had bestirred himself things would have been otherwise.*”

Now really, how can anybody be truly a Theosophist and “blame Karma” for anything? I will quote Plato again to show my meaning, who says in effect when referring to certain actions attributed to the gods: if they do these things they are not gods, and if they are gods they do not these things.

III.

Let us change the word “Karma” to “Character” and say it is “all that total of the soul” which has been called “the legacy of possibilities.” Emerson says: “In the history of the individual is always an account of his condition, and he knows himself to be a party to his present estate.” History is the action and reaction of these two, deny it as we will—Nature and Thought. “Whilst the man is weak, the earth takes him up. He plants his brain and affections. By and by he will take up the earth and have his gardens and vineyards in the beautiful order and productiveness of his thoughts.”

The individual with his total of possibilities must not, will not, be submerged for ever in his personality. This field, which is spoken of and which includes, I take it, environment, family, race, nation, climate, shows *where*, shows *what* the man may do, but *how* he will *do* it is another thing. Two men born together, twins of one parentage, if you please, advised and trained by the same wisdom, cannot do the same things, nor accomplish the same ends. Karma underlies the Necessity that produces individuals, and makes the many-ness as well as the oneness. How many parents have furnished all the requisites necessary for a

child to follow a certain line of life, money, encouragement, even to the point of force, everything—with disappointment on the one side and antagonism on the other the only results? Too many parents have forced square pegs into round holes; too much bestirring in a given direction. A developed soul will claim its right to resist; a weaker one may succumb to a force stronger than himself and struggle to do what is imposed upon him from without. Some succeed in materially altering, nay annihilating for an incarnation, perhaps, the direction from within. Even this is not fatal except with the divine fatalism which provides that “you come to your fate by the efforts you make to escape it.” Here the Beautiful Necessity, the Law of Adrasteia—the Law of the whole—homeopathically doses the system, and the personal factor is *nil*.

“*What use he makes of it all, is for him to decide and is not foreordained,*” as stated on page 348, in italics, cannot be true in the sense that is apparently implied; and moreover it is not by any means a hopeful doctrine. It is a sort of metaphysical dry-rot for some of us, a fascinating will-o'-the-wisp of the personal *I*, the pursuit of which we have proved to be deadly dull, and we like better to say to ourselves: “Life will be imaged but cannot be divided or doubled; any invasion of the unity would be chaos.”

#### IV.

Optimism is, like many other emotions, a sensuous delight which often intoxicates and then betrays. When the reveller wakes up he may find himself not so far in advance of the pessimists, who are turning the same pole in the opposite direction. Reason sits smiling at the meeting of the two extremes, and so we wonder why anyone says: “I am one of those optimists who believe there is a great deal more in a man than he is at present expressing, and that, in fact, very few of us are making the most of our opportunities.” I said extremes meet, and this sentence proves it, for it is to me the essence of pessimism derived from abnormal introspection; and when, further on, I read: “If he but choose to assert himself, wake up, etc., he could produce, etc.,” I think: Alas and alas, he does not

choose, and so he does not “*materially* alter his life,” and does not “rise, shake off his inertia and strike out.”

There is so much of this sort of thing over here in America, this optimism gone mad, this self-assertion, that we have called it metaphysical dry-rot. Serious persons, claiming “opulence,” “health,” “happiness” for themselves, are a little ludicrous to one who understands that there is a scheme of things, with a mighty Intelligence as the Architect, a mighty Will as the Power, and that Nature only makes obeisance to those who have first learned to obey. A mere superficial study of Theosophy leads to the conclusion that no person is expressing all that he is. It takes neither an optimist nor a pessimist to see this, for it is truth. How could that which masks the man express much of him?

V.

The cash-transaction idea is a good one; it is reasonable, especially in its bearing upon the more developed individuals, who, it is to be presumed, put out more force when they think, than the weaker man who is too unstable to be a great power in any direction. The pay is as immediate as the receipt of goods—so much cash so much equivalent in goods. Why it is “wiser for us to consider this aspect” of the subject, “almost to the exclusion of the other” (the Necessity aspect), I fail to discover from the article under consideration, or from any appeal it makes to my sense of proportion. Indeed, so far as I can judge at this moment, I think it is a pernicious teaching, as all half-truths and mere opinions are apt to be.

Action and reaction are equal and *immediate* upon the consciousness or life-side only. So far as the personal or form-side comes in, it is as likely to be mediate, as immediate. One plant blooms but a single time in a century; another blooms every day, and is the glory of the morning; another blooms at set of sun, another at the midnight hour. No one shall say they should grow alike. So some thoughts take longer to grow. That sublime virtue we call tolerance is based upon this: that we may make a law for ourselves, but wisdom for ever forbids us to impose it upon another.

To place the personal factor in the foreground of my thought

is to repeat the error of putting the earth at the centre of our solar system. The geocentric view causes one to turn a mental somersault, and is a dangerous thing, because one is more than likely to land on one's head in the mud. Of course, lazy people are averse to personal responsibility and the pay-up system generally, and this teaching sometimes has at first a rather stunning effect, especially on those who are having some dismal experience, whose cause cannot be traced. But here is our author creating another Nemesis, dressing it up as the "personal factor," and giving it the fascinating name of Free-will. This Nemesis will do well enough to stir up those who say: "Let us eat, drink, and be merry for to-morrow we die," but since there is also a possibility that physical action and inaction may be equal, and the personal factor *may* be shortsighted, we will put this thing of straw with the collection of philodoxical rather than philosophical views.

## VI.

No thoughtful Theosophist could deny the possibility of choosing at every step of the way, *i.e.*, deciding and selecting out of two or more ways the way he will walk. Freedom to choose, to experience, to demand, to express, to seek, to find, his is the freedom even to bind the fetters tighter, and if this is what he thinks about it, let him think so; yet—"If we thought men were free in the sense that in a single exception one fantastical will could prevail over the law of things, it were all one as if a child's hand could pull down the sun. If, in the least particular, one could derange the order of nature,—who would accept the gift of life?" Freedom to bind ourselves back to the law which knows not wrath nor pardon, is one view of freedom; when a man becomes that law he is a liberated soul, his will free because of the countless givings up of his will. The Absolution is complete then, for he has laid himself upon the Altar of that Unity which holds nature and souls in perfect solution, and compels every atom to serve a universal end. Of course, this is rather an apology for the one view than a refutation of the other.

VII.

But the most amazing statement made by our author is this: " Hitherto we have been led to consider that the physical body is a pretty accurate fit for the life within (!) and that as the life expands it will change." By whom or what the writer has been led to consider such a thing as this, I do not know, for it certainly contradicts all the information I have been able to glean from Theosophical literature or otherwise. The very basis of true sympathy and charity is that the form does *not* express the life, that the form is but the instrument in dense matter by and *through* which the consciousness—or life—is to do some things or may do certain things. How could a physical body fully *express* the life within? Self-examination shows us, if it shows anything at all, the futility of *thinking* that we can do so, and the utter inability for the physical to express more than a phase, or a small number of phases, of the consciousness is illustrated everywhere for the student of human life. "As above, so below"; immanence and transcendence in the great Cosmos, the same epitomised in every part thereof. This seems to me the solution of the long-continued discussions about Pantheism, Pan-nihilism, Immanence and Transcendence. The exclusion of the one or the other adds to the heat of the arguments. Again *inclusion* marks the only road to a Unity, which surely Theosophists all desire.

VIII.

To quote again from the REVIEW (p. 350): " He is only bound by it as long as he thinks he is." Yes, and the man will "think" he is bound just so long as the good of the whole can be subserved by his *Mâyá*, limitation, illusion.

IX.

When Corporal Tanner's feet were shot off at Gettysburg he was taken to a hospital, where a well-meaning visitor solemnly presented him with a tract on " The Follies of Dancing." Of course he laughed, because he "thought" the condition of his physical body made dancing impossible, but then, "Christian

Science" and "Mind Cure" were still waiting to be born, and after all he might have been deluded. Be that as it may, let us suppose that when he quietly informed his well-meaning visitor that he could not commit such folly if he wanted to, he was told that it would be so only as long as he thought it was so. His reply would surely have been, "Nonsense!"

To quote again from the REVIEW (p. 351): "*The life must work within its form*, but that the life is an exact fit or that it is getting as much as possible out of its form when that form is a human body, is what must be doubted." Again I cannot agree because I think, as I have stated above, that the life transcends the form, and by that I mean no metaphysical abstraction, but simply that everyone feels and thinks and knows more, far more, than any consciousness which is bound by a physical sheath, can possibly *imagine*. Our best efforts to express the life on the physical plane are often abortive. Who does not know this if he has watched the struggles of his fellow beings? How often have we not seen the life thus limited by its environment bound by everything on the physical plane? So obvious is this that we long ago found a simile in nature that explains, in a measure at least, the apparent injustice of considering the personal factor by itself.

A wise gardener puts the bulb from which he expects a beautiful flower into a small pot with very little earth about it. When the rootlets expand and touch the limiting wall of this little field the plant is forced, so to say, to put the life in another direction. If left to itself this same bulb might root itself very deeply in the earth and show luxuriant foliage and numerous blossoms of sorts, but the gardener limits its downward and outward growth and expression in the one way, in order that a rarer bloom may result. I have known human personalities that followed this analogy and who knew themselves limited, bound, cribbed and confined by physical organism and circumstance so far as expressing the life in or even through the physical body comes into consideration. But who can tell what purpose Karma, the Good Gardener of Souls, has in lopping off many possibilities and forcing the soul to turn on itself to grow, to bloom in a higher sphere? Karma, the Good Gardener, high

over all, sits on His throne in the inner consciousness, the heart of man. Therefore he who " blames Karma " or thinks of it as anything different from a part of the beautiful necessity of his life, is surely entangled in illusion's meshes. Let those who do this call themselves Theosophists no more, for they are reviling the Good Law which is Love, which is Wisdom, which is God.

X.

As for the " quickening of Karma " (p. 349) ; if the writer will apply his own theory to this it will be as useful as it will be elsewhere. First he says he doubts its frequency, then that the phrase " quickening of Karma " means to him " the bringing into a life, events, good or bad, generally bad, which were not arranged for at the beginning, and which occur because of the individual to hasten his evolution." On page 350 he sums up by saying: " For every Tom, Dick, and Harry Theosophist to attribute any little bit of misfortune which he meets to the quickening of Karma is an unwarrantable presumption."

Now, according to his theory a thing is so if one only thinks it is. A person puts forth intense longing to live the higher life, for a closer touch with God, for greater capacity for service, for light in darkness, for a greater, wider love and sympathy. In doing this the mind is changed, the mind intensifies—or vitalises—some of the hidden springs of consciousness. Something has occurred, an act on higher planes, a *fiat* has gone forth. Since endurance and tolerance and patience are the real answers to his change of mind or expansion of consciousness, suffering may, yes often does, ensue, because the lower nature strives when the man is going to desert her. Suffering is not monopolised by any set of individuals, and " every Tom, Dick and Harry," whether Theosophist or not, is subject to the laws of nature, and so we need not look at the amount of suffering endured as the solution of the mystery.

I might say, in passing, that too many vague allusions are made to these mysterious aspects, too many self-satisfied conclusions are drawn as to progress made, etc. The poor in mind we have always with us, let it pass. What I do object to is the assumption that suffering (bad Karma ?) has anything to do with

the case in itself, and what does indicate something is this: *What is the sustained and dominant attitude of an individual toward life-events, whether good, bad or indifferent?* The knower of Karma uses his suffering one way, other men think differently about things, and by doing so, get in still deeper. The intense longing for something not yet attained is itself the Power that maketh all new. It therefore illumines all after-events, causes assimilation of their meaning more quickly, and brings the man to new and more difficult experiences, as fast as he reconciles and balances the old. If, therefore, Tom, Dick or Harry is a Theosophist, and by consequence more or less a "knower of Karma," he may will or not to quicken his evolution, or hasten his Karma, and he even may or may not have a single experience in his outer life that differs from ordinary people, but his evolution is already hastened *because* of his change of mind. "Whatever is (then) begun takes its character from the state of mind in which it is begun, and is independent of the end. The beginning is the end; the rest but an echo." If our natures change, then all is done—all is gained. So I think, and: "Even a little of this knowledge protects from great fear."

I have heard one say, who listened for the first time to the teaching brought forward by the Theosophical Society about Reincarnation, Karma and Death, that her whole outlook upon life was changed, a glorious broadening of vision experienced. I consider that her Karma was quickened by the knowledge obtained and applied. That there are other veils to lift and further steps to take is undeniable, but whether or not they have been taken, no horoscope can say. The man who chooses to quicken Karma will in all probability smash his horoscope. The worldly-wise will say he is a failure or a fool. He himself knows that worldly wisdom is foolishness with God, "because the foolishness of God is wiser than men, and the weakness of God is stronger than men."

FLORENCE A. TAYLOR.

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THE supreme misfortune is when theory outstrips performance.

DA VINCI.



## PROFESSOR HYSLOP'S PRECONCEPTIONS<sup>1</sup>

PROFESSOR JAMES HYSLOP is well known on both sides of the water as Vice-President of the Society for Psychical Research, and as an able psychologist of the modern school. Perhaps nothing better illustrates his cautious and conservative habit of mind than the present volume from his pen. It is not an easy book to review, for it deals largely with first principles, and with the application of philosophical presuppositions to those psychical phenomena which are just now so largely engaging the attention of thinking men. For this very reason it is a disappointing book, for though confessedly holding an open mind, the author seems unable to realise that the preconceived theories from which he starts in reality prejudice his whole outlook, and convert his argument into little more than a systematised attempt to explain away facts that militate against his philosophical and psychological position.

The key to this position is contained in the following sentence in the Preface that "all new facts and theories must in some way find an assimilation with previous knowledge, and however great the departure involved in the discovery of the new, it must have some point of contact with the old."

To find their connection with existing knowledge may no doubt make the assimilation of new truths easier, but can hardly be laid down as the *condition* of their scientific acceptance. For it obviously begs the whole question of the validity of the knowledge assumed. It is by their non-agreement with the old knowledge, by their direct and open challenge to accepted theories, that the greatest scientific discoveries have been made. The Copernican displaced the Ptolemaic Astronomy not by accommodating itself to the assumed "knowledge" of the latter, but by

<sup>1</sup> *Borderland of Psychical Research*. By James H. Hyslop, Ph.D., LL.D. London: G. P. Putnam's Sons; 1906.

openly disputing its "truth," and proving its own claims. Yet this assumption that new "truth" must accommodate itself to old "knowledge" is the foundation of the author's whole argument, if argument it can be called. As stated above, the book is not so much an exhibition of new facts, as a professorial, not to say magisterial, pronouncement of those scientific and philosophical standards to which the facts must conform, or—so much the worse for them. It is also a forcible protest against all pretensions of the "naïve mind" to adjudicate upon such questions. These are matters, apparently, for psychologists and psychologists alone.

With this somewhat sweeping and contemptuous indictment the Professor proceeds to his task of laying down those conditions of normal psychology to which abnormal psychology must conform, and incidentally of exposing the crudities of thinking of the "naïve mind." The volume opens with a quasi-philosophical discussion of the difficulties inherent in the ordinary theory of sense-perception, and a brief but most inadequate reference to the earlier Greek philosophical systems which shows that, however close his acquaintance with modern psychology, the author is apparently unaware of the fact that Pythagoras and Plato have contributed anything of importance to this discussion. There follows a thoughtful and fairly exhaustive analysis of the primary mental functions as viewed in the light of modern psychology, and a chapter on "Memory," which is one of the best in the book. Succeeding chapters deal with "Illusions," "Hallucinations," "Secondary Personality," and "Pseudo-Spiritistic Phenomena," with which we have no space to deal.

We alluded above to the fact that the author's philosophical and psychological presuppositions in reality determined his attitude to the entire range of psychical phenomena with which he deals, and in most cases indeed prejudged the issue. As the chief interest and importance of the book centre in this question it will be well to examine it more fully.

Psychologically, this presupposition is that in the aberrancies of normal function will be found the key to abnormal happenings, so that until any so-called abnormal phenomenon is proved to be inexplicable as the result of the perversion or exag-

geration of normal mental functions, the *onus probandi* of explaining it by supernormal or superphysical agencies, such as disembodied "spirits," must be left to the defenders of the latter hypothesis. This sounds fair and reasonable enough until one remembers that the only evidence by which such proof can be established is excluded as falling outside the author's condition that the "new truth must be assimilated with previous knowledge."

On this condition the recent discovery of radio-activity would be ruled out of court as non-assimilable with the "previous knowledge" of the indestructibility of matter. When confronted with the required evidence of such supernormal happenings the author is content to remark that in his opinion it is not sufficient. What cannot be explained as perversion of normal psychology can be best accounted for by lack of scientific judgment and untrained habits of observation. Naturally, all will depend upon what we agree to call "normal."

To such a temper of mind it seems hopeless to expect that any new light will ever penetrate. On the question of an objective cause of so-called apparitions Professor Hyslop is more cautious, and here he is actuated by the philosophical presupposition upon which his theory of sense-perception rests. This theory is, that as normal sense-perception is *non-representative* of reality, though *indicative* of a reality otherwise unknown, so apparitions, which are due to abnormal sensation, may be indicative, though equally non-representative, of a real fact, such as the survival of bodily death. The *proof* of such survival, he maintains, can only be established when undeniable evidence of identity on the part of the supposed "spirit" shall be forthcoming. This evidence so far is still to seek. No attitude could be more cautious, conservative, and if one may say so, more hopelessly "scientific," in the modern sense of that much-abused term. Whether it is justified by facts is the whole question, and one with which the author does not deal.

But so much stress is laid upon the contention that normal sense-perception is non-representative of reality, that no review of Professor Hyslop's position would be adequate which did not take this contention into account, for upon it the chief argument

of the book, its admissions and reservations, is primarily based. As an illustration of his meaning, let us take the familiar chain of phenomena involved in the sensation of sight. The ordinary man, the author says, "sees" an object, and that for him is all that happens. No doubt obtrudes on the "naïve mind" that the object may be different from what it appears. But to the philosopher and man of science it is far otherwise. He knows that a whole series of complicated processes, ethereal, molecular, chemical, vital, mental, intervenes between the "object" and the percipient subject, of all of which the naïve mind is unconscious.

But though none of these processes has anything apparently in common between the "object" and the mental "picture" in the observer's mind, are we therefore justified in assuming that this picture is non-representative of reality? Such is the author's contention, and upon it he founds his whole argument as to the non-reliability of sense-perception in matters of psychical import. But the question is whether it will bear the weight. We are all familiar with the idealistic position that we have no immediate knowledge of an external world, but only of mental states. Granted; but this is, strictly speaking, only a psychological fact, with which the metaphysical question of "reality" has nothing to do. Philosophically, of course, everything turns upon what we mean by "reality," whether "esse" is always limited by "percipi." But scientifically, the question is whether sensation is representative of the *object*—not the relation of the object to "reality." That is a matter of pure metaphysics.

Let us substitute a photographic film for the human eye. Here a similar series of intermediate processes, ethereal, chemical, molecular, intervene between the sensitised film and the "object." There are only lacking the vital and mental changes through which the, in human vision, material "image" becomes a "mental state." Can we say, then, that the photographic image is non-representative of reality? No; for all sensitive plates under the same conditions represent the same object in the same way. Is it suggested that the retinal image only becomes non-representative of the object when it is changed into a "mental state"? Yet how can this be? It is true we are

only *conscious* of the retinal image as a mental state, yet of its essential correspondence, except as regards colour, with the photographic image we can be sure from the fact that all persons with normal vision *recognise* the similarity.

The "reality" of both images can be further verified by another sense—the sense of touch. Should we doubt the real existence of a seen or photographed object—real, that is, for the physical senses—we can touch it, if within reach. If then the photographic image is a faithful representation of the object, and the retinal image agrees with the photographic, it follows that the mental image, by which we are conscious of this correspondence, must be equally veridical, for that which produces the consciousness of similarity between two images must to that extent be similar to both, for "things that are equal to the same are equal to one another."

The truth is, though at present it is ignored by Western science, that in the "mental state" referred to above, there are two elements or factors. There is the "mental image"—the reproduction in mental "matter" of the physical image—and the mental "act" of discrimination or judgment. This distinction between the double mental contents of consciousness must be kept in mind. The "mind" here has two functions, to "reflect" and "discriminate"—the one passive, the other active. The "mental image" is a passive reflection in mental matter of the physical image, and is always a faithful copy of the latter;—into the active function of discrimination error may intrude.

In the phenomenon of what is called the "*positive* after-image," when, after closing the eyes, we have an exact reproduction of the object last seen, we have an illustration of the passive mental image, in which no act of judgment takes part. In the "*negative* after-image," which is a reproduction of the object in its complementary colour, we have an illustration of the passive mental image, *plus* an error of discrimination—*i.e.*, we have an "illusion" of colour, as in colour-blindness. But the "illusion" is in the judgment, not in the mental image.

Take again the "double-vision" of squinting. Here the "false image" is formed on the retina of the squinting eye, and is faithfully reflected by the mental image. The squinting person

"sees" two objects instead of one, because the defective visual apparatus represents two. The mental image repeats the error, which the judgment at first (as in young children) accepts, and only "corrects" it by an effort of will which ignores the "false image," which still continues to be "seen."

A further corroboration of the distinction between the two mental factors in vision, may be found in the following interesting hypnotic experiment recorded by Prof. Bernheim, and quoted by Dr. Forel in his latest book on hypnotism. A peasant girl, completely ignorant of optics, was hypnotised, and the suggestion made that she should see a candle suspended in the air. A prism was then held before her open eyes and she was asked what she saw. She replied, "Two candles." Here it is obvious that as the *real* objects in the room were duplicated for consciousness by the prism, the *suggested* candle was by association duplicated too, for when the experiment was repeated in the dark, only one candle was seen. The conclusion is irresistible that the mental image is a faithful copy<sup>1</sup> of the retinal image, not only when the latter is "false," but even when it is "imaginary," though, of course, in the latter case only by association of ideas.

The "illusion," as in all hypnotic experiments, and, in fact, in all so-called "optical illusions," is in the act of judgment; it is the mind, not the eye, which is deceived. The visual apparatus, like the camera, is only a highly complicated piece of mechanism; it may be defective, but cannot be "deceived." This fact alone is sufficient proof that the distinction drawn by Prof. Hyslop between "organic" and "functional" illusions is itself illusory; it does not exist. All illusions are necessarily of the judgment, *i.e.*, of the higher functions of the mind.

This somewhat lengthy digression will have served its purpose, if we have succeeded in proving that sense-perception may be truly representative of the "object," though with the nature

<sup>1</sup> This is not to say that the "mental image" may not be much fuller and more complex than the retinal image, *e.g.*, by the addition of feeling, memory, association, etc., for this is undoubtedly the case. So the retinal image is fuller in certain aspects than the photographic image, *e.g.*, by the addition of colour. But though the mental image may contain *more* than the retinal image it cannot well contain *less*, for perception, which is a mental act, must necessarily include all of the object visually presented. If the presentation is faulty the perception will be blurred and imperfect. A short-sighted person has a far less perfect perception of a landscape than a long-sighted one—just as the camera reveals stars which no human eye will ever see.

of "reality" it has nothing to do. That is not a question for science or psychology—but for metaphysics. Nothing shows more conclusively the weakness of the argument upon which Prof. Hyslop builds his case, than this confounding of psychological and metaphysical issues. That the mind adds its own quota to the results of sense-presentation (*sense-perception* is a misleading phrase) does not make those results less "real" upon their own plane. The artist "sees" more in the sunset than the peasant, the musician "hears" more in the Moonlight Sonata than the child—but both sunset and sonata are equally "real" for peasant and child.

It is the mind that sees, the outward eyes  
Present the image, but the mind describes.

A large inference follows from this admission. The author regards his contention that normal sensation is non-representative of reality as strengthening his argument that "hallucinations" are equally non-representative of reality, though both may have a *vera causa* at present unknown. For if normal sensation can, and necessarily does, deceive us as to the nature of reality—how much more then may abnormal? But if, as we have seen, normal sensation does truly represent the "object," does it not follow that abnormal sensation, *e.g.*, in "hallucinations," may equally faithfully represent a veritable "object"—that in this case too the mind reacts to "realities," though of a different order?

If in this way we elect to explain the "visions" and "hallucinations" of delirium, fever, insanity, etc., and most of those "apparitions" to which history in all ages has testified, who is to say that this explanation is less "scientific" than the theory which reduces them all to fancies of a disordered brain? To the Theosophist who believes in "astral vision," and a grade of matter corresponding to it, the explanation is scientific enough. For him the "reality" of a thing is strictly limited to and determined by the nature of the medium through which it is manifested. There is the physical "reality" of the external world of sense-presentation—the emotional, "reality" of feeling, the mental "reality" of thought, the metaphysical "reality" of abstract being. As much of physical-plane reality as the senses are adjusted to, that, when normally functioning, they faithfully,

though in varying degrees, represent. (Many animals have far keener senses than man, and there are many sounds that the human ear cannot hear, many sights that the human eye cannot see.) On the mental plane, this image is necessarily "mental," *i.e.*, it becomes an "idea," yet on this plane too, for the normal mind, this idea is equally "real," *i.e.*, it is an equally faithful representation of the "object" in the matter of the mental plane, though its value and content will differ for different minds, *i.e.*, it will be variously coloured by emotion. But of metaphysical reality, the reality of true being, we can know nothing till that far distant day when we become one with All that is. But this is Theosophy, for which, as an aid to Western psychology, the hour has not yet struck.

MONTAGU LOMAX.

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## THE NEW ROMANTICISM

IT is pretty certain that an intelligent visitor from a superior planet, coming to our earth, would find that in proportion as the novelty of things wore off, the reality would become dull, monotonous and stupid. It is difficult and perhaps impossible for an ant to realise the absurdity of its behaviour and the behaviour of its thousands of fellows, running about in a perpetual state of inefficient agitation. That absurdity is only fully obvious to one who has taken Solomon's cynical advice, and has gone to the ant-hill, there to discover by analogy the foolishness not only of ants but of human things. The fact is that at certain clairvoyant moments we have all seen the human ant-hill, only the spectacle has so saddened and appalled us that generally we swear never to see it so again. And that wilful blindness is what we call Romanticism.

Romanticism is in essence an attempt to escape from the compulsory vision of things as they are, by imagining them to be what they are not. It is the substitution of an imaginary for the real world, and a plain proof, wherever it appears, of the miserable fact that the real world has been seen and hated. I



say "miserable" fact, not at all because the real world is in itself contemptible, or petty, or small, but because it unfortunately happens that few people can look upon naked reality without experiencing an acute misery. Rather than such a truth and such a reality they prefer a veiled and shrouded truth and reality such as in fact constitute the world as appearance.

But I wish to point out that there are two methods of escape from the world as it is; and if we name the one Romanticism, the other may perhaps be called the Higher Romanticism. For the term Realism, which has sometimes been employed for this second mode of escape, does not seem to me more than a simple antithesis to the first Romanticism, and as such equally extreme and false. The Higher Romanticism consists in the deliberate vision and creation of the world, not as one thinks it ought to be, but as one thinks it can be. The world as it ought to be is not nor ever will be; but the world as it can be is a genuinely potential world, a real world by virtue of its potentiality.

Let me take a simple illustration. Suppose an acorn put into the soil, we know that, given good conditions, it may, and in all probability will, become an oak-tree. Now whoever sees deliberately in that acorn the future oak-tree, and takes pleasure in tending it and preparing soil and conditions for it, is not likely to be shocked by the insignificance of its early stages of growth. His mind is too interested in the potential future of the seed to be distressed about its present smallness. He escapes, as it were, from its present appearance, by plunging into its actual future. In the seed he sees not merely a thimbleful of matter, but a great and glorious oak-tree, spreading its limbs in the sun. But suppose that our first Romanticist is brought into contact with the newly-planted acorn. His desire, like that of the Higher Romanticist, is to escape the vision; but, too impatient to have learned the nature of oak-trees, he immediately sets to work to imagine what the acorn ought to be. Out of his inner consciousness, he creates for it a perfectly impossible future. Perhaps he sees it as a cedar of Lebanon or as a paradisaical tree of life. At any rate, his interest in the seed is maintained only by his belief that it will develop into something conformable to his preconception.

Of course, the acorn is incapable of obliging him ; and as day by day the fact becomes more and more obvious to the Higher Romanticist that his acorn is growing into a fine oak-tree, it becomes daily more and more obvious to the sentimental Romanticist that the acorn is becoming a fine cedar of Lebanon. The very same signs which the one rightly accepts as a proof the other falsely interprets as a proof. And it is true that he has need of all his interpretative powers, for he can escape the vision of what is, only by perpetually interpreting the facts favourably to his conception of what is not. And so skilful have most of us become in this imaginative work, that oak-trees quite readily pass in our minds for cedars of Lebanon, and cedars of Lebanon for oak-trees.

But let us now abandon the region of illustration and talk about nearer things—about ourselves. It is plain that we are what we are. It is also certain that we shall be what we shall be. If when we were first planted we were planted as an acorn, then oak-tree we shall become, because oak-tree is merely the future tense of acorn. But there is a third fact that is no less certain ;—we most of us have an idea of what we would like to be or of what we ought to be.

It is on this trinity of ideas that, in fact, all realism and romanticism are based : first, that we are what we are, secondly, that we shall be what we shall be, and thirdly, that we all think we ought to be this, that or the other. Needless to say, it is this last variety of idea that makes the sentimental Romanticist.

Now consider man as he is and man as he will be. These problems, as I have several times tried to show, are for the present unsolved. My own opinion is that they never will be solved, for the simple reason that man cannot stand outside man. On the other hand, all kinds of guesses may be made as to the nature and future of man. And some of these are useful and some of them are pernicious. The more dangerous of these guesses are such as secure the sanction of, let us say, religion or science, or any other great power. For just to the extent that the guess becomes appropriated to a constituted class or caste, to the same extent its essentially imperfect and tentative nature is suppressed.

In the interests, for example, of a religious view of the world it becomes necessary to attribute to man a divine origin, a divine future, and to put him into definite relations with a divine power. Now I need not say in this REVIEW that it is precisely these statements that must be regarded as dogmas, and pernicious dogmas to the extent that they falsely assume that the problems have already been solved. As a matter of fact, the divinity of man, of his origin and of his future, is at present beyond proof. We may if we like assume it as a working hypothesis, and as such it is valuable and perhaps necessary. But a few of us, at any rate, may bear in mind the difference between an expedient dogma and a proven fact.

In the interests of morality it becomes necessary to assume the doctrine of Free-will and individual responsibility. But for this assumption we could not give ourselves the right to blame or praise, to punish or to reward, to speak of Good and Evil, or even of Right and Wrong. As Sir Oliver Lodge, in his Catechism, says, the Fall began at the moment when man became conscious of a difference between right and wrong. That is to say, the creation of the sense of Good and Evil marked definitely the new phase of human life. But as students of philosophy are painfully aware, the doctrine of Free-will, on which hang all the ethical valuations, is so far from being proved that all recent discussion and investigation tend to prove the contrary. Should the doctrine of Irresponsibility, or as Mr. Mead phrases it, the doctrine of man as a "procession of Fate" be established, then the whole question of the Fall, together with all that depends on it, will be seen to be a problem of human error, a misunderstanding of the most universal and tragic significance.

Now, as I have remarked already, the aim in view is not to discover truth absolute. Only the rarest and most inhuman (superhuman, if you will) thinkers will inflict so much cruelty on themselves and others as is involved in the search for naked truth. What in practice we seek is the most enduring illusions, which relatively to the less enduring we can practically regard as truths. The doctrine of the divinity of man, for example, is such an enduring illusion. It is possible that the illusion may last

the whole of the present round. Certain fundamental illusions constitute perhaps the very world in which at present we live, and will last therefore as long as that world lasts. Again, the doctrine of Free-will and individual responsibility has lasted a long time, has served many useful purposes, and may continue for the majority of people to be necessary and beneficent. On the other hand, for the few it happens to be an illusion that no longer deludes them. In other words, from being an undetected illusion it has fallen to the condition of an exploded error.

The concern, then, of the New Romanticist is not with truth absolute, but with the more enduring illusions. The fatal defect of the old Romanticism was not at all that it involved lies, but that it involved lies that were easily found out. So simple a person as Sancho Panza quite readily discovered that Don Quixote's splendid illusions about himself were baseless. It is true he had not the imagination to see that Quixote was engaged in a task exactly comparable to the creation of the world out of nothing. Quixote was aiming at becoming the Demiurge of a world of chivalry, using for his material the yokels and country wenches and windmills and flocks of sheep that poor Sancho saw quite in the naïve way. The point, however, is that such an illusory world soon breaks down; and the disillusioned person who has made knights of yokels, princesses of wenches, and castles of windmills, discovers his mistake, and then turns cynic. For a cynic is only a disappointed romanticist, a romanticist turned inside out.

The illustration from Don Quixote may be made more striking by the realisation of the Quixote in ourselves. It is true that we do not actually adventure in the world as Don Quixote did; but, as Cervantes knew, there is a Quixote in every man that, imaginatively, at any rate, tilts at windmills and mistakes sheep for soldiers. We certainly have illusions about ourselves quite as great, if not so beautiful, as those of the Knight of the Rueful Countenance. I am not referring to the obvious examples of people imagining themselves to be poets, painters, or what not; but to the more frequent examples of less observed illusions.

Those of us who belong to one or more of the various reforming societies of the day certainly do so with very little thought

of personal advantage. The fact of sacrifices having to be made of time, temper and money is taken as proof that we are personally disinterested. It is enough to condemn a member of a Society if one should discover that he has all along been pursuing personal ends, and making use of the Society for his own purposes. Yet the extraordinary fact is that in reality every member of every Society, no matter how altruistic and self-sacrificing, is in the Society for his own personal purposes. He exploits the Society, he conceals his personal intentions behind the objects of the Society, he never sacrifices himself, he is never altruistic. Altruism, in fact, is impossible for an ego. As well ask the sun to revolve round the earth and to desert its centrality as ask an ego to revolve about the world of which he is the very centre, source and being. Hence, every act of so-called disinterestedness, altruism or what not, is an egoistic act, erroneously interpreted. But the error is a necessary one, for by means of it a person is kept busy at his work in the belief that thereby he is *not* doing it.

I need not enlarge upon our illusions with regard to other people and to events. The common division of people we meet into people of extraordinarily good or extraordinarily bad qualities; the utterly false perspective which makes events that happen to us and our friends of more importance than the events that happen to people we do not know,—examples of these are too numerous to need mention. The conclusion to be drawn is that in many respects we are Quixotic, and under illusions. The doctrine to be deduced is that our task is to reject the transient and choose the more enduring illusions.

Now what I have called the New Romanticism assumes first the necessity of some illusion to make life tolerable at all. The question for legislators (I have Plato's guardians in my eye, Horatio), is which of the possible illusions is at once most necessary, most beneficent, and most enduring. And I think there is no doubt as to the direction in which we must look for it. If the old Romanticism was concerned in a pursuit of things as they *ought* to be, it is certain that the new Romanticism will be concerned with the pursuit of things as they *can* be. The difference, in fact, is between the conceivable and the possible. The old

Romanticism desired such things as could be conceived, without regard to the question whether such things were possible. The New Romanticism asks of all such conceptions: Are they possible? Do they represent actual potentialities of existing things? In so far as they may be conceived to be future tenses of the existing present, then our New Romanticist may fairly don his armour and "knight-errant" in search of his ideals; for the end of his search is not an imaginary, impossible thing, but a real and possible thing. All the old glamour and charm and romance are still his; but he runs no danger of being cynicised by disillusion. He may over and over again be surprised and disappointed, but only by discovering that his guesses about future reality fell short of the reality itself. His acorns will not turn out to be cedars of Lebanon, but the oak-tree of reality is infinitely superior to the cedar of desire. He will reverence the oak-tree, as he will reverence all that is real, because it obeys its own nature, and moves steadily through the scale of its being.

But in the same way it is possible to regard himself as no more and no less than a superior seed, with an, as yet, unknown future. So to regard the "procession of Fate" that is ourselves, as to stand always reverently expectant of the next inevitable change; so to look upon the unfoldment of one's own nature as to be ready to accept, with ever-increasing interest, wonder, and gratitude, the eternal self-revelation and transformation of potency into actuality, that I call the attitude of the New Romanticist. And if, in addition, one can learn to watch other people and other events as the same fundamental procession of Fate, and as the exfoliation of miraculous seeds planted in the universe from its foundation, then I cannot think that the magical fascination of life becomes less, but on the other hand, the inevitable disappointment of disillusion becomes impossible.

A. R. ORAGE.

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THE idea or faculty of imagination is both rudder and bridle to the senses, inasmuch as the thing imagined moves the sense.—DA VINCI.

## THE ELASTICITY OF A PERMANENT BODY

PERHAPS you may think that I propose under this heading to treat of some recondite problem of physics, but that is not my intention. I propose briefly to consider the nature of the permanent element in the Theosophical Society.

Many confuse the idea of body with notions of shape and form, but I would venture to suggest that form is of the mind while body is of substance. There is a doctrine that man is possessed of a permanent "body," the substantial ground as it were from which proceed and to which return the births and deaths of his impermanent appearances, the perennial root of his evolutionary becomings, and the store-house of his diversified experiences.

It is not asserted that this "body" is unconditionally everlasting, but rather that it is permanent in the sense of lasting as long as man thinks himself a separate individual. It is his last limit as man, his "Ring Pass Not" until the Great Day "Be one with Us," when man ceases to be individual, and wins his freedom from the dominion of the spheres of evolution, by making joyful surrender of himself,—that is, of every thought of possessions of his own as apart from others, even of possession in the substance of his so-thought individuality. All his powers of their own selves make joyful surrender of themselves to the Great Powers, and thus becoming these Powers, as Hermes says, he is in God.

But this is apotheosis, the transcending of the man-state of separate existence and the entering into the Communion of Those that are ; that is to say, the energising in the Everlasting Body of all things.

The "permanent body," then, is not the Everlasting Body but the æonian substantial limit of the separated man-consciousness. How long this æon of substantial limit lasts, depends on the

nature of the man's activities; nevertheless this "body" must in any case be considered as permanent, when contrasted with the length of days of the bodies of incarnation which a man uses in his many lives on earth, or in the "three worlds."

When, however, we come to consider the meaning of "body" in this connection, we should be careful to keep our ideas concerning it as fluid as possible. We are here on the very borderland of individuality, and it depends entirely on the nature of the activities of the man whether or no the substance of this "body" shall be so condensed and crassified as to form "sheaths" to veil and dim the consciousness of the Self, or so wisely enformed and woven into such fine textures that it can supply "vestures" of glory and radiance for the revealing of the greater mysteries.

The nature of this "body" changes completely according as the desire of the man is set to "go forth" or the will of the man is fixed to "return." We therefore find it described in the ancient books under apparently contradictory epithets, such as ignorance and bliss; for it is on the borderland between the particular and the general, the individual and the cosmic. It is indeed one of the most difficult concepts for us to understand, for if we understood it really, we should have solved the riddle of what is called in Indian theosophy *mâyâ* and *avidyâ* and *kâraṇa*; that is to say "causal" in the sense of its being the cause of our continuing to proceed forth into duality, and therefore the root of ignorance, and the source of illusion. Nevertheless at the same time it is also the vehicle of our return to reality, and our means of contact with unity; as such it is the complement of knowledge, and the spouse of the Divine energising.

It is, therefore, evident that if we call it "body" we shall be doing less violence to the meaning of its actual nature by qualifying it with the contradictory epithet "spiritual" than by leaving it unqualified to the danger of its being confused with notions of physical bodies. I should prefer to call it substance rather than matter, vehicle rather than body. The legitimate lord of this living nature is *Âtman*, the Self; it is corrupted by the misdeeds of men.

When we consider these mysteries from the human point of



view, that is as related to our individual selves, we have immediate feelings, intuitions and experiences to go upon ; but when we proceed to argue on analogy with regard to "bodies" other than our own we run the risk of setting up our limited selves as a measure of the universe.

When, therefore, we come to consider a body of individuals such as the Theosophical Society, we must be very careful not to beg the question by assuming that we are dealing with a problem of a like nature to that of an individual human being. We are here face to face with the idea of a group, and should rather seek analogies in whatever notions we may possess on the nature of that far more difficult concept which is current among us under the term "group-soul."

This idea connotes something that is other than the individual. We generally apply the term to animals, and not unfrequently without more ado we conclude that the individual is vastly superior, and in our conceit thank God that we have got beyond that stage. But this is a short-sighted view, based upon the comparison of a single man with a single animal. The group-soul idea, I would venture to think, is connected with far wider conceptions. In the first place it is connected with the tradition of the "sacred animals," which all but a few in the West have relegated to the limbo of exploded superstitions. The "sacred animals" are said to be "lords of types" of whom the individual animals of that type are, as it were, the corpuscles of their body. These "corpuscles" are ever coming and going, ever being born and dying, but so long as that "type" is manifested, there is a permanent body for it even on the physical plane. These "lords of types," it is said, are great intelligences, they are the truly "sacred animals," types of intelligence as well as orderers of modes of life.

Now what obtains among the animals, we may well believe, is not in principle confined to them alone ; it is rather a showing forth in modes and forms that man can distinguish plainly in the external world, of the mysteries of his own greater nature ; as there are forms and modes without so there are forms and modes within ; and within our own kingdom there is, I hold firmly, a precise analogy with the animal group-soul and the

lords of its types. Families, clans, and nations, are all according to types conditioned by super-individual intelligences, and representative of the "permanent bodies" of such greater beings. Here the bond is blood; and blood is, I venture to think, more potent than mind, using the term mind here as indicative of mind in individual man.

When, however, we come to consider an international body such as the Theosophical Society, we are confronted with a still more difficult problem; and therefore, whatever suggestions one ventures to put forward must be advanced with all reserve.

I can well believe that the real work of the Theosophical Society may be the evolution of a conscious instrument, or permanent body, for the incarnation or manifestation of a Great Soul; that is to say, that while at the same time it affords the conditions for its individual members to perfect themselves, it should also have a common object that no individual in it can achieve as an individual; and that this object should be the endeavour to realise consciously a corporate common life, by means of which the power, wisdom and love of a Great Soul may manifest itself to the world.

This, I believe, is also a question of blood, for "the blood is the life." But this blood will be the blood of those who are "of the Race of Him." There is much talk of a "sixth race," and most people are looking for a new type of race on the lines of the old separated nations and peoples; but I would fain believe that the "new race" will, as it ever has been prophesied concerning it, be of every nation under heaven as far as its physical bodies are concerned.

The Theosophical Society, if I understand its purpose rightly, desires to form itself into a nucleus of this Race, not the sole nucleus, but to realise itself as one of the conscious members of what is to be finally the fully conscious Body of Humanity. This has been attempted before, nations and communities of religionists have claimed themselves to be *the* people, are doing so to-day. This exclusiveness we must avoid at all risks, if we would live according to reality. Performance, and not the making of claims, is our business, if we would attain to gnosis.

The Spirit that we desire to see incarnate among us is, I

believe, not the spirit of the individual, but a Spirit that subordinates individuality to the common good of the whole race. Many are endeavouring to realise this ideal outside our own ranks ; they are thus labouring to form other nuclei of the same Race.

But we have the ambition consciously to set about this great work, and knowingly to be about this holy business ; we long to come into conscious contact with a Great Soul of the order of Him who uses the whole body of humanity as His Body, and knows that all types of bodies and souls and minds are necessary for the purpose of the expression of His Life.

With such an enlightening belief it is impossible for us to think that any one type of religion will absorb the rest, any more than we can believe that one member of a body can absorb the rest ; for if it should be so, it would be along the lines of disease and not of health.

Therefore, if we would consciously realise the life of the whole we are bound to accept as the conditions of our common endeavour that we shall make no distinctions of creed, sex caste or colour ; the bond of our union is to go deeper than any of these distinctions ; the bond that binds us together as members of a natural family in our inner nature must be of a spiritual nature.

Now we are told by science that "a body is perfectly elastic when it has the property of resisting a given deformation equally," and we are further informed "that all bodies have different elasticities at different temperatures." Temperature, in the case of living beings, applies especially to the blood ; and temperature when thought of in connection with the deeper meaning we have ventured to give to the idea of blood in an organism bound together for a spiritual purpose, is rather temperament.

To be perfectly elastic therefore (and our aim is surely eventual perfection), we must have the property of resisting any given deformation equally ; we must have the will to resist equally throughout our body, that is to say in every unit or corpuscle of which it is composed, any temporary deformation from our type ; those who have not the power of resisting and

remain deformed, necessarily cease for the time to form part of the permanent elastic body of this type.

The most apparent nature of this type seems to me to be very clearly set forth in the ethical teachings of all the great religions. The further marvels of its glorious nature are for the most part hidden from us, for they transcend the individual consciousness. But this much we can know, that it is this type or mould of being that develops in us or impresses upon our substance what we very rightly call moral character. The permanent element in the Theosophical Society must therefore be sought in the power of resistance to all deformations from rectitude,—to any impressions but those of the Great Souls that are lords of truly human types, and who we may believe manifest their greater nature for men's consciousness through groups of like-willed human beings.

Elasticity is further defined in the dictionaries as “possessing the power or quality of recovering from depression or exhaustion; able to resist a depressing or exhausting influence; capable of sustaining shocks without permanent injury: as elastic spirits.”

With this before us, who, that is acquainted with the history of the thirty-and-one years of the Theosophical Society, will not exclaim: That is just what we most need—elasticity, and again elasticity and yet again elasticity! We have been elastic, our history proves it; we will continue to be ever more and more elastic. “Elastic spirits,” an excellent combination; that is our *métier*, the business we are ever to be about, our great work.

Away with deformations! Reformation, readjustment, enforcement according to substance and according to gnosis—restoration and perpetual refreshment must ever be more and more possible for us; elasticity of body, soul and spirit is our aim, that so we may individually and collectively mirror forth the activities of some Great Soul that shall embody the true spirit of the Theosophy we love more than our lives, and our beloved Society be assured as a permanent body for the Æon.

G. R. S. MEAD.

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POOR is the pupil that does not surpass his master.—DA VINCI.

## SAINT PAUL AND CLASSIC AUTHORS

IN Part I. of *The Hibe Papyri*, just edited by Drs. Grenfell and Hunt of Oxford, a papyrus, one side of which is occupied by fragments of a Greek Anthology, gives as one quotation from an Hellenic poet, the sentence quoted by St. Paul (*I. Corinthians*, xv. 32) : " Evil communications corrupt good manners."

The same maxim preserved in rhythm is also to be found in an excerpt from the *Thais* of Menander ; Socrates, however, in his *Ecclesiastical History*, states that it was an Euripidean sentence.

The chief poetical piece preserved upon the new papyrus contains some thirteen lines from the *Electra* of Euripides ; it is therefore most probable that the other quotations are from his works, including the sentence of Paul's, and therefore Socrates is likely to have been correct. It may also, however, as other Patristic writers tell us, have occurred in Menander's work.

In *Acts*, xvii. 28, Paul quotes another sentence to be found in at least two Greek poets, in *The Phænomena* of Aratus, and the *Hymn to Jupiter* of Cleanthes ; but the wording of Paul is more precisely identical with Aratus than Cleanthes. The Apostle, however, speaks of poets, in the plural, and so doubtless refers to both.<sup>1</sup>

However, there may have been a third author who used a similar phrase, for a Catena in Armenian quoting from Chrysostom's commentary upon the *Acts*, says : " This indeed was said by the poets Themgeanos (Timagenes) and Aratos." This author, Timagenes, is at present unknown, but there is no reason to doubt his existence. Paul, however, evidently had Aratus' *Phænomena* more particularly in his mind because the word " also," which he uses in the sentence, " we are *also* His offspring," refers back, not to anything he says, but to the preceding passage of Aratus : " In every way we all have need of Jove." It was

<sup>1</sup> Aratus : " For we are also His offspring." Cleanthes : " For we are Thy offspring."

natural that Paul of Tarsus should be familiar with the work of Aratus, for the latter was born at Soli, some twenty-four miles only distant.

Aratus, Cleanthes and Timagenes (if there was the final poet) may all have based their similar concepts of mankind being begotten of the Deity, on some idea propounded by Eudoxus, because the poem of Aratus was founded upon a prose *Phænomena* by that writer.

It is interesting to note that Paul uses a phrase, in *I. Corinthians*, iii. 10, "wise Master Builder," which is also quoted, as Hippolytus tells us in *The Philosophumena*, by the heretic Basilides. This has been thought to be a quotation from some sentence in Aratus, who copied it from Eudoxus where the latter was referring to the Demiurge (see *Philosophumena*, vii. 11).

Another citation from a classic writer by the Apostle Paul is the well-known statement, in *Titus*, i. 12: "The Cretans are always liars, evil beasts, slow bellies." Paul asserts that 'one of themselves, even a prophet of their own, had uttered this very unflattering report of them. This would appear to indicate a native of Crete, and the sentence has been found in an extract from a work upon oracles by Epimenides, who was born at Phæstos in Crete.

The statement that the author of the condemnation was a "prophet" is quite in accordance with Greek views, who held a poet to be inspired. Epimenides they particularly considered to have been so, for Cicero says of him, that he was "*futura præsciens et vaticinans per furorem.*"

It is common knowledge too that among the ancient Greeks *κρητικόν*, meant to lie. Callimachus, in his *Hymn to Jove*, v. 8, says: "The Cretans are always liars"; and Plutarch, speaking of Lysander's diplomacy with Pharnabazus, says: "He was not aware, as the saying has it, that he was playing the Cretan with a Cretan."

In *Acts*, xiv. 17, it reads: "In that He did good, and gave us rain from heaven, and fruitful seasons, filling our hearts with food and gladness."

Now the rhythmical character of this passage is very apparent, and an almost identical sentence has been found in an extract

from an unknown Greek writer, which reads: "Giving us showers from heaven and fruitful seasons, filling (our) hearts with food and gladness."<sup>1</sup>

There is a most interesting similarity between *Galatians*, v. 23, κατὰ τῶν τοιούτων οὐκ ἔστι νόμος, and the κατὰ δὲ τῶν τοιούτων οὐκ ἔστι νόμος of Aristotle's *Politics*, C. iii., chap. 8.

The phrase is used for a similar purpose by Paul and Aristotle. The philosopher wrote it to explain the exceptional character of certain all-powerful citizens, who were so great, or commanded such forces, as to be above restraint of the laws of the state. Paul uses the expression to illustrate the elevating character of divine grace, so transcendent that the Christian is above the law, or rather, so sanctified by his faith that he is not likely to transgress it.

In the above portion of St. Paul's argument in *Acts* xvii. 28, the Apostle appears to have utilised another extract from a Greek writer, which his hearer would probably have been familiar with. The sentence, which in the French version reads: "*Car c'est par lui que nous avons la vie, le mouvement et l'être,*" is apparently the same as the "Ζῶμεν δ' ἐν αὐτῷ θνητὰ καὶ κινούμεθα καὶ ἔσμεν" of a Greek author, whose name and date unfortunately are uncertain.

Quite recently, however, Professor Rendel Harris has shown strong reason for thinking that this sentence, like the reference to the Cretans, is taken from a work by Epimenides. In a Nestorian Commentary he has traced a passage, probably from Theodore of Mopsuestia, which, in commenting upon *Acts* xvii. 28, states that Minos, son of Zeus, inscribed upon his father's alleged tomb in Crete the following words: "A grave have I fashioned for Thee, O holy and high One. The lying Cretans are all the time liars, evil beasts, idle bellies; but Thou diest not, for to eternity Thou livest and standest; *for in Thee we live and move and have our being.*"

Diogenes Laertius informs us that Minos and Rhadamantnos were the subject of a long poem by Epimenides, and

<sup>1</sup> Οὐρανόθεν ἡμῖν ὑετοῦς  
 διδοῦς καὶ καιροῦς καρποφόρους,  
 ἐμπιπλῶν τροφῆς καὶ  
 εὐφροσύνης τὰς καρδίας.

Professor Rendel Harris suggests that this work is the common source of St. Paul's quotation in the *Acts* and in *Titus*, and of Callimachus and the author—almost certainly Theodore of Mopsuestia—utilised in the Nestorian Commentary.

In writing to Timothy, Paul apparently employed ideas, and perhaps intentionally quoted, from both Euripides and Aeschylus, for *I. Timothy*, vi. 12: "Fight the good fight of faith," and *II. Timothy*, iv. 7: "I have fought a good fight"—are surely echoes of *Alcestis*, 664 and 665 (648, 649): *καίτοι καλόν γ' ἂν τόνδ' ἀγών' ἠγωνίσω, τοῦ σοῦ πρὸ παιδὸς κατθανών.*<sup>1</sup> Whilst *I. Timothy*, vi. 15: "The blessed and only potentate, the King of kings and Lord of lords" carries us back to *Supplices*, 518.

"O King of kings of the blessed"

Most blessed, and of the perfect

Most perfect, happy Jupiter."

*Timothy*, vi. 10: "The love of money is the root of all evil," again, is perhaps an echo of Phocylides, v. 37: "The love of money is mother of every ill"; and *Acts*, xix. 27: "The image which fell down from Jupiter" may be words suggested by Lycophron's *Cassandra*, v. 361: "She who from the lofty throne of Jove shot like a star."

Leaving Paul, who of course was a Greek scholar, attention may be called to the passage in the *Epistle of James*, i. 17, "Every good and every perfect gift," which is the same as an hexameter verse, *πᾶσα δόσις ἀγαθὴ καὶ πᾶν δῶρημα τελείον.*

The Vatican manuscript of the *Aphorisms* of Epicurus, which was first edited by Wotke in 1888, contains the saying "It is more blessed to give than to receive," which is in *Acts*, xx. 25, stated to have been a sentence of Jesus.<sup>2</sup> This discovery leads to most interesting inferences, for it would tend to show either that Paul, supposing that the author of *Acts* correctly quotes him, in error ascribed a maxim of the Greek philosopher to Christ; or that our Lord gave as a proverb, a maxim or sentence identical with one from Epicurus.

<sup>1</sup> "But thou wouldst have fought a good fight, if thou hadst died for thy son."

<sup>2</sup> The term King of kings may be from the old Phœnician lapidary inscription phrase *melech melchim*, or from Persian royal edicts.

<sup>3</sup> *Epicureisch Sprachsammlung*, entdeckt und mitgetheilt, von J. Wotke in Rom. *Wiener Studien*; 1888.



A curious fact is that the sentence though definitely assigned to Jesus is not to be found in the Gospels, neither is it among the non-canonical "Logia." Epiphanius (*Hær.*, lxxiv. 5) quotes the saying: "It is a good thing to be a giver rather than a receiver," but his citation may be from the *Acts* and so is of little value. The *Didache* gives: "Blessed is the giver according to the commandment," but this may be based upon *Luke*, vi. 3: "Give to every man that asks of thee."

Another explanation may be that the scribe of the Vatican manuscript, having knowledge of the sentence given by Paul, slightly altered a maxim of Epicurus so as to be quite similar, because we know, from Plutarch, that Epicurus had said: "Doing good is not only more honourable, but more pleasant than being well treated." There is no serious reason why Christ should not have uttered a thought already enunciated by Epicurus. Aristotle had written: "Doing good, rather than being well treated, is the part of virtue" (*Eth. Nich.*), but Epicurus' dislike of Aristotle precludes any idea of his having derived his beautiful maxim from any concept expressed by him. Clement of Rome in his *Epistle to the Corinthians* says: "More gladly giving than receiving."

With the evidence now adduced it will be plain that if there is a quotation he may be citing either Epicurus, which is not very probable, or Christ, or the passage in the *Acts*. If, however, Clement nowhere quotes the *Acts of the Apostles*, then the latter suggestion is very unlikely.

A note may be introduced here as to Paul's assertion in *Acts*, xvii. 23, that at Athens there were "altars to unknown Gods." Pausanias tells us that he noticed such upon the road from Phalerum to Athens; whilst Philostratus in his *Life of Apollonius* (vi. 3) writes: "It is better to speak well of all the Gods, especially at Athens, where are found also altars to unknown Gods." It is impossible from this to say whether the Altar texts read the plural or singular.

It is worthy of note that almost all the quotations from classic authors in the New Testament are attributable to Paul. Some modern writers who deride Christianity, have sneeringly pointed out how plebeian are the names of some of the Apostles and early Gentile converts to the new faith. Doubtless it was

by Divine arrangement that this was so. Had the primitive Christians been of the educated and philosophic classes, their critics now would have said Christianity was merely an adaptation of Pagan religion and speculative thought. But it was necessary also to show that the new religion was such, and its credentials so convincing, as to convert a supremely well-educated and intelligent scholar familiar with the wisdom of both the Semite and the Greek. A proselyte of that character Divine providence produced in St. Paul. Naturally, he in his writings affords evidence of his literary culture. He knew the great authors of antiquity and all that the religion and philosophy they had embodied and produced could tell and yet became a firm and enduring Christian convert.

#### SUPPLEMENTARY NOTE

Dr. G. Adolf Deissmann has pointed out that Paul in *Galatians*, vi. 17 : "Henceforth let no man trouble me, for I bear branded on my body the stigmata of Jesus," appears to be quoting or closely following the formula of protective magic charms. He relies especially upon a Greek papyrus of rather late date, the formula of which may, however, be of greater antiquity. "Do not anyone persecute me. I am Papipetou Metoubanes, I carry the sepulchre of Osiris [an amulet of the God's tomb as protection]. Should any trouble me I will use it against them." Paul's wounds, received because of his being a Christian, are as the *βασιλάειον* of an amulet of a heathen deity acting as a charm against the troubling of an adversary.

JOSEPH OFFORD.

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WHOEVER in discussion adduces authority uses not intellect but rather memory.—DA VINCI.

SCIENCE is the captain, practice the soldiers.—DA VINCI.

SUPREME happiness will be the greatest cause of misery, and the perfection of wisdom the occasion of folly.—DA VINCI.

## DREAM TEACHING

FROM A LETTER FROM THE NORTH WEST

" I HAVE sometimes been going to tell you another dream I had eighteen months ago. But I thought you might deem me a nuisance with my dreams. However this one, although of small import, has had a kind of fulfilment. You know I tried long ago to learn to play on the violin. Well, I was no good at it. I had lessons from several teachers, and struggled away, but I could not play at all; had no ' ear.' At last I gave it up. But I kept my violin and music because they would bring little to sell. I was very lonely here at first, and when the first winter came I tried the fiddle again. No use; only a hideous noise that made a man sick.

" Then I had this dream. I found myself in a large room sitting at a long table. On this table were music-stands and music. All round the table were many people of all ages and sexes, each with a musical instrument—some such as I had never seen before. I was at the lower end—the bottom of the table; that is, I occupied the position of a mere novice—a tyro, a beginner. Then there entered the room a man whom I knew at once was the music-master. A man of commanding and lofty demeanour, wearing a short iron-grey beard, and having large dark eyes, a broad forehead and crisp, short, dark grey hair.

" He walked to the head of the table and took his place gravely. I was given a violin. Silence fell, and then the master gave a signal and all began to play. I scraped away, like ' auld micky ben ' himself. The master kept looking at me in a fixed sort of way, and I seemed to be playing—really playing—for the first time in my life. The music was grand, all the others evidently being accomplished musicians. Then I left and entered an ante-room. Here I saw a young woman who appeared to be cooking.

She said : ' Well, how goes the world with you ? But I know. One never can tell what will happen.' And so the dream ended.

"Awakening, I seemed—it might be mere fancy—conscious of a change in myself. Anyhow I again tried the violin and was amazed to find I could tune it true and the notes came clear. I can play now, I am told by people, very well indeed ; so much so that I have been asked to play at concerts. I do not intend to play at any concerts. But it has been to me a great blessing to be able to beguile long winter nights with the fiddle."

A. P. C.

## THE VISIONS OF THE SOUL

(OUR readers may remember some extracts recently printed in the REVIEW from the Masques of Ben Jonson, concerning Theosophical doctrines. The suggestion was then made that the references made by Jonson to such doctrines as Reincarnation and the like, presupposed a considerable public interest in these matters. Traces of that interest are, of course, difficult to discover in the absence of a THEOSOPHICAL REVIEW of that date. The following quaint passages occur in a volume of dialogues, purporting to be written by a member of the Athenian Society, and published in 1692, under the title *The Visions of the Soul before it comes into the Body*. We should be glad if any of our readers would pursue the enquiries here suggested, and discover, if they can, something more concerning the "Athenian Society," and the "warm management" of which the writer speaks.<sup>1</sup> Our extracts are from the Preface to the said work, and form one of the Dialogues.—EDS.)

### PREFACE TO THE READER

The occasion of this following treatise was the extravagant doctrine of Pre-Existence ; which of late hath been so warmly

<sup>1</sup> In my *Fragments* (p. 453, first edition), I find that I have quoted from *An Essay of Transmigration in Defence of Pythagoras* (London ; 1692) ; perhaps this is a trace.—G. R. S. M.

managed that it wants but a little more to make a thirteenth Article in the Creed of some persons. I have pursued the humour, but get as Comedians do when they dress up an Ape to make it appear more ridiculous: the Ingenious will discern it at first sight.

To such as enquire the real Design of this Publication, I answer, the graver conferences carry their meaning in their frontispiece; and the more jocose are not without their most solid morals; which perhaps may be more taking to some readers than if they had appeared in a common dress.

In the whole Discourse I have advanced many things new and unblown upon, more especially in the fourteenth Dialogue, where the Nature, Conception, and Actions of unbody'd Spirits are distinctly treated of. If I am asked for my authorities I answer what appears Reasonable wants no other Recommendation than being so.

#### DIALOGUE XX.

*(Betwixt a transmigrated Soul and an unbody'd Spirit)*

TRANS. S.—Well, how fare our friends, Brother? I long to be a member again of your Society and be freed from the strange alliances I have contracted.

UNB. SP.—Why, what Relations have you now?

TRANS. S.—My present Relations are a forward crop of beans, but what kindred I shall meet with next Harvest I know not; I came out of a Sprat last year, having finished my circuit in and change through all the watery inhabitants.

UNB. SP.—Pray what sort of Fish gave you the most troublesome entertainment?

TRANS. S.—The Porpus by far to be sure; every westerly wind I was drunk with tumbling o'er and o'er, if it had not been for a pitying Collier who by a lucky shot made a hole just big enough to creep out of my Prison, I might have lain in salt pickle these forty years longer, but 'tis all one, for I was turned out of one prison to be chained in another; for I can't expect to change the Laws of Fate and have my transmigrations finished before another Thousand Years are expired.

UNB. SP.—Why so ?

TRANS. S.—Because I must run through all these things Terrestrial, Marine, and Volatile, before I have finished my task and expiated the wickedness of my Pre-existent State, which expiation always lasts Three Thousand Years ; 'tis an unalterable Decree that all Spirits are to be purified by such a Discipline, only here's the difference ; that Spirits are to actuate mostly in those creatures that are of the same Dispositions as they were ; as for instance : The justice of Fate assigns such as are Angry and Malicious into Serpents, the Ravenous into Wolves, the Fraudulent into Foxes, and so of the rest ; only here and there's a good Spirit whose actions being most rational, transmigrates out of one man into another, finishing most of the Three Thousand Years in humane Bodies, and as for other Creatures, the Fates take care that they specially die, that that part of the Transmigration may be quickly over, and reason good, for if by chance they should be unjustly confined beyond the Three Thousand Years there's no amends to be made but some preferment amongst the Officers of Fate, who are always exempt from the Duties of Humanity.

UNB. SP.—Give an instance of some soul that has animated several Humane Bodies.

TRANS. S.—I myself was first infused into Æthalides, then passed into Euphorbus, then into Hermodimus, then into Pyrrhus, then into Pythagoras ; then I left Humanity and transmigrated into an Elephant, and so through every distinct species in the Creation, and now at last I'm got into a Bean.

UNB. SP.—I can get into a Bean too if I please : But here's the question : is this Bean my proper Residence, and am I by a virtual contact confined more to it than to any other Being or Place whatever ? I am rather of opinion that all this noise about Transmigration is no more than this : That such as are of equal Temper, Judgment, Inclination, etc., may be said to be unanimous or acted by the same Spirit, especially if they live in different ages. I can't conceive it to be anything else but like Care, Motion, Study, etc., of some dead Person appearing in some living one ; and thus if you acted Pythagoras you were no more Euphorbus, Hermodimus, or Pyrrhus, than as you had an inclina-

tion to the several excellencies that appeared in those Persons, and thus a transmigration into Fishes, Plants, Trees, etc., is nothing else but a study of their Nature.

TRANS. S.—You might have added that 'tis a doctrine that has not been received in the lower world these many years; and that 'tis also believ'd that 'twas a politick juggle to make the Age virtuous by suggesting that if Persons liv'd ill lives they should suffer such and such dreadful transmigrations after Death, but you'll find to your sorrow when you come to put off your first Body that all is Matter of Fact and no politick juggle.

UNB. SP.—When it comes to't I'll believe it but not before, since Pythagoras, who is affirmed to be the greatest patron of this doctrine, did also teach that the Substantive Unity of One Number is not the Unity of Another, and if so there is no Transmigration of one Animal into the life of another different Animal, but a continuance (as long as there is a Being) under the law of its own Nature and Particular Species; Species is not coincident with Species, and this is also implied by one of Pythagoras' symbols, *viz.*, we must not wear the image of God in a seal ring;—that is as God can't be resembled or included in Corporeal Matter, so a Humane Spirit (which is the Image of God) must not stoop so low as to actuate meaner Nature than the Rational.

TRANS. S.—Pythagoras held a correspondence with Spirits and cou'd not be mistaken, what instances you have brought are none of his, Timon, Xenophanes, Cratorius, Aristophon, Hermippus and others, have ascribed things to Pythagoras which he never wrote or said—but you'll be better satisfy'd when you come to make the experiment for yourself.

UNB. SP.—'Tis no matter whether they are his or no, they are truth, and truth never clashes with truth, but is always the same; But I suppose you are in a Dream instead of in a Bean or I would advise you to gape, for here's a shower of Rain which will help on your germination, and haste your Change into a Cabbage.

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INTELLECTUAL passion drives out sensuality.—DA VINCI:

## CORRESPONDENCE

## THE DISTINCTION BETWEEN ART AND FACULTY

To the Editor, THE THEOSOPHICAL REVIEW

SIR,

Mr. Orage's short paper on the distinction between "art" and "faculty" in the January number of THE THEOSOPHICAL REVIEW is so interesting, and with regard to occult arts and faculties so theosophically important, that I can but wish, in the interests of clear thinking, that he had made the distinction clearer and more accurate between the two words and the things they connote. Mr. Orage says the distinction is that "an art can be *taught*, but a faculty can only be *acquired*." But surely if a faculty can be "acquired," it can also be "taught." Art can only be defined as a system of rules for practical guidance in certain actions, as in manual trades and crafts, technical professions, etc. The arts, as such, can be taught just as the crafts can, and for the same reason. But a "faculty" is a mental gift or power, the essence of which is that it is individual and innate. It may be educated and strengthened, but it can never be "taught," and never, unless latent, "acquired." Mr. Orage says, rightly enough, that occult faculties are merely "our present faculties raised to a higher power." But if "present," they cannot be "acquired." He says, again, that these faculties are always "ineffable and incommunicable." Just so—but then, equally, they cannot be acquired. If they are incommunicable from without, they can only be communicable from within, *i.e.*, from the Self. Again, though an "art" can be taught, an artist cannot be "made"—*nascitur, non fit*. Why? Because, though you can acquire the rules of the "art," you cannot acquire the "faculty" of the artist, unless it is born with you. Mr. Orage emphasises this point, yet speaks of faculties as acquirable, when his whole argument demands the contrary.

It seems to me that much of the difference which he rightly insists on between occult arts and faculties is better expressed by the use of the word "art" in the singular and plural respectively. There



is a great difference between the "art of occultism" and "occult arts." The plural has long been used in a somewhat depreciatory sense. We distinguish at once, for instance, between "oratorical arts" and the "art of oratory." Most of us would agree with Mr. Orage that we have had enough and to spare of "occult arts"; but we cannot well have too much of the divine "art" of true occultism, by which I understand the proper method, known to all initiates, of educating and evolving the higher faculties of man.

With regard to the distinction between "thought" and the faculties of "intuition," "insight," and "imagination," I quite agree with Mr. Orage that the difference is not one of kind, nor even of degree. Thought is a large and somewhat loose term, but, whatever its connotation, it must inhere in the mind. But poetical as the expression is, "winged thought" and "winged judgment" do not seem to me quite accurately to define intuition and insight. If anything the difference is rather one of mental sense. If we call reason, ratiocination, intellect, judgment, the *limbs* of the mind—the means by which it moves from premiss to conclusion—then insight and intuition are its *eyes*. Insight is merely intense and penetrative *mental* vision (thus distinguishing it from *astral clairvoyance*); intuition the same faculty applied to abstract ideas or truths. Philosophically, it is "immediate" as opposed to "mediate" cognition. But I must demur to the definition of imagination as "winged sympathy," beautiful as the expression is. Imagination is a royal faculty—none other than the image-making or creative power of the mind. Its artistic use and expression implies "sympathy" no doubt, as does the proper use of insight and intuition, but imagination is as much more than "sympathy" as it is greater than "fancy." And it is as well to remember that though intuition, insight, and imagination are now so different from the more "pedestrian" faculties of reason and judgment, they were not always so; just as the highly specialised faculty of physical sight was once a mere pigment-spot on the surface of our bodies.

MONTAGU LOMAX.

PURE THINKING, ETC.

*To the Editor, THE THEOSOPHICAL REVIEW*

DEAR SIR,

In last month's correspondence W. L. credits me with a belief in Koreshanism. This surprises me because the context of my

paper on the fallacy of the undulatory theory of light makes clear that my allusion to Cyrus R. Teed's prediction and subsequent verification of the concavity of the earth's surface was only meant to illustrate that even *one-sided* theories are capable of verification. For Kepler's laws are rationally provable, and I hold that only the rational is real, and *vice versa*.

As for W. L.'s request to me to explain optical phenomena without the undulatory theory, I shall try to point out their *rationale*; not, however, in order to prove that my view of light is true. This it is apart from anything that I may say in future. That the substratum of light is that of sight or the *immaterial* We, stands firm on the rock of pure insight, and cannot be *rationaly* contested.

Further, I find that Mr. Orage is perplexed as to what starts Logic. This also surprises me; for am I not constantly emphasising that we are *self-active*, and that consequently all activity originates in spiritual Freedom or, to use a properly Theosophical term, in *Karma* as the nature of the Absolute Spirit?

Mr. Orage's perplexity is easily traced to the standpoint of the intellectual consciousness. This is made obvious also in his positive assertion that the changes of consciousness are atomistic. In a sense, this agrees with the analysis of mental activity in the sphere of the so-called association of ideas, or of the analytical process. But surely, even though the mind jump arbitrarily from one point to another, there is always at bottom the unbreakable continuity of the same mind. Or does Mr. Orage view his mental contents in the image of a heap of sand? I take it that he is only clumsily referring to the discretion implied in the exercise of attention; in this respect atomicity is a hopelessly inadequate term. If the physicist himself begins to acknowledge that "atom" is a fiction, the term would be entirely misapplied to mental changes even if the dialectic movement *were* a chimera.

Somehow or other Mr. Orage's attitude reminds me of Schopenhauer's atheism, with its logical conclusion that life must be either renounced or borne as a huge joke. If there is no *necessary* connection between mental changes, on what ground does Mr. Orage submit his *positive* assertions or denials to his fellow men? What does he aim at, if there is no truth? Is he only joking? Are we, Theosophists, only aiming at whiling away our time in a fundamentally senseless play at life? I am a Theist, not an atheist; and, as I have already stated, pure Logic is the exposition of God as He is in His essence. As for

the rest, I refer Mr. Orage to my paper on the distinction between true and pseudo-thinking.

Yours sincerely,

FRANCIS SEDLÁK.

### THE SPLASH OF A MINNOW

*To the Editor, THE THEOSOPHICAL REVIEW*

DEAR Sir,

May a minnow among fishes venture to splash among the Leviathans who have recently churned up our Theosophic ocean; or, in other words, may a younger member send a word of thanks for the bomb throwing of Mr. Orage, and the glorious *κόσμοι* which the thought of Initiation has woven for Mr. Mead and Dr. Wells?

Theosophy, it seems to me, has given me this: the knowledge that I may *realise* what I am, what I am doing, and to love it, and for this I am thankful; but I do not feel that I can describe either what it means, or is, or might be.

It appears to me a limitless process and prospect, and that every minute of it is in a way an initiation; for Life on this plane, as I understand it, is Wisdom in series, and Wisdom is Power so soon as it is assimilated. But this means no more than that I am conscious and am also power, or in other words, *I am life*. I cannot express it more shortly or more clearly; but it is precisely this discovery which Theosophy has given me. Before I thought I was *something*, now I know I'm not; at least I know it sometimes, which is a beginning.

A German friend of mine called occultism the Philosophy of the Nicht-etwas—"the not-*something*," and I like the phrase. Initiation, therefore, seems to me a process of perceiving the not-something among the somethings, and I hope, therefore, it is to be accomplished by every man for himself, as well as by some mysterious ceremony in which I used to believe. (It was an impressive *Something* with details which made me shudder, but which I won't venture on at present.)

Of course I *may* have been through it—say on the "astral"—how do I know!—or I may have it in front of me, once or  $x$  times. If it is describable, it is also describable in terms of ceremony; but personally I cannot feel that confirmation would help me if I went through it again, unless—the light be within me, and I can perceive it there.

Meanwhile, I give thanks with all my heart to my innumerable

initiators, and among them to my fellow members who have helped me both in the destruction and creation of somethings; and in consideration of my size apologise for the splash.

I am, Sir,

Your obedient servant,

THE MINNOW.

#### BAHAISM

##### *The Editor*, THE THEOSOPHICAL REVIEW

I HAVE just read with interest Mr. Sprague's sympathetic article on Bahatism (late Bâbism), and from some acquaintance with former writers on the subject note some omissions, perhaps errors.

Much of the early persecution may be traced to the political significance of the Bâb's descent from Âli, and some communistic utterances to be found in Prof. Browne's book. The whole trend of early utterances was to semi-political reform of Mohammedanism. Why does Mr. Sprague omit all reference to Ezel, who for some time exercised the power of successor bequeathed to him? Again, not a word of the charges of attempted poisoning reciprocated by Ezel and Baha, with other quarrels, which led to the deportation of the former to Famagusta and the latter to Akka.

Far from teaching "distinctively a new religion," Abbas is now reported to be telling people they should remain in the religion to which they have belonged. Mr. Phelps' book proves this. The "accounts of wonderful powers of speech and superhuman wisdom" attributed to Baha, the Manifestation, are also told of the Bâb, and are like the narratives about Jesus in the Apocryphal Gospels and about Buddha in various books.

Historically, Baha comes forward and displaces the appointed successor by his strength of character, as has often occurred before. Theologically, he seems to me to continue the idea of reformed Mohammedanism (see *The Book of Ighan*).

I would recommend the study of this movement, as exhibiting how widely divergent accounts of events may arise in the course of sixty-two years, and how the trend of the movement may vary in half that time. (Cf. Browne, *New History of the Bâb*, and Phelps, *Abbas Effendi*.)

Yours truly,

R. H. R. SKEELES.

## AGNOSTIC THEOSOPHY ?

*To the Editor, THE THEOSOPHICAL REVIEW*

SIR,

Now that your pages are especially occupied with the discussion of certain questions, which, as individual members of the Theosophical Society, many of us have had to work out in our own minds before now, may I crave space for a few words of gentle protest against certain remarks appearing in the article entitled "In Defence of Agnosticism"? The word "agnosticism," and still more the significance attaching to it, is not, by the way, early Victorian, as the writer asserts; it is mid-Victorian. When Mr. Orage puts forward, with an abundance of good humour, if with ever vanishing consistency, his private views on Theosophy and its mission, nobody is much concerned to interfere with him, although some of us may be inclined to shrug our shoulders in bewilderment at such perversity of mental gymnastic, and such Nietzschean vagaries. But when he proceeds to enunciate categorically the beliefs of the Theosophical Society, and to take upon himself to speak authoritatively in the name of the twelve thousand and more persons, who, in addition to himself, represent the Society, then one is impelled to remonstrate with a writer who, to all appearances, considers himself better cognisant of one's own relation to the Society than one is oneself cognisant. I am told that the Society to which I belong regards belief as dangerous, and that its main purpose is to destroy beliefs concerning races, creeds, castes, sexes, colour. And again, that we deny revelation, and authority, and dispense with forms, ceremonies, persons, doctrines, etc. All of which I find rather startling. Even if this were true, it would not be regarding all beliefs, and belief in the abstract, as dangerous. It would be regarding certain beliefs as dangerous, and setting up others in contradistinction to them. Obviously my good friend is playing at word-juggling.

But, apparently, it has never occurred to him that it is not beliefs which are dangerous, but the abuse or distortion of those beliefs, not doctrines or dogmas which are harmful, but their abuse. Personally, I happen to be a solid believer in the aforesaid races, creeds, castes, sexes, colour, revelation, authority, forms, ceremonies, persons, doctrines, and a string of other doubtless equally pernicious institutions. But I repudiate the insinuation that membership in the Theo-

sophical Society involves my abandoning any of these beliefs. The Society enjoins upon me such wholesome modesty that it constrains me to recognise that I have not yet mastered all that the world has to teach me, and that, consequently, other people have as much right to their opinions as I have to mine. But that is not inhibiting me from maintaining my own convictions.

Ever since I began to cogitate for myself I have objected to being labelled as a Protestant. No man ever yet found salvation in the formula, "I do not believe," or in merely protesting against somebody else's belief; we are judged primarily, not by what we disbelieve, but by what we *do* believe. Mr. Orage would have our Society a collection of what my dear old friend, the late Rev. Dr. F. G. Lee, used to dub "negation-mongers." To me the Society, as represented by its work, its literature, and the official statement of its aims and objects, stands pre-eminently for the *gnosis* as against agnosticism, for constructive thinking as against merely destructive iconoclasm and vapid "negation-mongering," for the age of synthesis emerging from the age of analysis. There is at present in evidence a tendency fondly to imagine that disagreement with beliefs advanced with conviction in our literature constitutes in itself a new gospel of "rational" Theosophy, the more admirable, of course, the more violent and unreasoning the dissent from those beliefs. May the gods defend us from a new Theosophical orthodoxy, and that the hybrid orthodoxy of Theosophical Protestantism!

When Mr. Orage speaks of the likelihood of our Society having to alter its doctrines every ten or twenty years he is again confusing a doctrine with the manner of its presentation, and its use with its abuse. Surely Mme. Blavatsky, Mrs. Besant, Mr. Mead, and Mr. Sinnett, have demonstrated quite irrefutably the persistence of a body of truths, the *Wisdom*, throughout the ages, though the manner of its presentation may have varied.

My good friend, Mr. Orage, may continue to preach his "blue-eyed" philosophy of utter irresponsibility in life—and as sedulously abstain from putting it into practice. Only I beg of him not to endeavour to tar all his friends with the same brush. Some of us find that emptiness of conviction isn't much good when we come to the profounder experiences of life.

I am, Sir,

Yours obediently,

JAMES I. WEDGWOOD.

## REVIEWS AND NOTICES

## NEW SONGS BY MR. MACBETH

Breaths of the Great Love's Song, and Hymns of Healing. By James Macbeth. Sold by W. K. Smith. (To be obtained from the Theosophical Publishing Society, 161, New Bond Street, W. Price 2s. 6d. net.)

THE Christ invoked in these "Breaths" of the Song of Love is cosmic rather than personal; the Universal Christ of the mystic rather than the Risen Master of the Churches; though, in truth, the supreme mystics of the earth have seen the Twain as One; and this, I think, Mr. Macbeth recognises. These songs invoke that Holy Spirit, Mother of God, Whom I prefer to name Wisdom rather than Love; simply because Wisdom cannot be made separate from Love; whereas there is a spurious so-called love which is divorced from Wisdom. These Songs are less to be valued in my eyes for what they say, than as a witness of what their singer has *known*. This "word," he tells us, is the "incommunicable word"; but here and there he touches that which makes us aware he has felt some hidden things, has penetrated some secret which, perhaps, cannot be uttered; which, in any case, is better to leave veiled; for it is a hideous deed to "profane the mysteries," and I sometimes fear this age is too prone to think it can reduce to definite formulæ the things unspeakable, and too ready to rush in light-heartedly where angels fear to tread.

But such books as Mr. Macbeth's, breathing a spirit of large-heartedness which sees *all things* dwelling within the Body of the Lord, have also another value. They contain the passwords of a mystic and wholly unorganised and free brotherhood, whereof it is good the members should know each other; though, alas! they are parted at times by the web of ignorance and misconstruction in which we struggle.

The airs of some of the hymns at the end of the book I was kindly permitted to hear before they were harmonised; they are very sweet and plaintive.

The poem by Miss Adams towards the end of the volume appears to me to touch "the root of the matter," and has the living ring of verity which appears in all work of hers which I have yet seen.

I. H.

#### MYERS' "HUMAN PERSONALITY"

**Human Personality and its Survival of Bodily Death.** By Frederic W. H. Myers. Edited and abridged by Leopold Hamilton Myers. (London: Longmans, Green & Co.; 1907. Price 10s. 6d. net.)

OUR readers are already so familiar with the contents of Myers' *magnum opus*, that it is unnecessary to do more than announce the publication of this abridged edition, which in its 470 pages gives the general reader all that he will require to follow the main arguments and appreciate the general evidence. Myers has done much to break the ice of *Psychical Research* reserve, and we hope that his good example will be followed by a series of writers who, while reasoning on the ground of most accurate observation and description of psychic phenomena, will at the same time allow their readers to feel that they are alive and not either dehumanised mechanical registering instruments, or apologists of a materialism thinly veiled in deceptive neologisms.

G. R. S. M.

#### A STORY OF THE WAY

**Unto a Perfect Man.** By Ion Keith Murray. (London: The Theosophical Publishing Society; 1907. Price 2s. 6d. net.)

THIS romance takes us back to the early days of the Theosophical Society, when many such attempts were made to bridge the gulf between the real and its reflections. Much water has flowed under the bridges since then. Many of them have been carried away.

"These things are an allegory." They can be nothing else. Mr. Keith Murray's allegory is a good specimen of its kind. He has laid under contribution many theosophic books and has not unskillfully welded together what he found in them. His method is quiet and restrained; a pleasant contrast to the flamboyance of some stories on the same subject which it has been our painful duty to read. Yet we think the utterances placed in the mouth of the



Seeker's "Guide" are not always worthy of so great a Master as he is represented to be. They are not all in good taste.

Mr. Keith Murray should avoid exclamation points. Their use weakens any style; and is, besides, quite out of date.

Chapter V., on "The Christian Mysteries," is well put together, and may be found useful for quotation.

The sincerity and enthusiasm of the book will gain it good-will; and with care, compression and the study of great prose the author may do worthy work in the future.

A. L.

#### MR. WAITE'S APHORISMS

Steps to the Crown. By Arthur Edward Waite. (London: Philip Wellby; 1906.)

IN this work Mr. Waite comes forward in a new character, as a writer of Aphorisms. It is planned as a series, representing (as he tells us in his preface) the passage of the natural man, in whom "the powers of the soul are divorced from its proper graces," to the time when "the soul has passed out of Egypt, and now beholds, near or from afar, the Promised Land." For "Maxims" after the French style, which seems to be his model, the first of these conditions is the more favourable, and we fancy that to not a few readers the "Counsels of Caiaphas" will have more piquancy than the sayings of the "Path of Union." In such a collection there will inevitably be much that is useful, though not new—as this notable saying: "When we cease to believe in the priest, we are disposed to believe in the sorcerer"; much that is neither new nor true, as this: "By avoiding the study of good models we succeed occasionally in acquiring our own individual accent," which Mr. Waite should have left to the Spread-eagler who invented it to excuse his barbarism. But we can honestly say that in these 220 pages there are many thoughts good to read, and good to meditate on; a pasture in which all thinkers will find food, some in one place and some in another, and be ready to give the author thanks. We will hope that he himself has found the truth of his "Aids to Reflection," 48: "By the making of many maxims man sometimes passes from pessimism to optimism, for it is difficult to be busy about one thing without beginning to see the good which is in all." Perhaps most to our own taste is the section beginning on p. 73, culminating with this: "The human heart becomes less

implacable in proportion as it is more disposed to *amour*. Hatred is an exhausting passion, and the man who is subject to boredom soon wearies of the notion of vengeance. The heroic virtues themselves are sometimes an expression of our weariness ; we begin to be unselfish when we are tired of living for ourselves."

A. A. W.

#### A ROMANCE OF PYTHAGORAS

*Pythagoras and the Delphic Mysteries.* By Edouard Schuré. Translated by F. Rothwell, B.A. (London: Philip Wellby; 1906. Price 2s. net.)

THOSE who are acquainted with M. Schuré's previous works will know what to expect in *Pythagoras*. We have before us a charmingly written romance and not a study based on the analysis of documents. M. Schuré has repainted the dim historical background of the contradictory accounts of the *Lives* of the great philosopher, and has used it as a setting for his own exposition of what he understands of the general "esoteric doctrine" as sketched in modern Theosophical books. He has given us a graphic picture of what he believes to have been the life and teachings of Pythagoras, but it must be held to be *Dichtung* rather than *Wahrheit* by the scholar of the texts. It will not, however, fail to interest the many who are unacquainted with the difficulties of Pythagorean studies, and will be doubtless read more widely than books of a soberer character. We could wish, moreover, that M. Schuré had been more modest in his self-appreciation, for referring to the "edifice of the knowledge of the Kosmos," he ends his book with the words: "No philosophy, however, has yet embraced the whole of it. It is this whole I have endeavoured to reveal here in all its harmony and unity" !

Mr. Rothwell has done the translation well, but we would call attention to some misspellings which should be corrected if the work goes into a second edition. Sanchouniathon (not Sankoniaton), Porphyrius (not Porphyrus), *akoustikoi* (not *akousikoi*), *antichthon* (not *antichthone*), *hieros* (not *hiéros*), sibyls (not sybils), triad (not tryad).

G. R. S. M.

#### A SONG BOOK FOR CHILDREN

The Lotus Song Book. (London: *The Lotus Journal*, 8, Inverness Place, Queen's Road, W.; 1907. Price 2s. 6d. net.)

THE essential pre-requisite in reviewing a book such as this one, is a

clear understanding of the circumstances which have called it into being, and the purpose it is intended to subserve. As the Theosophical Society has expanded numerically and emerged from the stage in which it lay open to the imputation of being a mushroom growth, so has the need asserted itself of provision for the instruction of children in accordance with theosophic principles. For if it be claimed for the Ancient Wisdom that it has any application to the problems of modern life, then assuredly will it first and foremost shed illumination on those connected with the education (in the true significance of the word) of the young.

Accordingly there has sprung up, in different parts of the world, what have come to be known as Lotus Circles, and which may broadly be described as Ethical classes. They are conducted on widely divergent lines, and embrace young people of varied stages of growth, ranging from infancy to budding adolescence. The difficulties attendant on the formation and conduct of these circles have been rather considerable. However, there seems good cause to boast that the labour has not been expended in vain, notwithstanding the rather cheap cynicism of a recent clerical scribe, who assured his readers through the doubtless very appropriate channel of a halfpenny newspaper, that for the Theosophical emblem of the lotus there should now deservedly be substituted that of the lettuce.

Singing has naturally come to occupy a prominent position in the activities of Lotus Circles. Gradually there has accumulated a collection of little songs appropriate for children, which have become wedded to certain tunes. These form the nucleus of the present work; the publication of which has been rendered possible by the financial generosity of two members of the Theosophical Society, who modestly desire to remain anonymous.

The collection comprises sixty-three numbers in all. Many of these are eminently suited to children, though others may appear, at the first glance, rather beyond their understanding. But doubtless these have been included advisedly, and with the intention that they shall serve as a basis for instruction. The words reveal many happy features, much that is well calculated to appeal to the youthful imagination,—such, for instance, as Miss Frances R. Havergal's "Soul-Flowers."

In the selection of the music the compilers have drawn from various sources. One of our members, Mr. H. Ernest Nichol, Mus. Bac., Oxon., of Hull, who is well known in this particular department of

musical work, contributes fifteen tunes, and several others come from the *Ethical Hymn Book*. There are also various adaptations from classical sources, especially from Haydn, and selections from traditional tunes.

The *Lotus Song Book* has evidently cost its compilers no little trouble, and they are to be congratulated on the success which has crowned their efforts. The book is well printed, the music-type bold and easy to read, and there is a well-chosen ornamental design of lotus flowers on the cover.

J. I. W.

#### "THE GREAT LAW" IN ITALIAN

*La Legge Suprema: Studio sulle Origini delle Religioni e sulla loro Unità Fondamentale.* Da W. Williamson. Tradotto dall'Inglese da T. Ferraris. (Milano: Ars Regia, Libreria-Editrice del Dr. G. Sulli Rao, Corso Magenta, 27; 1907. Lire 6.)

THIS large and handsome volume is well printed on good paper with bold type, and solidly bound. Sig. Ferraris is to be congratulated on his translation and the editor on his work. Indeed the first large volume of the *Ars Regia* cannot fail to give satisfaction to our colleague "W. Williamson," and also to lay the solid foundation of a reputation for good work when entrusted to the hands of Dr. Sulli Rao.

G. R. S. M.

#### MAGAZINES AND PAMPHLETS

*Theosophist*, January. In this number we miss for the first time the "Old Diary Leaves," which have for many years formed so interesting a portion of its contents. Their place is taken by a valuable and beautiful lecture by Miss Agnes E. Davidson on "The Memory of Past Lives," enforcing the lesson, which cannot be too often repeated, that "no one who is not well on the way to perfect selflessness should *trust himself* with psychic powers; because, until the demon of self is uprooted, we cannot foresee from day to day what dire temptation may assail us, what unholy desire may arise within us, absorbing to its own ends all our powers of mind and soul and body." Miss L. Appel, M.B., treats of "Feeling and Emotion in Eastern and Western Psychology"; Dr. N. Chattopādhyāya continues his study of Zoroastrianism; under the title of "The Secret of Content" K. S. Kothandarama Aiyar discusses a remarkable

article by Mr. Arnold Bennett in *T.P.'s Weekly*, which is well worth the notice it receives; Dr. John McLean speaks well and wisely of "The Golden Keys"; and "The Great Pyramid," "Buddhist Rules for the Laity," and "Bālabodhini," are continued. The monthly instalment of Rāma Prasād's "Self-Culture" must not be passed without special notice. He treats of the mischief of sectarianism, taking for his example the Christian missions in India. He says: "The missionaries came over to India, saturated with the spirit of religious vanity, ready to convert the whole heathen world to their own beliefs. They began to study the literature of the Hindus with the object of showing up its hollowness. And the result of these labours has been that the whole Western world is now becoming pervaded with Buddhist and Hindu thought!" His claim for his own religion is no small one, but it is not our place to dispute it. "The true mission of Hinduism to the world (says he) should be to preach, not that any one in the world is not a Hindu, and that he should become one; but to teach the whole world to see that every-one is a Hindu, whether he call himself a Christian or a Muhammadan, or the immediate follower of any other Teacher of the world. There is nothing in any religion of the world which is not in Hinduism; and a good deal in Hinduism which is not to be found in any other religion." This last phrase is, however, one to which even the missionaries would agree.

*Theosophy in India*, January. Here Mrs. Besant's lecture on the "Significance of Psychic Experiments" will be of most interest to our readers.

*Central Hindu College Magazine*, January, has for frontispiece a most formidable "Sandstorm in the Sahara." The literary contents are quite up to the level. From the "Hindu Catechism" we take a useful note; "The real meaning of the famous but mostly ill-understood teaching of Shri Kṛiṣṇa about the Dharma of *another* being dangerous is simply that in so far as one has failed to adapt oneself to changed circumstances, and continues to act up to the duties of a previous surrounding, he has *failed*. In sticking to the duties of a bygone Dharma a person has been performing *another's* Dharma. It is a crime to believe that such a great Being could ever have shown the way to petrification and race-suicide."

*Theosophy and New Thought*, January, is the title under which we have to find our old friend *The Gleaner*. In the alteration of the cover we should have been glad to have missed the truly barbarous Corin-

thian column, but this was not to be. A series on the life of H. P. B. is begun, and the articles are good, including one on "India as the World-Saviour." There is at least one point on which Mrs. Besant's work with the Hindus has been overwhelmingly successful—she has restored their self-esteem; and out of that we may hope the other virtues will spring in time.

*The Vâhan*, February, announces the Fourth International Congress, to open on May 18th, at Munich. The librarian's eyes have been opened to the fact that when books are allowed to be taken out they don't always return. There are three things to which the most sensitive conscience does not extend—horses, books, and umbrellas; and precautions must be taken accordingly. The new questions are whether a soul may attain perfection without conscious effort, and if dead children may reincarnate in the same family.

*Lotus Journal*, February. This number is rather lighter than it has been of late. It professes to be a Magazine for Children and Young People, and now and then the dignity of the Young People has seemed to us a little unduly to kick the beam. This time the Children have the upper hand, and the number isn't a bit the worse!

Of our other Magazines we have to note: *Bulletin Théosophique*, February; *Revue Théosophique*, January, with translations; *De Theosophische Beweging*, February; *Theosophia*, January, whose main contents are "The Use and Object of Art," by J. L. M. Lauweriks, "Heirs of the Ages," by G. R. S. Mead, "Is a Lie ever Justifiable," by Jo. de Vos, and a notice of the Dutch edition of Alan Leo's *Modern Astrology*; *Teosofisk Tidskrift*; *Théosophie*, February. From Italy we have two new magazines to acknowledge, one the official *Bulletin* of the Italian Section, published at Genoa, and to be distributed monthly to the members, like our own *Vâhan*; the other comes to us from Rome, under the title *Ultra*, and is a nicely got-up periodical of forty-eight pages. We are much pleased to find the names of our old friends Sig. Decio Calvari and his "gentile sposa" once more appearing in a magazine of their own. We join the *Bulletin* in congratulating them heartily on the success, "complete from all points of view" of their first number, and wish them, this time, complete success from the pecuniary point of view also. *Omatunto*; *Theosophic Messenger*, with an important report of the proceedings of the annual meeting of the Chicago Branch, showing clearly how seriously are *there* regarded the matters of morality which we are just now being invited to disregard altogether; *Theosophy in Australasia*, December, with excellent articles

discussing, *inter alia*, the relation of Buddhism to Christianity and the Paris repudiation of Philanthropy. *New Zealand Theosophical Magazine*, January, in which the most extensive article is a study by W. A. Mayers entitled "The Bible and Christian Dogmatics," which well illustrates the great and growing difficulty put in the way of controversy by modern criticism. Once *verbal* inspiration given up, no two thinkers have, in reality, the same Bible to dispute upon, and they are forced, even against their will, to make use of their reason as a test of what they will admit as the Gospel. It is a vast step forwards. *La Verdad ; Fragments ; Theosophisch Maandblad*.

To *Broad Views*, February, Mr. Sinnett's own contributions are on Stonehenge, and a well-timed discussion of the Zancig performance, inclining to regard it as a case of the singular community of thought of two closely related minds, examples of whose power when carefully trained were familiar long before Mr. and Mrs. Zancig came forward. *Modern Astrology* has for us, the profane, a discourse by Mrs. Leo on our power to rule our stars; *Occult Review*, February, has eight pages of reproduction of Blake's drawings, which put the interest of the letterpress somewhat in the shade; *Indian Review*, December, in which we would call attention to a very acute and thoughtful appreciation of "America in Literature," by Prof. J. Nelson Fraser; *Visishtadvaitin ; Siddhanta Deepika ; The Dawn ; The Arya ; O Munde Occulto ; Notes and Queries*, this time reproducing the quaint fable that Freemasons are "mentioned in England in the third century, when St. Alban, the protomartyr of Britain, appointed the regular meetings of the Lodges, and presided over them in person." What tales our American friends will swallow! *Herald of the Cross ; New International Review ; The Grail ; The Crank ; Health Record*.

From the "Dépôt des Publications Cosmiques," Paris, we receive two numbers of the *Revue Cosmique*, the editor of which is a certain Aia Aziz, who hails from Algeria, and two small volumes of "Explanations and General Principles of the Cosmic Movement," "authorised" by someone whose mark is a lotus in the centre of a misshapen hexagram. Like the similar American ones, they testify that life is springing up all the world over, in the most unlikely places—as in the Nile floods, welling up through the ground, far from the River, and doubtless muddied and defiled by what it has passed through, but the life-giving Water for all that!

## THE PASSING OF H. S. OLCOTT

JUST as we are making up our last pages comes a not unexpected cable from Madras, dated February 17th :

“ President passed seven to-day.”

We must reserve for our next issue any attempt to appreciate the work of H. S. Olcott, the President-Founder of our Society ; for the present it is enough to know that he has passed hence, after thirty-one years of unceasing labour for the Theosophical Society, and self-sacrificing devotion to its interests. During his active life H. S. Olcott has jealously guarded the liberty of the Society, and shown a fine example of impartiality and freedom from sectarianism ; he has deserved well of us and won our love, and we are sad at his going, though well we know such sadness is unwisdom.

May he now realise in their true nature the things in which he has believed so fervently.

## TWO COMMUNICATIONS FROM ADYAR

IT is with regret that we find ourselves forced to give publicity to the following communications which have been sent from Adyar to all Theosophical periodicals throughout the world and have already appeared in some of them. They have thus become public historical documents and must be discussed publicly. The first purports to be an official presidential declaration and runs as follows :

ADYAR, *January 7th, 1907.*

*To the Theosophical Society, its Officers and Members.*

DEAR BRETHREN,

In the beginning of this year 1907, which my several medical attendants in Italy, on board ship, at Colombo, and here at Adyar, have almost unanimously proclaimed to be the last year of my existence in this physical body, it behoves me to put my house in order; also to place on



record certain words of counsel given to me by the Masters, connected with the affairs of the office of President of the Theosophical Society. This Society, which is now operating in forty-five different countries of the world through over six hundred Branch Societies, comprises a great number of persons of different races and religions, all united together on the platform of Universal Brotherhood, so it concerns me to appoint as my successor one who will act with perfect impartiality, as regards morals, religions and politics, favouring no one but holding the scales between all with perfect justice, as I have always tried to do. There are many in our Society who surpass me in learning, and in various other qualities, which go to make up the capable ruler, but I leave it to posterity to say whether there is one among us who has worked more zealously than myself to realise the idea of Universal Brotherhood.

The responsibility resting upon me to appoint my successor was too great, so, as in my previous times during the course of official duties connected with this Society, I trusted to Those behind the movement to give me Their advice in the matter.

Last evening, in the presence of witnesses, Mahâtmâ M. and Mahâtmâ K. H. appeared beside my sick-bed, visible to our physical eyes and speaking in voices audible to our physical ears. They told me to appoint Annie Besant as my successor. They said no matter whom I should appoint there would be some discontented ones, but that taking everything into consideration, They most decidedly considered her the best fitted for the office.

I therefore appoint Annie Besant to take the office of President of the Theosophical Society at my death, and I cannot but feel glad that Their decision confirms the view that I had myself already taken. I feel convinced that I can safely trust to her the administration of the duties of the office I have held for the last thirty-one years, the more so, because the Masters assured me last evening that They would overshadow her as They have me in the work.

They both approved my wish that Adyar should be kept as the Headquarters of the Theosophical Society, and official residence of the Presidents, for the time of their office, inasmuch as the property had been bought by the Founders under Their (the Masters') direct inspiration.

In case she does not find it possible to remain in the office the entire term, I beg her not to appoint a successor unless They approve of her choice.

(Signed) H. S. OLCOTT, P.F.T.S.

On receipt of this extraordinary document the Executive Committee of the British Section of the Theosophical Society unanimously passed the following resolution :

Resolved :

That the Executive Committee of the British Section cannot consider the presidential notice of January 7th as valid : on the grounds—

(1) That it is illegal as being in contravention of Rule 9 of the General Rules and Regulations of the Theosophical Society,—which gives the President-Founder the right only of nominating and not of appointing his successor.

(2) That it imposes upon the Society a blind belief in and unquestioning acceptance of the genuineness and supreme authority of a personal psychic phenomenon.

At the same time this Executive Committee declares its readiness to receive with becoming respect any nomination that their venerable President-Founder may make in accordance with the constitution and his own best judgment.

Rule 9 of the General Constitution reads :

The President-Founder, Col. H. S. Olcott, holds the office of President for life, and has the right of nominating his successor, subject to the ratification of the Society, the vote being taken as provided for in the election of a President.

Our President-Founder has unfortunately passed from hence without being able personally to rectify a blunder that must be ascribed largely to his exceedingly weak state of health—for it is in entire contradiction to the whole of his previous presidential record.

The Acting President (Mr. A. P. Sinnett) and the General Officers of the Society, therefore, must now see to it that all is put into due order, and so do what Colonel Olcott would have been the first to do himself once he realised the unconstitutional nature of his proclamation.

The second communication reads :

#### A CONVERSATION WITH THE MAHÂTMÂS

Probably on account of the possibility of my life closing at any time, the two Mahâtmâs who are known to be behind the Theosophical movement and the personal instructors of H. P. B. and myself, have visited me several times lately (in the presence of witnesses, being plainly visible, audible and tangible to all), with the object of giving me some final instructions about things to which They wished me to attend while I am still in the physical body. It may be that I shall live some years yet, but the critical condition of my health makes it imperative that I arrange certain matters for the sake of the Society.

It is natural enough, since I have been working under the guidance of these Masters during the last thirty-one years, that They should have some words of counsel for me, as my Teachers, in reference to Theosophical matters, and that I, as their humble servant, have questions to ask them concerning my endeavours to carry out Their will. "For the night cometh,

when no man can work." Fortunately this refers only to the physical body; for as regards work in the other bodies, there is no "night," but only the earnest endeavour that must be concentrated in the work, no matter in what body we may be functioning at the time.

The interview which I am about to describe, had for its object the course I should pursue in the present crisis, brought about by the cloud resting upon one who has been one of our most respected members, and, indeed, one who has given faithful service to the Society for many years, but who, it has been recently discovered, has been giving out teachings of which we did not approve.

Some members of the Society have formed themselves into two groups. The one, with an exaggerated moral sense, believes that the Teachers of mankind cannot employ agents that are not above the weaknesses of the physical body, contact with whom would be supposed morally to taint them.

The other party (who, if we make a careful study of history, must be regarded as having some knowledge and common sense on their side) considers that these invisible Teachers, in order to reach the masses, and especially to penetrate to the very depths of human society, are forced to employ agents or messengers who possess many of the failings of mankind; but that they must also possess a high standard of ideals and spirituality, at least enough to enable them to be useful instruments for conveying the lofty precepts and high teachings, which it is incumbent upon them to give out in order to carry out the will of Those who employ them.

The principal members of the two parties were rather startled recently by the statement of Mrs. Annie Besant (made privately but now generally known) that she thought she must have been under a glamour, in supposing that she had worked with Mr. Leadbeater under the guidance and in the presence of the Mahâtâmâs while he was giving such harmful teachings.

I wished to make my own mind easy about the matter, so I asked the Mahâtâmâs this question: "Is it then true that Mrs. Besant and Mr. Leadbeater *did work* together on the higher planes, under Your guidance and instruction?" *Answer* (Mahâtâmâ M.): "Most emphatically yes!" *Question*. "Was she right in thinking that because Mr. Leadbeater had been giving out certain teachings that were objectionable, he was not fit to be Your instrument, or to be in Your presence?" *Answer*. "No; where can you find us perfect instruments at this stage of evolution? Shall we withhold knowledge that would benefit humanity, simply because we have no perfect instruments to convey it to the world?" *Question*. "Then it is not true, that they were either of them mistaken or under a glamour?" *Answer*. "Decidedly not. I wish you to state this publicly."

I can give no better examples than the Founders, to corroborate what the Mahâtâmâ said, for in spite of our manifold shortcomings and physical weaknesses, They did not hesitate to employ us as Their instruments, because They saw in us the capacity of becoming loyal true workers. As

for myself, you know well what an imperfect instrument I have been, and so far as H. P. B. was concerned, you know that a Master once wrote through her hand and referred to her "unfortunate rotten old body." (See *Old Diary Leaves*, Vol. II.)

In the principal discourses which I recently gave at the International Congress at Paris and the London and Chicago Conventions, I discussed this matter freely, for the sense of it oppressed my mind, and I felt that it would be most unwise to allow the Society to take such a stand, as seemed to me to be an extreme one, concerning ideals that were impossible to realise at our present stage of development. In my Paris address I said

"Some years ago I wrote an article on 'Asceticism,' in which I told about the rebuke that was administered to me at Bombay, by a Master, when, upon being asked to name the one of all the then members of the Society in India whom I thought the brightest spiritually, I named one whose devotion to the Society was great, and whose personal conduct was irreproachable; but I was told that I should have selected a certain person who, although a drunkard, was spiritually advanced within. No sensible person would say that one addicted to drunkenness or sexual excesses is more likely to be an accurate teacher or wise counsellor than one who leads a decent life; quite the contrary, but it means that now and again appears a person who, despite moral failings, can serve as a channel for high teachings. Yet the very fact of his moral taint would naturally put us on our guard, for fear that we might fall into the trap of our own credulity, and take the teachings without proper scrutiny."

The Mahâtma wishes me to state in reference to the disturbances that have arisen because we deemed it wise to accept Mr. Leadbeater's resignation from the Society, that it was right to call an Advisory Council to discuss the matter; it was right to judge the teachings to which we objected as wrong, and it was right to accept his resignation; but it was not right that the matter should have been made so public, and that we should have done everything possible to prevent it becoming so, for his sake as well as that of the Society.

He said it should be the sacred duty of every Theosophist, if he finds a brother guilty of a wrong, to try to prevent that brother from continuing in his wrong-doing, and to protect others from being contaminated by that wrong so far as it is possible; but it is also his duty as a Theosophist to shield his brother from being held up *unnecessarily* to general public condemnation and ridicule.

I shall now close this article with the first direct message from the Masters Themselves sent through me to the Society as a whole.

"Let those who believe in Our existence, and that We are behind the Theosophical Movement, also that We shall continue to employ it as an agency for the uplifting of mankind, know, that we are sometimes forced to employ imperfect instruments (because of the lack of perfect ones) for Our

work. Therefore cease from such turmoil and strife, and from causing such disturbance in the Unity of Brotherhood, and thus weakening its strength, but instead, work together in harmony, to fit yourselves to be useful instruments to aid Us, instead of impeding Our work. We who are behind the Theosophical Movement, are powerless sometimes to prevent the checks and disturbances that must unavoidably arise, because of the Karma of individual members; but you can aid us much by refusing to take part in such disturbances, and by living true to the highest possible ideals of Theosophy. Should any event bring forth seeming injustice, have faith in the Law, that never fails to adjust matters. Cease rushing headlong into strife, or taking part in dissensions; hold together in brotherly love! Since you are part of the Great Universal Self, are you not striving against yourselves? Are not your Brother's sins your own? Peace! Trust in Us."

H. S. OLCOTT.

The reference to "glamour" above is to a statement made by me in a private and confidential letter, which should have been held sacred. In view of the acceptance by Mr. Leadbeater of the charges made against him—though some of them have since proved to be exaggerated—I stated that I thought my experiences with him on the higher planes must have been due to glamour, *fer*, while still recognising him as a disciple, I thought that the things charged would have temporarily shut him out from such work. It is true that this view caused me much pain, as it discredited certain things of which I had felt sure, and shook what I had believed to be solid ground under my feet. But better this, it seemed to me, than that the Holy Ones should be insulted by our imperfections. It is with a sense of deep gratitude and relief that I learn that those experiences were not deceptive, that they were as true as for years I had believed them to be, and that while I was right in condemning the teachings, and also in believing that he was and is a disciple, I was wrong in thinking that the errors prevented Them from using him as one of Their instruments for good. How glad I am to have been wrong in this, and to have been set right, what words of mine may say?

And truly when one measures the depths of one's own imperfections, the shallowness of one's views, the narrowness of one's best wisdom, how can one think that another may not be a channel, though in him also imperfections mar the nature? Truly severity to one's own failings and charity to those of others, is our safety on the Path narrow as the edge of a razor. May this be the flower of wisdom gathered from the plant of pain, and may we live in the spirit breathed in the Master's words.

ANNIE BESANT.

With regard to this communication the Executive Committee of the British Section has passed the following resolution :

That the Executive Committee of the British Section of the Theosophical Society cannot receive the pronouncements contained in the document entitled "A Conversation with the Mahâtmâs" as a valid instruction to the Theosophical Society.

It requires no apparitions from the invisible to persuade us that it is our plain duty to condemn unquestioned wrong-doing and to safeguard the ignorant and innocent; it requires no voice but that of conscience to teach us to strive to be in charity with all, even with those utterly callous to the misery they have caused; it requires nothing but ordinary observation to discover that the instruments which have been used in the Theosophical Society for the inculcation of many a lofty truth are one and all very imperfect and fallible men and women. But it requires more than the pronouncements of such apparitions to persuade us that true Masters are utterly indifferent to grave moral obliquity in their pupils, and that there has been, as he himself claims, unbroken conscious access to the presence of true Masters by one who self-confessedly has all the time been systematically teaching practices which are universally condemned, and which are now long after their detection condemned by these same apparitions. But why condemn them now only and not long ago and face to face, and so have saved some of the victims? And why, again, if the communion of pupil and teachers be constant, do they allow the present condemnation to reach the ears of their unfortunate pupil by means so public, while in the same breath they condemn publicity?

The authority of psychism has for long been on trial in the Theosophical Society. Were its authority to be now accepted as supreme and unquestioned, the Society would commit intellectual and moral suicide, and condemn itself publicly to the well-deserved reproach of fatuity; for psychic tyranny spells theosophic slavery.

Though I would not call into question the personal *bona fides* of our late venerable and stricken President, whose sick bed has been tended by two American ladies who are both remarkably psychic, and with whom he has on each occasion witnessed these recent phenomena, —I, nevertheless, can recognise nothing in these pronouncements that is of the slightest authority for myself or that can be helpful to others; they are prejudicial to all concerned and involve everybody in quite needless turmoil.

G. R. S. MEAD.