

THE THEOSOPHICAL PATH

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“It is only by studying the various great religions and philosophies of humanity, by comparing them dispassionately and with an unbiased mind, that men can hope to arrive at the truth. It is especially by finding out and noting their various points of agreement that we may achieve this result. For no sooner do we arrive — either by study or by being taught by someone who knows — at their inner meaning than we find, almost in every case, that it expresses some great truth in Nature.” — H. P. BLAVATSKY

IS THEOSOPHY A RELIGION? * by H. P. Blavatsky

“Religion is the best armour that man can have, but it is the worst cloak.” — *Bunyan*

IT is no exaggeration to say that there never was — during the present century, at any rate — a movement, social or religious, so terribly, nay, so absurdly misunderstood, or more blundered about than THEOSOPHY — whether regarded theoretically as a code of ethics, or practically, in its objective expression, *i. e.*, the Society known by that name.

Year after year, and day after day had our officers and members to interrupt people speaking of the Theosophical Movement by putting in more or less emphatic protests against Theosophy being referred to as a ‘religion,’ and the Theosophical Society as a kind of church or religious body. Still worse, it is as often spoken of as a ‘new sect’! Is it a stubborn prejudice, an error, or both? The latter, most likely. The most narrow-minded and even notoriously unfair people are still in need of a plausible pretext, of a peg on which to hang their little uncharitable remarks and innocently-uttered slanders. And what peg is more solid for that purpose, more convenient than an ‘ism’ or a ‘sect.’ The great majority would be very sorry to be disabused and finally forced to accept the fact that Theosophy is neither. The name suits them, and they pretend to be unaware of its falseness. But there are others, also, many more or less friendly people, who labor sincerely under the same delusion. To these, we say: Surely the world has been hitherto sufficiently cursed

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with the intellectual extinguishers known as dogmatic creeds, without having inflicted upon it a new form of faith! Too many already wear their faith, truly, as Shakespeare puts it, "but as the fashion of his hat," ever changing "with the next block." Moreover, the very *raison d'être* of the Theosophical Society was, from its beginning, to utter a loud protest and lead an open warfare against dogma or any belief based upon blind faith.

It may sound odd and paradoxical, but it is true to say that, hitherto, the most apt workers in practical Theosophy, its most devoted members, were those recruited from the ranks of agnostics and even of materialists. . .

He who believes his own religion on faith, will regard that of every other man as a lie, and hate it on that same faith. Moreover, unless it fetters reason and entirely blinds our perceptions of anything outside our own particular faith, the latter is no faith at all, but a temporary belief, the delusion we labor under, at some particular time of life. Moreover, "faith without principles is but a flattering phrase for wilful positiveness or fanatical bodily sensations," in Coleridge's clever definition.

What, then, is Theosophy, and how may it be defined in its latest presentation in this closing portion of the nineteenth century?

Theosophy, we say, is not *a* Religion.

Yet there are, as every one knows, certain beliefs, philosophical, religious and scientific, which have become so closely associated in recent years with the word 'Theosophy' that they have come to be taken by the general public for Theosophy itself. Moreover, we shall be told these beliefs have been put forward, explained and defended by those very Founders who have declared that Theosophy is *not* a Religion. What is then the explanation of this *apparent* contradiction? How can a certain body of beliefs and teachings, an elaborate doctrine, in fact, be labelled 'Theosophy' and be tacitly accepted as 'Theosophical' by nine-tenths of the members of the Theosophical Society, if Theosophy is not a Religion? — we are asked.

It is perhaps necessary, first of all, to say, that the assertion that "Theosophy is not *a* Religion," by no means excludes the fact that "Theosophy *is* Religion" itself. A Religion in the true and only correct sense, is a bond uniting men together — not a particular set of dogmas and beliefs. Now Religion, *per se*, in its widest meaning is that which binds not only *all* MEN, but also *all* BEINGS and all *things* in the entire Universe into one grand whole. This is our Theosophical definition of religion; but the same definition changes again with every creed and country, and no two Christians even regard it alike. We find this in more than one eminent author. Thus Carlyle defined the Protestant

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Religion in his day, with a remarkable prophetic eye to this ever-growing feeling in our present day, as:

“For the most part a wise, prudential feeling, grounded on mere calculation; a matter, as all others now are, of expediency and utility; whereby some smaller *quantum* of earthly enjoyment may be exchanged for a far larger *quantum* of celestial enjoyment. Thus religion, too, is profit, a working for wages; not reverence, but vulgar hope or fear.”

But to Theosophists (the genuine Theosophists are here meant) who accept no mediation by proxy, no salvation through innocent blood shed, nor would they think of ‘working for wages’ in the *One Universal* religion, the only definition they could subscribe to and accept in full is one given by Miller. How truly and Theosophically he describes it, by showing that

“. true Religion
Is always mild, propitious and humble;
Plays not *the tyrant*, plants *no faith in blood*,
Nor bears destruction on her chariot wheels;
But stoops to polish, succour and redress,
And builds her *grandeur on the public good.*”

The above is a correct definition of what true Theosophy *is*, or ought to be. (Among the creeds Buddhism alone is such a true heart-binding and men-binding philosophy, because it is not a dogmatic religion.) In this respect, as it is the duty and task of every genuine Theosophist to accept and carry out these principles, Theosophy *is* RELIGION, and the Society its one Universal Church; the temple of Solomon’s wisdom, in building which “there was neither hammer, nor axe, *nor* any tool of iron heard in the house while it was building” (I. Kings, vi.); for this ‘temple’ is made by no human hand, nor built in any locality on earth — but, verily, is raised only in the inner sanctuary of man’s heart wherein reigns alone the awakened soul.

Thus Theosophy is not *a* Religion, we say, but RELIGION itself, the one bond of unity, which is so universal and all-embracing that no man, as no speck — from gods and mortals down to animals, the blade of grass and atom — can be outside of its light. Therefore, any organization or body of that name must necessarily be a UNIVERSAL BROTHERHOOD.

Were it otherwise, Theosophy would be but a word added to hundreds of other such words as high sounding as they are pretentious and empty. Viewed as a philosophy, Theosophy in its practical work is the alembic of the Mediaeval alchemist. It transmutes the apparently base metal of every ritualistic and dogmatic creed into the gold of fact and truth, and thus truly produces a universal panacea for the ills of mankind. . . . Hence, once that we live up to such Theosophy, it becomes a universal *panacea* indeed, for it heals the wounds inflicted by the gross asperities of the Church ‘isms’ on the sensitive soul of every naturally religious

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man. How many of these, forcibly thrust out by the reactive impulse of disappointment from the narrow area of blind belief into the ranks of arid disbelief, have been brought back to hopeful aspiration by simply joining our Brotherhood -- yea, imperfect as it is.

If, as an offset to this, we are reminded that several prominent members have left the Society disappointed in Theosophy as they had been in other associations, this cannot dismay us in the least. For with a very, *very few* exceptions, in the early stage of the Theosophical Society's activities when some left because they did not find mysticism practised in the General Body as *they* understood it, or because "the leaders lacked Spirituality," were "untheosophical, hence, untrue to the rules, you see," others *left because they were either half-hearted or too self-opinionated — a church and infallible dogma in themselves. . . .* Thus, all those who left have done well to leave, and have never been regretted.

Furthermore, there is this also to be added: the number of those who left can hardly be compared with the number of those who found everything they had hoped for in Theosophy. Its doctrines, if seriously studied, call forth, by stimulating one's reasoning powers and awakening the *inner* in the animal man, every hitherto dormant power for good in us, and also the perception of the true and the real, as opposed to the false and the unreal. Tearing off with no uncertain hand the thick veil of dead-letter with which all old religious scriptures were cloaked, scientific Theosophy, learned in the cunning symbolism of the ages, reveals to the scoffer at old wisdom the origin of the world's faiths and sciences. It opens new vistas beyond the old horizons of crystallized, motionless and despotic faiths; and turning blind belief into a reasoned knowledge founded on mathematical laws — the only *exact* science — it demonstrates to him under profounder and more philosophical aspects the existence of that which, repelled by the grossness of its dead-letter form, he had long since abandoned as a nursery tale. It gives a clear and well-defined object, an ideal to live for, to every sincere man or woman belonging to whatever station in Society and of whatever culture and degree of intellect. Practical Theosophy is not *one* Science, but embraces every science in life, moral and physical. It may, in short, be justly regarded as the universal 'coach,' a tutor of world-wide knowledge and experience, and of an erudition which not only assists and guides his pupils toward a successful examination for every scientific or moral service in earthly life, but fits them for *the lives* to come, if those pupils will only study the universe and its mysteries *within themselves*, instead of studying them through the spectacles of orthodox science and religions.

And let no reader misunderstand these statements. It is Theosophy *per se*, not any individual member of the Society or even Theosophist,

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on whose behalf such a universal omniscience is claimed. The two — Theosophy and the Theosophical Society — as a vessel and the *olla podrida* it contains, must not be confounded. One is, as an ideal, *divine* Wisdom, perfection itself; the other a poor, imperfect thing, trying to run *under*, if not *within*, its shadow on Earth. No man is perfect; why, then should any member of the Theosophical Society be expected to be a paragon of every human virtue? And why should the whole organization be criticized and blamed for the faults, whether real or imaginary, of some of its 'Fellows,' or even its Leaders? Never was the Society, as a concrete body, free from blame or sin — *errare humanum est* — nor were any of its members. Hence, it is rather those members — most of whom will not be led by Theosophy, that ought to be blamed. Theosophy is the soul of its Society; the latter the gross and imperfect body of the former. Hence, those modern Solomons who *will* sit in the Judgment Seat and talk of that they know nothing about, are invited before they slander Theosophy or any Theosophists to first get acquainted with both.

Regardless of this, Theosophy is spoken of by friends and foes as a religion when not a *sect*. Let us see how the special beliefs which have become associated with the word have come to stand in that position, and how it is that they have so good a right to it that none of the Leaders of the Society have ever thought of disavowing their doctrines.

We have said that we believed in the absolute unity of nature. Unity implies the possibility for a unit on one plane, to come into contact with another unit on or from another plane. We believe in it.

The just published *Secret Doctrine* will show what were the ideas of all antiquity with regard to the *primeval instructors* of primitive man and his three earlier races. The genesis of that WISDOM-RELIGION, in which all Theosophists believe, dates from that period. So-called 'Occultism,' or rather Esoteric Science, has to be traced in its origin to those Beings, who, led by Karma, have incarnated in our humanity, and thus struck the key-note of that secret Science which countless generations of subsequent adepts have expanded since then in every age, while they checked its doctrines by personal observation and experience. The bulk of this knowledge — which no man is able to possess in its fulness — constitutes that which we now call Theosophy or 'divine knowledge.' Beings from other and higher worlds may have it entire; we can have it only approximately.

Thus, unity of everything in the universe implies and justifies our belief in the existence of a knowledge at once scientific, philosophical and religious, showing the necessity and actuality of the connexion of man and all things in the universe with each other; which knowledge,

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therefore, becomes essentially RELIGION, and must be called in its integrity and universality by the distinctive name of WISDOM-RELIGION.

It is from this WISDOM-RELIGION that all the various individual 'Religions' (erroneously so called) have sprung, forming in their turn offshoots and branches, and also all the minor creeds, based upon and always originated through some personal experience in psychology. Every such religion, or religious offshoot, be it considered orthodox or heretical, wise or foolish, started originally as a clear and unadulterated stream from the Mother-Source. The fact that each became in time polluted with purely human speculations and even inventions, due to interested motives, does not prevent any from having been pure in its early beginnings. There are those creeds — we shall not call them religions — which have now been overlaid with the human element out of all recognition; others just showing signs of early decay; not one that escaped the hand of time. But each and all are of divine, because natural and true origin; aye — Mazdeism, Brahmanism, Buddhism as much as Christianity.

Nevertheless, it is an averred fact that mankind is not a whit better in morality, and in some respects ten times worse now, than it ever was in the days of Paganism. Moreover, for the last half century, from that period when Freethought and Science got the best of the Churches — Christianity is yearly losing far more adherents among the cultured classes than it gains proselytes in the lower *strata*, the scum of Heathendom. On the other hand, Theosophy has brought back many from Materialism and blank despair to belief (based on logic and evidence) in man's *divine* Self, and the immortality of the latter. . . .

Theosophy, as repeatedly declared in print and *viva voce* by its members and officers, proceeds on diametrically opposite lines to those which are trodden by the Church; and Theosophy rejects the methods of Science, since her inductive methods can only lead to crass materialism. Yet, *de facto*, Theosophy claims to be both 'RELIGION' and 'SCIENCE,' for Theosophy is the essence of both. . . .

The modern Materialist insists on an impassable chasm between the two, pointing out that the 'Conflict between Religion and Science' has ended in the triumph of the latter and the defeat of the first. The modern Theosophist refuses to see, on the contrary, any such chasm at all. If it is claimed by both Church and Science that each of them pursues the truth and *nothing but the truth*, then either one of them is mistaken, and accepts falsehood for truth, or both. Any other impediment to their reconciliation must be set down as purely *fictional*. Truth is one, even if sought for or pursued at two different ends. Therefore, Theosophy claims to reconcile the two foes. It premises by saying that the *true*

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spiritual and primitive Christian religion is, as much as the other great and still older philosophies that preceded it — *the light of Truth* — “the life and the light of men.”

Thus, if Theosophy does no more than point out and seriously draw the attention of the world to the fact that the *supposed* disagreement between religion and science is conditioned, on the one hand by the intelligent materialists rightly kicking against absurd human dogmas, and on the other by blind fanatics and interested churchmen who, instead of defending the souls of mankind, fight simply tooth and nail for their personal bread and butter and authority — why, even then, Theosophy will prove itself the savior of mankind.

And now we have shown, it is hoped, what real Theosophy is, and what are its adherents. One is divine Science and a code of Ethics so sublime that no Theosophist is capable of doing it justice; the others weak but sincere men. . . . One may work for Theosophy to the best of his ability, yet never raise himself to the height of his call and aspiration. This is his or her misfortune, never the fault of Theosophy, or even of the body at large. Its Founders claim no other merit than that of having set the first Theosophical wheel rolling. If judged at all they must be judged by the work they have done, not by what friends may think or enemies say of them. There is no room for *personalities* in a work like ours; and all must be ready, as the Founders are, if needs be, for the car of Jaggenâth to crush them *individually for the good of all*. It is only in the days of the dim Future, when death will have laid his cold hand on the luckless Founders and stop thereby their activity, that their respective merits and demerits, their good and bad acts and deeds, and their Theosophical work will have to be weighed on the Balance of Posterity. Then only, after the two scales with their contrasted loads have been brought to an equipoise, and the character of the net result left over has become evident to all in its full and intrinsic value, then only shall the nature of the verdict passed be determined with anything like justice. . . . Now, these results can hardly be perceived, much less heard of amid the din and clamor made by our teeming enemies, and their ready imitators — the indifferent. Yet however small, if once proved good, even now every man who has at heart the moral progress of humanity, owes his thankfulness to Theosophy for those results. And as Theosophy was revived and brought before the world, *via* its unworthy servants, the ‘Founders,’ if their work was useful, it alone must be their vindicator, regardless of the present state of their balance in the petty cash account of ‘Karma, wherein social ‘respectabilities’ are entered up.

THEOSOPHY AND CHRISTIANITY: by T. Henry, M. A.

II



WE have seen that the burden of Christ's teachings, or of the true and original Christian gospel, is that which has been called the "Mystic Christ"; but that H. P. Blavatsky, in writing on the subject as a Theosophist, does not deny that there was a historical character which served as a basis for the gospel narratives of Jesus. Nevertheless, as regards these narratives, the expected has happened, and the life of this character, like the teachings, has suffered much from the hands of scribes and transmitters. We must frankly confess a want of knowledge on this subject; H. P. Blavatsky, in the course of her numerous writings, has scattered many hints, which might, in the hands of a sufficiently patient and laborious student, furnish the clue as to the basis of the historical Jesus. We are convinced that she knew much more than she tells. We are left with the conclusion that the character depicted in the canonical gospels is mainly fictitious, but that it had a historical basis. Some sage has been used as that basis, and his life has been conventionalized, many of the incidents, such as the virgin birth, the temptation, and the ensuing moral victory, being symbolic and common to other world-saviors. The Jewish legend of Joshua Ben Panthera, well known to Christian scholars, is gone into by H. P. Blavatsky, with the suggestion that his name was borrowed by those who compiled the gospel. That a great Teacher was due in that part of the world at that time, seems to have been known; and we may mention Vergil's prophecy. But cycles do not dawn at the same time in all parts of the world; and it is evident that the gospel of mercy and forbearance had been taught long before in the lands ruled by Buddhism. But it will be more profitable to leave this question and pass on to consider the practical question of the actual teachings. In Christianity, adequately interpreted, we shall find preserved the sublime teachings of that Wisdom-Religion which is the vital spark of every great religious system in the world, however much these may have been encrusted and imbedded in forms and dogmas by the hands of man.

The doctrine of the Mystic Christ is sufficiently clearly pronounced even in the few sayings of the Teacher which have come down to us, as also in those of some of his disciples; and it will be necessary to quote but a few of such instances. The expressions, "kingdom of heaven" and "kingdom of God," often occur, in reference to a state to be attained by man; and the most striking case of this is the well-known:

"The kingdom of God is within you." — *Luke*, xvii, 21.

— with which may be compared St. Paul's exhortation:

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“Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?”
— I. *Cor.*, iii, 16.

As to praying to God, we find:

“When thou prayest, enter into thy closet, and when thou hast shut thy door, pray to thy Father which is in secret.” — *Matt.* vi, 6. (See also v. 18.)

Lest the meaning of the English should here be misunderstood, through change of idiom since the translation was made, it is advisable to refer to the Greek. The phrase is τῷ πατρί σου, τῷ ἐν τῷ κρυπτῷ, which means “To thy Father-in-secret”; and further on in the same two passages we have ὁ πατήρ σου ὁ βλέπων ἐν τῷ κρυπτῷ, meaning “Thy seeing-in-secret Father.” In *Galatians*, iv, 19, we have:

“Until Christ be formed in you.”

And in vv. 15 and 16 of the first chapter, we read:

“When it pleased God . . . to reveal his Son in me.”

The three following passages may be coupled together:

“Seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you.” — *Matt.*, vi, 33.

“He that believeth on me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do.” — *John*, xiv, 12.

“Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect.” — *Matt.*, v, 48.

It seems clear that Christ and his apostle were teaching that man should seek the God within, not an imaginary God without; that they should strive to *become*, rather than to follow. The words ‘Father’ and ‘Son’ are frequently used in this connexion; and here we but find conformity with a very ancient and recognised form of symbolism. The ancient teaching, as found in Egypt (Osiris and Horus), as in many other places, is that the Father is the universal Spirit, not the property of any man; but the Son is an emanation from that universal Spirit, and is the Divine Spirit individualized in man. Thus the Son forms the link between the human and the divine, and is man’s means of access to the divine.*

One of the most important passages in the Gospels is the brief account

*Students may be referred to the following footnote in Chapter v of *The Key to Theosophy*: “Christos is not only one of the three higher principles, but all the three regarded as a Trinity. This Trinity represents the Holy Ghost, the Father, and the Son, as it answers to abstract spirit, differentiated spirit, and embodied spirit.” Also in chapter vii: “The spirit — the ‘Father in secret’ of Jesus — or Âtman, is no individual property of any man, but is the divine essence which has no body, no form. . . .” And in chapter x: “Our God *within* us, or ‘our Father in secret,’ is what we call the Higher Self, Âtmâ. Our incarnating Ego was a God in its origin . . . but, since its ‘fall into matter,’ . . . it is no longer a free and happy God, but a poor pilgrim on his way to regain that which he has lost.”

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of Jesus' private interview with Nicodemus, a Pharisee and ruler of the Jews, who came secretly to see him, and said: "We know that thou art a teacher come from God: for no man can do these miracles that thou doest, except God be with him." And the answer was:

"Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." — *John*, iii. 3.

Nicodemus asks how a man can be born again, and is told:

"Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit."

This again refers to a process taking place within man, and amounting to a second birth. Jesus was a Teacher of the Sacred Wisdom, and as such had been consulted by Nicodemus. Paul seems to have been a proficient follower of Jesus' esoteric teaching. In the eighth chapter of his epistle to the Romans he describes the difference between the two natures of man.

"The law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death. . . . They that are after the flesh do mind the things of the flesh; but they that are after the Spirit the things of the Spirit. For to be carnally minded is death; but to be spiritually minded is life and peace."

Then comes this significant passage:

"But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his. And if Christ be in you, the body is dead because of sin; but the Spirit is life because of righteousness."

And he says that the Spirit of him that raised Jesus from the dead can quicken our bodies. Paul was clearly a believer in the indwelling Christ. In *Galatians*, i, 15, he speaks of God revealing "his Son in me"; in *Ephesians*, iii, 17, we find: "That Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith."

H. P. Blavatsky says:

"This 'resurrection' can never be monopolized by the Christians, but is the spiritual birth-right of every human being endowed with soul and spirit, whatever his religion may be. Such individual is a *Christ-man*. On the other hand, those who choose to ignore the Christ (principle) within themselves must die *unregenerate heathens* — baptism, sacraments, lip-prayers, and belief in dogmas notwithstanding."

Which agrees with Paul's reiterated assertion that a man is not justified (regenerated) by works and the law alone, but by faith. In short, he must realize the spirit of the doctrine, not merely accept it outwardly and observe certain rites. (James, however, insists on the other side of the question, showing that even faith is vain unless it is the kind that produces works.) As to the words, "every human being . . . whatever his religion," we may compare the following (*Galatians*, iii, 8):

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“The scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the heathen through faith, preached before the gospel unto Abraham, saying, In thee shall all nations be blessed. So then they which be of faith are justified with faithful Abraham.”

Resurrection means the rising again of the Christos in man from its grave in the flesh; it means the reattainment by man of his liberation. We are told by scholars that, during an initiation ceremony, the candidate actually passed three days in a sarcophagus, entranced and seemingly dead, after which he arose, inwardly regenerated. But the process of regeneration and rebirth is continual in man; it happens when, by strong resolve, he masters his selfish passions and allows the Christ spirit to rise within him.

We realize better now than formerly that we cannot expect to carry dogmatic Christianity into all lands to convert the adherents of other creeds. But we can carry the true spirit of Christianity by preaching everywhere the truth that man is redeemed from bondage to sin by the power of the Divinity within him. In that way we shall not antagonize the believers in other religions, but shall form a fellowship with them. Truly this would be carrying out the original purpose of Jesus in sending forth apostles to the gentiles. To have faith in Christ does not mean that we are to trust blindly to a charm or formula, but that we are to avow the Divinity in whose image we are fashioned and whose breath inspires us. To deny this Divinity is the sin against the Holy Inspiration. Theosophy, among other aims, strives to reconstitute Christianity, but in doing so it is necessarily the adversary of all that corrupts Christianity.

The Theosophical motto, “There is no religion higher than truth,” defines the attitude of Theosophy to religions; and what can be more holy than the eternal truth of the Divinity of man? In this age of lopsided intellectual development, when so much is being done to stamp upon our minds the idea that our lineage is mainly bestial, it is all the more a sacred duty to insist on the Divine origin and nature of man. Let us away with the doctrine that man is a feeble creature, innately sinful, with no power to reform himself, and only redeemable by a miracle of special grace which will wash away all his sins without any great effort on his part. This doctrine was never taught by the Master, but it must be one of those that were interpolated later by the generations of busy scribes and expounders during the turbulent eras of ecclesiastical history. When man was endowed with a spark of the Divine free-will, he was intended to use it, not to abjure it.

The present world-cataclysm has brought vividly before men’s minds the religious issues we are here discussing; and, judging from what is now being said in public print, we shall not seem revolutionary in our remarks. The churches, they say, have not made good or risen to their

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opportunities; but there is nothing the matter with religion itself, they say. Some look for a reconstitution of Christianity; others see that the arguments applied to sectarianism within one religion can also be applied to creeds within the one universal Religion. Our present object is to show the relation of one religion in particular — Christianity — to the universal Religion; but we do not aim to make out a special claim for that one religion above others. The service rendered by Theosophy in doing this is apparent when we consider that dogmatic Christianity cannot survive in its present form the repeated assaults made on it; and that, *unless there is something to replace it*, the age will relapse into materialistic negation and moral anarchy. Adverse critics of Christianity are fond of pointing out the analogies between this religion and other religions or Pagan beliefs; intending this as argument against the truth of Christianity, as tending to show that it is merely rehearsed heathenism. But we use the same facts in support of a very different conclusion. We maintain that these analogies show the identity of the one great Wisdom-Religion throughout all its various forms of presentation. Let those who are dissatisfied with the husks find the kernel, not throw away the whole fruit in petulance.

Let us bear in mind that, during the centuries when Christianity was young, the world was declining headlong towards social and moral decay. Internecine strife had broken up the old Greek harmony and loyalty to moral beauty; the sterling character of the Roman republicans had become a thing so far forgotten by the degenerate hordes of the empire that it could no longer be invoked as a saving force. In the interests of world-domination, powerful forces were banded together for the purpose of hunting out and exterminating all traces of the ancient Mysteries. Constantine forms an alliance between Christianity and secular power. Julian vainly labors to restore the ancient faith. Justinian closes the last of the Athenian schools and persecutes all followers of the ancient Gnosis. Christ was thus buried very deep in the earth, and it has always been the undying Spirit of man himself, and never the constituted authorities, that has resurrected Christ and brought renewed life to Christianity. So be it now in our day! Let us stand manfully on our innate divinity and rebuke all who would fain have us believe that we are helpless sinners, nothing better than mere higher animals.

ART AS A FACTOR IN EVOLUTION: by R. Machell



AS knowledge increases the range of human sympathies, so should the more highly civilized become more liberal in their appreciation of the races formerly classified as savage or barbarian; because the advance of knowledge tends to make clear the fact that in all races, even in the most degraded, there are traditions as well as evidences of lost arts and sciences such as distinguish the civilized nations. We are now beginning to see the weakness of the ape-ancestry theory, which held the field for about half a century in Europe and America, and we are forced to admit that all the evidences are in favor of the opposite theory, to wit, that the arts, sciences, religions, and philosophies, have continually deteriorated, and often almost entirely disappeared, to be again revived, restored, revealed, or rejuvenated, in a renaissance or rebirth that comes more as a revelation, through man as the active agent, than as a growth or gradual development. The history of nearly all inventions is similar. Some one or more individuals have foreseen the new machine, or the new scheme, almost in its entirety, and have been laughed at as dreamers, until the idea has taken root in the minds of practical men, who gradually gave it form, and brought it up to the level of the ideal as it first presented itself to the 'dreamer,' who is seldom credited with its origination.

I imagine that as time goes on we may recognise the fact that civilization is a product of evolution guided by Wisdom, or Superior Intelligence, which continually reveals to man the truths that he continually degrades, and disfigures, in his attempts to adapt them to his limited conceptions of what is necessary for the welfare of his kind.

The theory of revelation is complementary to that of evolution. The reason why it has been regarded as antagonistic is that the knowledge of the true nature of man has been lost, and that the source of revelation has been placed outside of him in an impossible kind of God, who was both personal and absolute, which is of course unintelligible to the mind of man, though capable of a metaphysical explanation, that to most men would also be unintelligible.

But Theosophy explains intelligibly that man is in himself a kind of epitome of the Universe, linking up the highest and the lowest spheres of being, the most spiritual and the most material, in his own person, and thus is able to reveal the mysteries of his own inner life to the mind that is housed in his body, and so to all other men. Man is himself the revealer, the recipient of Wisdom, and the mystery revealed.

The prime factors in civilization, as well as its chief attributes, are the arts and sciences, the religions and philosophies.

Tradition has it that in the Golden Age all men were of one tongue,

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and religious intolerance was unknown. But the element of discord was introduced, according to exoteric tradition, and still works havoc in the world. The occult philosophy puts it differently, saying that the Human Monad left its state of pure spirituality to descend into Matter for the regeneration of the world and for the increase of its own experience. This was according to the Universal Law of evolution and involution, which must bring the human race through the region of chaos and conflict up again to the golden heights of Wisdom and peace.

So the old philosophy recognised the existence of discord as an element peculiar to this stage of evolution, a temporary experience, that can be at any time surmounted by the individual, who knows that the source of Wisdom and peace are in his own heart, and may shine through to illuminate his mind with true ideas, that may be made practically useful in his material evolution. Civilization depends upon the periodic revelation of ideals from the spiritual world to the earth-bound souls of mortals. The arts, sciences, religions, and philosophies are means by which such ideals are brought forth from the inner world and made serviceable.

While we are taught that all men are thus potentially revealers and teachers, we are also reminded that the whole human race is here under the hypnotic spell of ignorance or chaos, and that only the elder brothers of the race succeed in bringing to earth the seed of divine wisdom. By Elder Brothers is meant Souls that in previous cycles of evolution have learned the lessons that they are now qualified to teach.

As we are all students in the school of life we must admit that we have much to learn, but we may avail ourselves of what our Teachers have given us to clarify our own ideas on the subject of these various branches of the tree of Wisdom, one of which is Art.

An artist is not always the best person to explain verbally the meaning and purpose of art. It is his mission to exemplify this in his work, and we do not generally give the name of artist to a speaker or writer, although it may be in every way fully as well applied in their case.

Painters are naturally inclined to express themselves in paint rather than in words, and it often happens that they pass through life without even formulating mentally any clearly defined explanation of the purpose and power of art. Many of these producers of 'works of art' are hardly worthy of the honorable title 'artist,' but should rather be considered as servants of art or as apprentices (in the larger sense). For they have not mastered the principles of art, though they may have acquired more or less skill in the exercise of some artistic function.

As to who shall decide their right to the name of artist, that is a matter which is open to discussion, for it depends upon one's philosophy of life as to who may be considered entitled to speak authoritatively on any

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subject. In the meantime, in this democratic age, everybody is free to claim authority, and is entitled to all he can command. On the other hand, no one need consider himself bound by any other authority than the law of the land, or such other law as he may have accepted, willingly or otherwise. Obviously there is no general agreement on such matters. Else the world would now be at peace and might continue so. Fortunately, Art is not a cause of war; and that distinguishes it from religion. If the two were better understood the difference between them would disappear along with the misunderstandings as to their true nature.

It would be safe to say that the vast majority of those who take some pleasure in art are entirely ignorant of the nature of aesthetics. Many, perhaps most, of these would say they know the meaning of the word religion, while they would surely break down utterly in any attempt to say what is the quality in a work of art that gives it aesthetic value.

The terrible ordeal through which our civilization is now passing will probably open people's eyes to the reality of spiritual forces in a material world, and will make them better able to appreciate the deeper nature of life and art. It must surely already have prepared many to sympathize with that which appeals to the latent spirituality in themselves, and which indicates the spiritual nature of the world they live in.

I think that no longer will the world at large be content to be simply amused or distracted for a moment by work that can only appeal to their sensuous perceptions of material beauty. Nor will they be satisfied with that which may excite admiration for the skill of the executant. Skill is necessary, but it is a means to another end. That end is ecstasy, a word that will surely repel many who yet love art.

But the word is a good one and that which it expresses is of vital importance in life. One dictionary gives this:

"A state in which the mind is carried away, as it were, from the body; a state in which the functions of the senses are suspended by the contemplation of some extraordinary or supernatural object; a kind of trance. . . ."

This, which is a familiar phenomenon in connexion with certain forms of religion, is hardly recognised as a right and proper faculty of art, by the generality of those who flock to our art galleries or museums to get enjoyment and distraction.

Indeed, I think it would be true to say that ecstasy generally to the public suggests delusion; and that aesthetic ecstasy is another name for affectation in their vocabulary. The rise of materialism, with the decay of religion, and the loss of spirituality coupled with an excessive emotionalism, have made the rational world look askance on anything approaching mysticism or ecstasy.

The fact is that without some knowledge of the complex nature of

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man the phenomenon of ecstasy cannot be explained so as to place it where it really belongs in the field of human experience.

To the Theosophist, man is a soul incarnate in a body, and connected therewith by means of a mind, which itself is dual, the lower mind being merely a function of the body, and the higher being the reflexion of the spiritual intelligence of the soul or spiritual essence, which is the real and enduring self overshadowing, if not inherent in, the living human being.

The term soul is loosely applied by various schools of religion and philosophy to describe any or all of the many conditions of man's consciousness above the purely animal.

Accepting the term soul as descriptive of a state intermediate between pure divinity or spirituality and pure animalism or materiality, we may call ecstasy a state in which the mind is closed to the animal and made to reflect the light of the divine.

Such a condition is an approach to union with the higher or spiritual self and is a state of infinite bliss.

Accepting again this rough sketch of man's complex nature, it will be easy to see that there must be many stages of ecstasy, or perhaps one should say that ecstasy has many *imitations* in lower states, which may be produced by use of drugs, as well as by surexcitation of the lower emotions and passions. Love and hate can produce a frenzy, that is a kind of diabolical parody of spiritual ecstasy, but which may appear elevated to one who is sunk in mere animalism. Ignorance of man's nature may cause one to mistake such intoxication for divine ecstasy.

The results of such mistakes are disastrous to the victims of these indulgences, as well as to those who mistake the utterances of such debauchees for revelations derived from truly spiritual sources.

It may be said that all keen enjoyment or intense pleasure is a phenomenon that in some sort reflects the state of ecstasy, but the difference is a difference in kind as well as in degree: for the plane of matter is separated from the plane of spirit, and man has in himself the bridge by which he may pass from one state to the other. Pleasure, amusement, distraction, interest, and so on, are states of the lower mind: ecstasy is the passing over the bridge into conscious perception of the spiritual world. (I am using the words in their ordinary sense, for in truth the condition of consciousness in the state of spiritual awakening, or ecstasy, is one that cannot be correctly described in ordinary language.

All religious ceremonies aim at producing a state of ecstasy, and it has truly been said that one of the main differences between the religions of civilized and of savage races is that the ceremonies are abortive in civilized communities and effective in those of the primitive devotees, who more strictly adhere in practice to their ancient rituals.

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In both cases art and religion are used together for the same purpose, and while the process in civilized communities is generally an intellectual exercise resulting in intellectual exaltation at best, and in fatigue more usually, in the so-called savage ceremony the evocation is aimed at planes of nature that are not intellectual, whether they be higher or lower, and from which results are definitely expected and probably received, though they may be highly undesirable from the point of view of civilized morality.

While the phenomenon of ecstasy is perhaps not altogether unknown to the general public, it is probably correct to say that it is almost invariably regarded as a state of delusion or dream, caused by an abnormal condition of the mind. But it would be really much nearer the truth to say that mankind is in general only about five per cent. awake, and that his normal condition at present is one of semi-sleep or of partial intoxication, in which both vision and understanding are clouded and distorted by ignorance and sensuality, and that ecstasy is a momentary or partial awakening of the true man to a dim perception of his own inner possibilities, and to a conception of bliss, that may seem to him too beautiful to be true, too pure to be possible.

The attainment of this intense joy is one of the aims of both religion and art, and in both cases the real aim is constantly obscured by the misuse of these high functions for the lower purpose of amusement or sense-gratification, which holds the mind down to the material plane.

Art, therefore, is a revealer of hidden truth, a bridge across the gulf that separates the illusions of earth-life from the realities of the spiritual spheres of consciousness. When it is employed as a means of increasing the pleasure of life on earth it becomes indeed a deluder, for the earth is but a state of transition or of preparation for real life.

When speaking thus of earth-life as an illusion, it must be clearly understood that by 'earth-life' is meant a life wholly concerned with the pleasures and pursuits of material existence — that is to say of animalism. Though here again one must guard against the error of supposing that animals are degraded creatures because their state of evolution is different from that of man. What is proper to the animals is no longer proper to man, who is endowed with higher possibilities than the animals have yet evolved. For man to be content to live like an animal is retrogression, and therefore his animalism is unnatural to him and disgraceful. Nor are we in a position to say how far the animals may be spiritually illuminated in their unintelligence or the reverse.

It may be that man in evolving mentality and in cultivating his intellect has thereby temporarily obscured the light of the soul, and so has brought himself into a state of materialism to which no animal could

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possibly attain. It may well be that the mind of man has led him to plunge deeper into the abyss of matter, has caused him to "descend into hell," as said in the old mystery-drama, in order that he may be forced to free himself by his own effort from the delusion of the senses, and so rise to true self-knowledge and spiritual self-consciousness.

So when we speak of animalism as a reproach to man we do not impute degradation to the animals in general. Exception may be made in the case of the anthropoid apes, which in *The Secret Doctrine* are said to be the abnormal progeny of man, paying to nature the penalty of man's violation of her laws.

But man's mission is to evolve to higher states than those that he at present can command. For this he is equipped with the higher faculties of the mind, which is his, to use as he will. He can rise to great heights by its aid, or he can plunge far lower than the beasts in pursuit of gratifications that they dream not of; and in the exercise of his great powers he can find joy that marks him out as a being distinct from them. They too recognise the difference.

So it is proper for man to aspire, and it is right for him to use the means he has evolved for that purpose. For this his imagination exists, not for his deception, not to blind him to unpleasant facts, but to reveal to him the truth that lies concealed within the illusions of material existence. By this high faculty he comes to a perception of his own divinity, his god-like ancestry, and his relation to the Great Soul of Humanity; by this he senses the reality of Universal Brotherhood.

And what if he deludes himself? Even so he learns to know his limitations, which must be understood along with his possibilities. But in fact delusion does not come as a consequence of true aspiration; for aspiration is itself the turning of the mirror of the mind so that it may reflect the image of the divine. Delusion comes from looking down into the darkness of the magic mirror, and seeing there in the lower sphere distorted images. The mind is a mirror, but it must be controlled, or it will give distorted reflexions. So the control of the mind is the first duty of man; on that his evolution must depend. That is the basis of all true morality, which is something more than a social convention adopted as a veil to conceal the ugliness of life. Morality is self-discipline, which is control of the mind. Without this discipline no true knowledge can be attained, for the mirror in which the truth is reflected will not remain steady of its own accord; it must be controlled by Will: and Will is man's magic, which can accomplish miracles.

Therefore let those who are looking for some light beware of the false beacons that are raised by undisciplined seers of distorted truths. Test all ideals by the touchstone of your own heart; and if your aspiration

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is sincere, your own mind self-controlled, and your imagination free from vanity and passion, your heart will not deceive you.

To aid man in his evolution, the Teachers of humanity, those elder brothers, who belong to an older race long since passed on to other spheres, and who remain with us to keep the link unbroken in the chain of evolution, have given us civilization, with our arts and sciences, our religions and philosophies, all which are means to the same end, the attainment of spiritual enlightenment, which we call Wisdom. The history of the world is a long record of the efforts of these Teachers, and of the consequent rise of civilization and its subsequent relapse, to be again revived by new efforts of the tireless Leaders, who watch over man's evolution.

And all these arts, sciences, and religions aim at producing a state of ecstasy, not frenzy nor hysteria, but simply a higher state of consciousness such as is described in "the divine *Pymander* of Hermes Trismegistus":

"The knowledge of IT is a divine silence and the rest of all the senses."

In that silence there is something that is more eloquent than speech, more musical than song. It is not instruction. It is direct perception.

The attainment of this state is difficult, and the means by which it may be accomplished are innumerable, as they must be, for humanity is composed of many different elements. And, as all nations do not now speak the same language, so all the individuals in a nation cannot understand or employ the same means of awakening themselves to a higher state. It is said in the Book of the Golden Precepts that "the Path is one for all; the roads that lead thereto must vary with the pilgrim." So we have multitudinous religions and diverse arts, but the aim of all is to open a way to the Path. This opening of the way is ECSTASY.

When one realizes what these things really do mean, one is almost appalled at the distance from the truth to which we have wandered in our pursuit of false ideals of progress and prosperity. And when a Teacher returns to earth to carry on the work, it must be a hard task to gain a hearing. Such is in fact the experience of every True Teacher. But the work is done somehow, and a new age is started. The Teacher may not be recognised as such, but the new revelation of the old Truth is never quite fruitless.

There have been nations that responded readily to the appeal of art while others rose eagerly to the call of religion, but it would seem as if this were merely a question of temperament. A nation appears to have an artistic, or a religious, or a scientific temperament, but, at the time of its periodic awakening or renaissance, there seems to come to birth in it a group of old Souls, who may not consciously co-operate in the work of revival, but who undoubtedly do work together, even though

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separated by circumstances, for the restoration of the old ideals, each in his own department. Some one or other may attain to fame and the rest may be more or less unknown in their day; but the historian in time discovers them and shows that they were there at the right time doing their share, sowing seed perhaps for a later age to profit by. And each Master has his own disciples; so it would be natural to find the birth of such a master-soul followed by the appearance of a number of lesser men of genius or of talent, who may not have come into direct contact with their Master in that life-time, but who worked in the same direction, with more or less success, to raise the ideals of the people. The result was in each case a revival that was not the result of what went immediately before, but rather a cyclic consequence of the eternal ebb and flow that is the condition of all life. It would seem that Great Souls can only come to birth at certain epochs, just as the flowers can only bloom at certain seasons of the year. But also it is true that flowers may be induced to bloom at other seasons by artificial means; and man can achieve great spiritual progress even in the dark ages of materialism; but then it must be by artificial means. All civilization is artificial in a sense, and individual men can at all times free themselves from the limitations of their age, to some extent, and rise to a considerable height above the general level of their generation by artificial means. For men are to some extent individuals, not perhaps as much as their vanity may lead them to believe, but more than they generally realize. And each individual may at any moment find the open door through which to pass into the presence of his own soul and so attain self-knowledge.

As men and women we are the slaves of Time, or perhaps I should say the fools of Time, but as souls we are free from such limitations, and who shall say at what moment in time we may come to perception of eternal Truth? One thing is certain: we are passing through a time of great changes. So much has been already destroyed, that the work of reconstruction assumes more and more imposing scope as the days of disaster pass into years, and as the institutions and traditions of yesterday pass from sight in the needs of the moment. But though all things pass, and all forms change, the principles of civilization remain the same, the arts and sciences, the religions and philosophies.

The forces of destruction are let loose and will do their work, but the forces of reconstruction must be assembled, and the plan of the new building must be understood. It already exists in the Universal Mind; we have to find it and fulfil it. Therefore I have ventured to put forward these thoughts from the teachings of Theosophy, as I have been able to understand them, in their application to the meaning and purpose of Art in the scheme of civilization, and considered as a factor in evolution.

A ROYAL PLAYGROUND: by Edytha Pierce

IT is with a strange feeling that, after passing through the vast halls and galleries of the great palace at Versailles and viewing the extensive park and gardens, the beautiful fountains and white marble statues which line the broad stone steps, one wanders down one of the broad shady avenues and suddenly sees the rural scenes depicted in the accompanying photographs, in the midst of all the splendor of the most famous palace and grounds of France. The quaint little thatched buildings look like doll-houses, compared with the great palace with its 'rooms for a thousand,' and yet this little representation of a rural English village is roomy enough to accommodate quite a large number of persons.

It was the old king, Louis XV, who gave 'Little Trianon' to Marie Antoinette, saying to her that as she was fond of flowers he wished to present her with a bouquet. Close by this property was the King's own botanical garden, which was one of his recreations.

Weary with the round of regulated life in which the whole court of Louis XVI lived, which brought with every hour some set form of ceremony, even to the minutest detail, and having no time in the whole day when she was not surrounded by great personages of the court or by servants, from the time she arose in the morning until she retired at night, it is no wonder that Marie Antoinette, the queen, would gather together her few closest friends and escape to her beloved Little Trianon, and pretend, if nothing more, to live a simple country life.

It was her joy to enlarge and beautify the place, and to add to it in many ways, as related by Elizabeth W. Champney in *Romance of the French Châteaux*:

"Here, in contrast to the ostentatious pomp of the magnificent distances of Le Nôtre's royal garden, . . . the sunlight steals through the natural wood and glints the mossy, thatched roofs of the tiny hameau, touching softly the ruinous walls of the Queen's Dairy, the Mill, and the humble Maison du Seigneur.

"The little Eden did not evolve itself by chance, nor in a day. For three years Marie Antoinette occupied herself with it, assisted by experts and artists. The Duc de Caraman (an amateur landscape gardener enamored with the new, so-called English style, . . .), the architect Mique, and, above all, the artist Hubert Robert, . . . all gave their best thought to the Queen's desire. No more formality of never-ending vistas, of rigid straight lines, of clipped trees, colossal statuary, and spectacular fountains.

"Trees and brooks, rocks, shrubs, and flowers should be free as nature itself, and all architectural adjuncts graceful, coquettish, and petite. *Rochers* were piled in picturesque disorder. The tiny stream wound gracefully through its daisy-starred meadow, crossed by rustic bridges turning in its passage the brown wheel of the mill, so carefully posed in the most alluring situation for the water-colorist. The habitations of the mock village were quaint and apparently dilapidated from the first, with cracks painted on the stones and scars of fallen plaster showing the brickwork in the hut which the King was to call his residence. Each friend was to have her *chaumière*, but must dress in the peasant costumes invented by Watteau for the opera. This child's-play and rural stage-setting was only a part of the scheme. The classical note

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struck by the dainty palace itself was recalled in Mique's exquisite Temple of Love, a fitting shrine for Bouchardon's *Cupid*. The Salle de Comédie and the Music Pavilion, where Gluck, who had been the Queen's master in Vienna, played upon her harpsichord, were both in the pseudo-Greek style of the Petit Trianon, which Marie Antoinette had no desire to change."

For several years Marie Antoinette occupied herself in beautifying her beloved spot, and many happy days were spent here, where court etiquette was banished and where a simpler and more natural life was indulged in, and where, in her little theater there, she and her friends had their little theatricals and invited the King and other guests for a happy time together. She there "lived as a private person," she said.

The buildings are empty now, but they are still in such a fine state of preservation that one wonders that they show the marks of time so little, for when one comes to think of it, one recalls the fact that Marie Antoinette was enjoying her pretty summer home at about the time when our own American Revolution was in progress. Time and Nature have indeed taken away all the artificiality from the place, for the shallow pond is bordered deep with reeds and rushes, and the little streams are overgrown with sedges. The trees have grown tall and stately with the years, and many are ivy-draped. Moss and ivy also drape parts of the pretty buildings, while daisies stud the grass and other wild flowers peep at you from under the bushes and shrubs, as if saying, "We have been growing here so long that we feel perfectly at home."

Certainly, there is food for thought in these two contrasting features of this most remarkable spot: the outer manifestation of life with all its pomp and circumstance, the material splendor of the great palace, of the luxuriant gardens, and of the great park, which appeals to the worldly senses; and the simple, beautiful, natural-looking little village with its simple, homelike, thatched cottages, in a setting of natural glories of trees, water, and sky, which appeal directly to the inner sense of sweet peace and contentment, in the very midst of all the surrounding greatness.

There was indeed something most commendable in the young queen Marie Antoinette, if in her heart of hearts she longed (as she most surely did) for the touch of the simple life, and for the good, the true, and the beautiful, and if she turned from the artificialities of the court life and found her longings gratified in her beloved Little Trianon. How the remembrance of it must have sustained her when the shadows came upon her and her way fell upon evil days.

And now, the weary traveler after viewing the splendid palace, after walking miles through the great galleries full of treasures of art, after climbing the hundreds of marble steps, turns with relief to the shady path which leads to the little thatched cottages beside the still pond and under the great trees, and sits him down to feast his eyes upon the simple restful scene.

HONOR TO WHOM HONOR IS DUE: by J. H. Fussell



AN interesting, and to many a startling, contribution to modern science has recently been made by Professor Wood Jones, Professor of Anatomy in the University of London. So important was this considered to be that a long report of Professor Jones' conclusions was cabled to the *New York Times*, which we quote here in full.

SAYS MAN WAS ANCESTOR OF APES

British Scientist Calls for Reconsideration of Post-Darwinian Theory

TALGAI SKULL DEDUCTIONS

MAN HIGHLY DEVELOPED AGES BEFORE PERIOD HE WAS SUPPOSED TO BE MERE BRUTE

"Special Cable to *The New York Times*.

"London, Feb. 28. That man is not descended from anthropoid apes, that these would be in fact more accurately described as having been descended from man, that man as man is far more ancient than the whole anthropoid branch, and that compared with him the chimpanzee and orang-outang are newcomers on this planet, were assertions made by Professor Wood Jones, Professor of Anatomy in the University of London, in a lecture yesterday on the origin of man.

"The professor claimed these assertions were proved not only by recent anatomical research, but to be deducible from the whole trend of geological and anthropological discovery.

"One of the most interesting references in the lecture was to recent reports by Dr. Stewart Arthur Smith of Sydney on the Talgai skull (discovered in 1889 in Darling Downs, N. S. W., but never seriously investigated till 1914.

" 'This undoubtedly human skull, very highly mineralized,' he said, 'was found in a stratum with extinct pouched mammals, and probably is as ancient as the famous Piltown skull, whose human nature was so hotly disputed just before the war. In deposits of the same age as those in which the Talgai skull was unearthed were found bones of dingo dogs, and also bones of extinct pouched mammals gnawed by these dogs.

" 'Until the arrival of Captain Cook in Australia no non-pouched mammals were ever introduced upon the Australian island continent. It is geologically certain that Australia has always been surrounded by the sea since the time of the evolution of pouched mammals. Had it not been so, it is almost certain that many non-pouched mammals in the neighboring continents would have migrated thither.

" 'How then can the presence of the Talgai man and his dingo dogs alone among these be accounted for? The conclusion deducible is that he must have arrived there in boats with his family and his domestic dogs, and the astounding fact emerges that at a period in the world's history, when only a year or two ago the most advanced anatomists were satisfied man was scarcely distinguishable from his brute ancestors, a man already so highly developed as to have domesticated animals and to be a boat builder and navigator was actually in Australia, and, to an astonishing degree, the reasoning master of his own fate.'

"In view not only of this, but of even more convincing evidence gathered from man's

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own anatomical structure, Professor Wood Jones made a moving appeal for the whole reconsideration of the post-Darwinian conception of man's comparative recent emergence from the brute kingdom. The missing link of Huxley, if ever found, would not be a more apelike man, but a more human ape."

Forty-one years ago, in 1877, Helena P. Blavatsky published her first great work, *Isis Unveiled: A Master-Key to the Mysteries of Ancient and Modern Science and Theology*. In the Preface, the author writes:

"It is offered to such as are willing to accept truth wherever it may be found, and to defend it, even looking popular prejudice straight in the face. . . .

"The book is written in all sincerity. It is meant to do even justice, and to speak the truth alike without malice or prejudice. But it shows neither mercy for enthroned error, nor reverence for usurped authority. It demands for a spoliated past, that credit for its achievements which has been too long withheld. It calls for a restitution of borrowed robes, and the vindication of calumniated but glorious reputations. Toward no form of worship, no religious faith, no scientific hypothesis has its criticism been directed in any other spirit. Men and parties, sects and schools are but the mere ephemera of the world's day. TRUTH, high-seated upon its rock of adamant, is alone eternal and supreme."

And in the opening chapter, Madame Blavatsky writes:

"In undertaking to inquire into the assumed infallibility of Modern Science and Theology, the author has been forced, even at the risk of being thought discursive, to make constant comparisons of the ideas, achievements, and pretensions of their representatives, with those of the ancient philosophers and religious teachers. Things the most widely separated as to time, have thus been brought into immediate juxtaposition, for only thus could the priority and parentage of discoveries and dogmas be determined. In discussing the merits of our scientific contemporaries, their own confessions of failure in experimental research, of baffling mysteries, of missing links in their chains of theory, of inability to comprehend natural phenomena, of ignorance of the laws of the causal world, have furnished the basis for the present study. . . . We have laid no charge against scientists that is not supported by their own published admissions, and if our citations from the records of antiquity rob some of what they have hitherto viewed as well-earned laurels, the fault is not ours but Truth's. No man worthy of the name of philosopher would care to wear honors that rightfully belong to another.

" . . . Our voice is raised for spiritual freedom, and our plea made for enfranchisement from all tyranny, whether of SCIENCE or THEOLOGY."

Madame Blavatsky's second great work, her greatest, so many regard it, *The Secret Doctrine: The Synthesis of Science, Religion, and Philosophy*, was published in 1888, exactly thirty years ago. Its two volumes deal respectively with *Cosmogogenesis* and *Anthropogenesis*. In the latter, particularly, is given a comprehensive review of the theories advanced by modern science respecting the origin and evolution of man; and in contrast with these, a presentation of the most ancient teachings, based upon Stanzas of the *Book of Dzyan*, which Madame Blavatsky declares to be

"the records of a people unknown to ethnology; it is claimed that they are written in a tongue absent from the nomenclature of languages and dialects with which philology is acquainted; they are said to emanate from a source (Occultism) repudiated by science; and, finally, they are offered through an agency, incessantly discredited before the world by all those who hate unwelcome truths, or have some special hobby of their own to defend. Therefore, the rejec-

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tion of these teachings may be expected, and must be accepted beforehand. No one styling himself a 'scholar,' in whatever department of exact science, will be permitted to regard these teachings seriously. They will be derided and rejected *a priori* in this century; but only in this one. For in the twentieth century of our era scholars will begin to recognize that the *Secret Doctrine* has neither been invented nor exaggerated, but, on the contrary, simply outlined; and finally, that its teachings antedate the Vedas." (Vol. I, xxxvii, Introductory)

To the last statement, Madame Blavatsky adds a footnote, saying:

"This is no pretension to *prophecy*, but simply a statement based on the knowledge of facts. Every century an attempt is being made to show the world that Occultism is no vain superstition. Once the door be permitted to be kept a little ajar, it will be opened wider with every new century. The times are ripe for a more serious knowledge than hitherto permitted, though still very limited, so far."

With each succeeding year since their publication, these two great works, *Isis Unveiled*, and *The Secret Doctrine*, have found a wider circle of readers. Regarded at first, save by a few, more as literary curiosities, 'inventions,' 'exaggerations,' they are being increasingly recognised as among the most serious *attempts* (if you like) in all literature to get at the foundations of human knowledge, and to make an impartial study of the ancient wisdom, and contrast it with modern scientific theories and religious dogmas. They are being increasingly recognised as dealing with the greatest scientific problems of this or any age; as being in themselves scientific, philosophic, and religious in the highest degree.

True, they have been rejected and derided, as Madame Blavatsky said they would be, in the last century, and are still rejected and derided by some today, but her (not 'prophecy,' but) "statement, based on knowledge of facts," that in the twentieth century scholars would begin to give them recognition, is already receiving confirmation. Not that credit is yet given, save in rare instances; not that honor is paid where honor is due, — though Madame Blavatsky never looked for honor to herself — but that with almost every year, new corroborations are appearing to demonstrate the truth of the ancient teachings, which she declared have been 'simply outlined' in *The Secret Doctrine*.

* * * *

One of the greatest, and most fascinating, of all problems has ever been the origin of man. Answer that, and you will know his destiny; for that no stream rises higher than its source is axiomatic; as is also the statement that the less cannot include the greater. Ascribe to man an ape or brute ancestry, and one can expect no more than that ferocious and brutal animal instincts shall recur again and again to destroy whatever civilizing, human and, shall we say, spiritual and divine qualities may have been — by what miracle, indeed? — evolved from the brutish ape-stock. But on the other hand, ascribe to man a divine origin and ancestry,

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and we can call upon him to claim his heritage and act in accord with his inherent divine nature.

No great question can be answered from a one-sided viewpoint, or from a partial consideration of facts relating to only one phase of it. Yet this is precisely what the Darwinists have the presumption to claim: namely, that they have solved the problem of man's origin, while at the same time ignoring the supreme facts that distinguish man from the brute. They have built, and not wisely, only upon the fact that man has a brute side to his nature, ignoring his divine potentialities, and in some cases more than potentialities, his divine achievements. They have investigated along one line only, they have discovered many facts assuredly, but have also misinterpreted many, and so have built up the huge degrading theory of man as the descendant of the ape. Claiming to use reason, they have ignored the fundamentals of logic; they have built upon the insecure foundations of unsupported theory for the establishment of what they designate as law. They have misinterpreted legend, tradition, history, biology, geology, and archaeology, and have failed to see the implications in the unbridgeable gulf between those characteristics and qualities which have in them the potentialities of divinity and which make man truly man, and the brute instincts of the ape; between the mind of man with its limitless powers and the unreasoning instincts of the animal.

One of the greatest teachings of Theosophy, given in *The Secret Doctrine*, is that there is not one line only of evolution, but two lines. The modern theory postulates and concerns itself with but one, the physical, claiming mind to be product or outgrowth of physical evolution. Theosophy, as is shown in *The Secret Doctrine*, not ignoring this, but amplifying it, postulates another, the mental, the truly human. It postulates also a third, the Monadic, or purely spiritual, but space forbids us, and for our present purposes we do not need to discuss it, save to say that it is interblended with, and is the very ground or basis of, the other two. This must however be studied for a complete understanding of the subject, and the student is referred to *The Secret Doctrine*.

In fact, man is more than an animal, more than an outer animal nature, though that were developed to its highest. The animal nature evolved to its highest, as in the most highly developed human form, is not man and can never be man. Man is of another order; the human form is but the vehicle, the house, in which man, the tenant, lives. Man is the soul, the mind, (using these terms somewhat loosely, and in this instance as synonymous). Man is an inhabitant of the human form which is his dwelling and also the instrument by means of which he contacts the outer physical world and so gains experience therein.

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Darwinism deals, and imperfectly, as said above, only with the evolution of the physical frame, dwelling or instrument, in which man lives, and which he uses. It has attempted, but has utterly failed, to account for the dweller, man himself. It has even failed to trace man's physical parentage, as we shall presently show on the highest authority, the authority of discovered facts.

* * * *

Ever since its first formulation there has been, in certain quarters, persistent opposition to the Darwinian theory, (a) from scientists who, like the great French naturalist, de Quatrefages, and others, claim that certain well authenticated facts disprove the ape-ancestry of man; (b) from certain theologians who hold to the *special creation* theory for man's origin, basing this on a literal interpretation of the Biblical account in *Genesis*; and (c) from those who accept the ancient Theosophical teachings as given by Madame Blavatsky in *The Secret Doctrine*, and in other Theosophical literature.

Other theologians, however, psychologized by the weight of modern scientific opinion, have deserted the *special creation* theory and accepted the Darwinian. Thus, according to them, even Jesus, Buddha, and all the great Teachers of the past, are the product of evolution from the ape. What reverence, what worship, should we not therefore give to the brute form in which is locked up, hidden away, the divine potentialities of the sublime wisdom that fell from their lips! For remember Jesus did not differentiate himself from the human race. Did he not say, "Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect"; and "Whosoever shall do the will of God, the same is my brother, and my sister, and mother"?

If we accept the Darwinian theory, what other conclusion can we come to? Read what Professor J. Howard Moore, a noted Chicago educator, and writer on ethical subjects, says in an article, 'Our Neglect of Ethical Culture,' published in *The Open Door* (New York, December, 1916). He says:

"We have known now for something like two generations that man's origin was not so shining as it was once supposed to be. But so poky are we in adjusting ourselves to new truths, especially truths of revolutionary importance, that our whole educational program still proceeds on the hypothesis that the raw material of human character is celestial.

"Man did not come from the skies. He came from the *jungle*. We are not children of the sun. WE ARE CHILDREN OF THE APE. MAN IS AN ANIMAL. He acquired his psychology in the same way exactly as he acquired his backbone. He did not originate it; it was handed to him. The great trunk tendencies of human nature are the same tendencies as those that form the foundation of animal psychology elsewhere.

"Civilized peoples are the not very remote posterity of savages, and savages are the posterity of those bowed and unconsidered beings who walk over the earth with their faces toward the ground. Humanity is only a habit."

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He says further: "The greatest defect of our educational system is the lack of a moral element." Are we then to look for the ground of such moral element in man's hypothetical ape-ancestry? This evidently is the trend of Professor Moore's argument. Others however, and especially students of Theosophy, trace the lack of a moral element -- so far as it is lacking — in our modern educational systems precisely to the degrading teaching of such ancestry.

There is much truth in the familiar sayings which have become proverbial; "Like produces like," and "Like father, like son"; and a great teacher, illustrating the same truth, once asked: "Do men gather grapes of thorns or figs of thistles?"

Is, then, the moral element traceable to the ferocious animality of the anthropoid, or to a higher source?

"We are not children of the sun. We are children of the ape. Man is an animal," says Professor Moore. Hence what can we expect from man but animal ethics, — if we can ascribe ethics to an animal?

Is this to be the basis of education? Is it not rather that the ape-ancestry theory, which has so psychologized humanity — a very large part of it certainly — during the last half century and longer, is very largely responsible for the present crisis with which our civilization is confronted?

Very different are the results already to be seen, even in so short a time as has elapsed since the beginning of the present century, in the accentuation of the moral element in education based upon a recognition of the inherent divinity of the human soul. I refer to Katherine Tingley's Râja-Yoga system of education which has this as its basis, while at the same time recognising the duality of human nature — the animal passional side as well as the truly human, potentially and inherently divine side, the Higher and True Self, which metaphorically speaking *is born of the Sun*, and in its essence is pure, radiant and divine, however hidden its true nature may be, enmeshed in, covered up and seemingly warped by its association with the animal, lower self. How else is self-control possible, self-conquest, if there be not a higher to control and conquer the lower?

* * * *

There are certain difficulties that inevitably arise in connexion with the Darwinian theory which have received no satisfactory answer; and, some of them, no adequate consideration by the advocates of the theory. Yet they demand solution, else the theory falls by the weight of its own degrading absurdity. We may put them thus:

(1) Regarding the missing link needed to bridge what has been spoken of above as the unbridgeable gulf between the human mind and

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the brute instinct of the ape: how comes it that we find no evolution from the anthropoid upward *now going on before our eyes*, nor any evidence of progression, on the part of the anthropoid, in the long ages that have elapsed since the first human is supposed to have differentiated from the ape, or from the hypothetical common ancestor of both?

(2) How account for the fact that however far back we go, through archaeological research, we find evidences of civilizations as high and glorious as any in *known* history? Whereas, on the other hand, the lowest, savage races, such as the Blackfellow of Australia, show no progression, but the retrogression of decrepit old age; show indeed no evidences of being nearer ape-ancestry than ourselves, but rather that they are the decaying remnants of a once highly developed people.

(3) How account for the fact that man existed before the apes? — of which there is abundant scientific evidence.

(4) How account for the fact that as the ape grows older, he becomes more brutal, the brain more restricted, whereas the opposite is true of man?

All these points are discussed by Mme Blavatsky in *The Secret Doctrine* and shown by her to be conclusive arguments against the Darwinian theory. But before quoting from that work, it is of interest to turn to the most recent scientific corroboration of the ancient teaching that man preceded the anthropoid apes. This corroboration, with an account of which we have headed this paper, is from no less distinguished a scientist than Professor Wood Jones, Professor of Anatomy in the University of London. His conclusion, as stated in the *New York Times*, based on scientific grounds, and particularly on the recent reports of Dr. Stewart Arthur Smith of Sydney, Australia, on the Talgai skull discovered in 1889 in Darling Downs, N. S. W., but never seriously investigated till 1914, is “that man is not descended from anthropoid apes, but that these would be in fact more accurately described as having been descended from man, that man as man is far more ancient than the whole anthropoid branch”; claiming that “these assertions were proved not only by recent anatomical research, but to be deducible from the whole trend of geological and anthropological discovery.”

This, as we shall presently see, is in entire harmony with the most ancient teaching, the Secret Doctrine of antiquity.

* * * *

Honor to whom honor is due, and while paying honor to Professor Wood Jones and to Dr. Stewart Arthur Smith for the careful scientific analysis of these lately discovered facts and for their clear statement of their significance, it is but just that we should recall briefly the testimony

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of other earlier scientists in regard to the insuperable difficulties against an acceptance of the Darwinian theory. Madame Blavatsky makes reference to many of these in *The Secret Doctrine*.

Speaking of "the *approximate* duration of the geological periods from the combined data of Science and Occultism now before us" and giving "rough approximations in accordance with the latter," she writes:

"Mr. Edward Clodd, in reviewing M. de Mortillet's work *Matériaux pour l'Histoire de l'Homme*, which places man in the mid-Miocene period, remarks that 'it would be in defiance of all that the doctrine of evolution teaches, and moreover, win no support from believers in special creation and the fixity of species, to seek for so highly specialized a mammalian as man at an early stage in the life-history of the globe.' To this, one could answer: (a) the doctrine of evolution, as inaugurated by Darwin and developed by later evolutionists, is not only the reverse of *infallible*, but it is repudiated by several great men of science, e. g., de Quatrefages, in France, and Dr. Weissmann, an *ex*-evolutionist in Germany, and many others, the ranks of the *anti*-Darwinists growing stronger with every year; and (b) truth to be worthy of its name, and remain truth and fact, hardly needs to beg for support from any class or sect."

Adding a footnote,

"The root and basic idea of the origin and transformation of species — the *heredity* (of acquired faculties) seems to have found lately very serious opponents in Germany. [This was published in 1888.] Du Bois-Reymond and Dr. Pflüger, the physiologists, besides other men of science as eminent as any, find insuperable difficulties and even impossibilities in the doctrine." — *The Secret Doctrine*, II, 711.

Madame Blavatsky declares emphatically

"That man was *not the last member in the mammalian family*, but the first in *this Round*, is something that science will be forced to acknowledge one day.

"That man can be shown to have lived in the mid-Tertiary period, and in a geological age *when there did not yet exist one single specimen of the now known species of mammals*, is a statement that science *cannot* deny and which has now been proven by de Quatrefages." (*Introduction à l'Étude des Races Humaines*).— II, 155.

"Civilization dates still further back than the Miocene Atlanteans. 'Secondary-period' man will be discovered, and with him his long forgotten civilization." — II, 266.

"The geologists of France place man in the mid-miocene age (Gabriel de Mortillet), and some even in the *Secondary* period, as de Quatrefages suggests; . . ." — II, 686.

Ernst Haeckel (in *The Pedigree of Man*, translated by Ed. B. Aveling, p. 49) after citing what he calls Huxley's *momentous sentence* that "the anatomical differences between man and the highest apes are less than those between the latter and the lowest apes," says:

"In relation to our genealogical tree of man, the necessary conclusion follows that the human race has *evolved gradually from the true apes*."

On this Madame Blavatsky comments:

"What may be the scientific and *logical* objections to the opposite conclusion — we would ask? The anatomical resemblances between Man and the Anthropoids — grossly exaggerated as they are by Darwinists, as M. de Quatrefages shows — are simply enough 'accounted for' when the origin of the latter is taken into consideration.

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“ ‘Nowhere in the older deposits, is an ape to be found that approximates more closely to man, or a man that approximates more closely to an ape. . . .’ ”

And quotes also Dr. F. Pfaff, Professor of Natural Science in the University of Erlangen, as follows:

“ ‘. . . The same gulf which is found today between Man and Ape, goes back with undiminished breadth and depth to the Tertiary period. This fact alone is enough to make its untenability clear.’ ” — II, 87.

“ ‘If,’ says Professor Pfaff, ‘in the hundreds of thousands of years which you [the Evolutionists] accept between the rise of palaeolithic man and our own day, a greater distance of man from the brute is not demonstrable, [*the most ancient man was just as far removed from the brute as the now living man*], what reasonable ground can be advanced for believing that man has been developed from the brute, and has receded further from it by infinitely small gradations.’ ” — II, 686-687.

And Sir W. Dawson, LL. D., F. R. S., in *Origin of the World*, p. 39, says:

“ ‘While we can trace the skeletons of Eocene mammals through several directions of specialization in succeeding Tertiary times, man presents the phenomenon of an *unspecialized* skeleton which cannot fairly be connected with any of these lines.’ ” — II, 720.

And we find Madame Blavatsky stating unequivocally that

“ ‘Man belongs to a kingdom distinctly separate from that of the animals.’ ” — I, 186.

And though, according to the ancient teaching, man was at one time ‘ape-like,’ yet he never was an ape, nor was his ancestor an ape. This is of the greatest interest in view of certain legends and traditional records of the Orient, especially as recited in the Mahâbhârata. On this point Madame Blavatsky says:

“ ‘It is not denied that in the preceding Round [or great period of evolution before the present, the Fourth Round] man *was* a gigantic ape-like creature; and when we say ‘man’ we ought perhaps to say, the rough mold that was developing for the use of man in this Round only — the middle, or the transition point of which we have hardly reached. Nor was man what he is now during the first two and a half Root-Races. That point [*i. e.*, the middle or transition point, just referred to] he reached, as said before, only 18,000,000 years ago, during the secondary period, as we claim.’ ” — II, 261.

“ ‘But what the Occultists have never admitted, nor will they ever admit, is that man was *an ape in this or in any other Round*; or that he ever could be one, however much he may have been ‘ape-like.’ ” — I, 187.

“ ‘The man who preceded the Fourth, the Atlantean race, however much he may have looked physically like a ‘gigantic ape’ . . . was still a thinking and already a speaking man. The ‘Lemuro-Atlantean’ was a highly civilized race, and if one accepts tradition, which is better history than the speculative fiction which now passes under that name, he was higher than we are with all our sciences and the degraded civilization of the day: at any rate, the Lemuro-Atlantean of the closing Third Race was so.’ ” — I, 191.

“ ‘It is sufficient,’ declares Madame Blavatsky, “to glance at the works of Broca, Gratiolet, of Owen, Pruner Bey, and finally, at the last

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great work of de Quatrefages, *Introduction à l'Étude des Races Humaines, Questions Générales*, to discover the fallacy of the Evolutionists," and then adds:

"We may say more: the exaggerations concerning such similarity of structure between man and the anthropomorphous ape have become so glaring and absurd of late, that even Mr. Huxley found himself forced to protest against the too sanguine expectations. It was that great anatomist personally who called the 'smaller fry' to order, by declaring in one of his articles that the differences in the structure of the human body and that of the highest anthropomorphous pithecoïd, were not only *far from being trifling and unimportant*, but were, on the contrary, very great and suggestive: "each of the bones of the gorilla has its own specific impress on it that distinguishes it from a similar human bone." Among the existing creatures there is not one single intermediate form that could fill the gap between man and the ape. To ignore that gap, he added, 'was *as uncalled-for as it was absurd.*'"

In a footnote to this, Madame Blavatsky quotes again from Professor Pfaff, who says:

" 'We find one of the most man-like apes (gibbon), in the *tertiary period*, and this species is *still in the same low grade*, and *side by side* with it at the end of the Ice-period, man is found in the same high grade as today, the ape not having approximated more nearly to the man, and modern man not having become further removed from the ape than the first (fossil) man. . . . these facts contradict a theory of constant progressive development.' "—II, 681-682.

Exactly the same position as is now taken by Professor Wood Jones was taken half a century ago by the great French naturalist, de Quatrefages, as is seen from the following. We continue our quotation from *The Secret Doctrine*:

"Finally, the absurdity of such an *unnatural* descent of man is so palpable in the face of all the proofs and evidence of the skull of the pithecoïd as compared to that of man, that even de Quatrefages resorted unconsciously to our esoteric theory by saying *that it is rather the apes that can claim descent from man than vice versa*. As proven by Gratiolet, with regard to the cavities of the brain of the anthropoids, in which species that organ develops in an inverse ratio to what would be the case were the corresponding organs in man really the product of the development of the said organs in the apes — the size of the human skull and its brain, as well as the cavities, increase with the individual development of man. His intellect develops and increases with age, while his facial bones and jaws diminish and straighten, thus being more and more spiritualized: whereas with the ape it is the reverse. In its youth the anthropoid is far more intelligent and good-natured, while with age it becomes duller; and, as its skull recedes and seems to diminish as it grows, its facial bones and jaws develop, the brain being finally crushed, and thrown back, to make with every day more room for the animal type. The organ of thought — the brain — recedes and diminishes, entirely conquered and replaced by that of the wild beast — the jaw apparatus." — II, 681-682.

Other important testimony in refutation of the claims of the Darwinists, cited by Madame Blavatsky, and by no means to be disregarded, is given by Lyell, the 'Father' of Geology, by Professor Max Müller, and by Professor Rawlinson.

"According to Lyell, one of the highest authorities on the subject, and the 'Father' of Geology (*Antiquity of Man*, p. 25):—

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“The expectation of always meeting with a lower type of human skull, the older the formation in which it occurs, *is based on the theory of progressive development*, and it *may* prove to be sound; nevertheless we must remember that as yet *we have no distinct geological evidence that the appearance of what are called the inferior races of mankind* has always preceded in chronological order that of the higher races.”

To which Madame Blavatsky adds:

“Nor has such evidence been found to this day. Science is thus offering for sale the skin of a bear, which has hitherto never been seen by mortal eye!

“This concession of Lyell’s reads most suggestively with the subjoined utterance of Professor Max Müller, whose attack on the Darwinian Anthropology from the standpoint of LANGUAGE has, by the way, never been satisfactorily answered:—

“‘What do we know of savage tribes beyond the *last chapter of their history?*’

“(Cf. this with the esoteric view of the Australians, Bushmen, as well as of Palaeolithic European man, the Atlantean offshoots retaining a relic of a lost culture, which thrived when the parent Root-Race was in its prime.)

“‘Do we ever get an insight into their antecedents? . . . *How have they come to be what they are?* . . . Their language proves, indeed, that these so-called heathens, with their complicated systems of mythology, their unintelligible whims and savageries, are not the creatures of today or yesterday. Unless we admit a special creation for these savages, they must be as old as the Hindûs, the Greeks and Romans [far older]. . . . They may have passed through ever so many vicissitudes, and *what we consider as primitive, may be, for all we know, a RELAPSE INTO SAVAGERY* or a corruption of something that was more rational and intelligible in former stages.’ (*India: What Can It Teach Us*, 1883, p. 110).

“‘The primeval savage is a familiar term in modern literature,’ remarks Professor Rawlinson, ‘but there is no evidence that the primeval savage ever existed. Rather *all the evidence looks the other way.*’ (*Antiquity of Man Historically Considered*). In his *Origin of Nations*, he rightly adds: ‘*The mythical traditions of almost all nations place at the beginning of human history a time of happiness and perfection, a ‘golden age’ which has no features of savagery or barbarism, but many of civilization and refinement.*’ How is the modern evolutionist to meet this consensus of evidence?” — II, 721-722.

* * * *

It is to be expected that exception will be taken by some to the statement of Professor Wood Jones, for error once firmly entrenched in the human mind dies hard. Indeed, such exception has already been taken by Garrett P. Serviss who has declared that Professor Jones has been misunderstood and his words misinterpreted. To the latter’s statement, as reported by the *New York Times*, that the anthropoid apes “would be in fact more accurately described as having been descended from man,” Professor Serviss takes exception, saying:

“This cannot possibly have been Professor Jones’ meaning, because it involves a misunderstanding of the scientific view of man’s descent that no university professor could be guilty of, although popularly it is widespread and apparently ineradicable.

“No evolutionist believes, and none has ever contended, that the ape was the ancestor of man. . . .”

Professor Serviss evidently forgets Ernst Haeckel, usually regarded

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as one of the greatest evolutionists, whom we have already quoted as saying distinctly, "the necessary conclusion follows that the human race has evolved gradually from the true apes." And if the popular view of the evolutionary theory is so wide-spread and ineradicable, the evolutionists themselves are responsible for this. As to the "scientific view of man's descent," spoken of by Professor Serviss, we fail to see wherein it is scientific; in fact, as we shall see presently, quoting Professor Serviss' own words, it is based wholly on 'supposition.' *Our* idea of science involves something more sure than supposition as a basis.

But the arguments presented above hold equally against the view presented by Professor Serviss, namely, that

"What evolution teaches is that both ape and man had a common ancestor, from which they both arose as two branches of a tree arise by bifurcation from a single trunk."

With strange inconsistency, however, Professor Serviss still makes man the descendant of apes and monkeys as is seen in his further statement which I italicize. He says:

"The first bifurcation of that trunk has generally been dated in the Eocene or the Oligocene, the two earliest subdivisions, or ages, of the Tertiary period.

"Both of the branches then formed are supposed to have been represented by apes and monkeys. There was yet no sign of the creature man. But in the next age, the Miocene, one of the two first branches [both supposed to have been represented by apes and monkeys, he has just said, remember] is supposed to have divided, giving rise on one side to the branch of anthropoids called gibbons, and on the other side to a branch which again subdivided, one of its parts producing the direct though as yet unknown ancestors of man who lived in the Pliocene age (next after the Miocene), while the other gave rise to the primitive anthropoids from which are descended the chimpanzee, the gorilla, and the orang."

So, after all, Professor Serviss makes man descended from "apes and monkeys," — "both branches (the first bifurcation) then formed," he declares, "are *supposed* to have been represented by apes and monkeys."

"Supposed!" In fact, at the best, this 'scientific view' is nothing but supposition, theory, and is not supported by *any discovered facts*. And with this brief reference, we may take leave of Professor Serviss.

The insuperable difficulties against accepting an ape-ancestry for man apply equally against accepting a common ancestry for both man and ape. All honor then to those scientists and others who, recognising these difficulties, and many perhaps realizing *intuitively* the fallacy of the Darwinian theory, have set their faces against its degrading psychology.

* * * *

So, honor to whom honor is due; and especially is honor due to Helena Petrovna Blavatsky, and not only honor, but gratitude. For in her great work, *The Secret Doctrine*, not only has she given a masterly

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and scientific presentation of the whole case against the Darwinian theory, whether in respect to the ape-ancestry of man, or their common ancestry, but she has done more. She has, on logical, scientific, and philosophic grounds, once again demonstrated the truth of the ancient teaching of the Wisdom-Religion: that man is inherently divine; that the real man, the soul, is a spiritual being, potentially a god; that, as such, man has power to rise or fall, yet never can he utterly lose his potentially divine nature.

We cannot here take up this phase of the subject further. That must be left for a future occasion. We give but one more brief quotation from *The Secret Doctrine*. There Madame Blavatsky declares that

“Owing to the very type of his development man *cannot descend* from either an ape or an ancestor common to both, but shows his origin from a type far superior to himself. And this type is the ‘Heavenly man’ — the Dhyân Chohans, or the *Pitris* so-called, as shown in the first Part of this volume (*The Secret Doctrine*, ¶. v.). On the other hand, the pithecoïds, the orang-outang, the gorilla, and the chimpanzee *can*, and, as the Occult Sciences teach, *do*, descend from the animalized Fourth human Root-Race, being the product of man and an extinct species of mammal — whose *remote* ancestors were themselves the product of Lemurian bestiality — which lived in the Miocene age.” — II, 682-683.

Man’s origin being from a type superior to himself — the “Heavenly man” — his destiny is likewise to rise to the height of that origin — Divinity itself. This has been the burden of every one of the great religions of the world, and the teaching of Jesus himself. Study his words, study comparative religion, — the same teaching runs through all: — “Ye are not worms of the dust; ye are children of the Sun, children of Light, sons of the Divine, of Deity itself.”

Honor to whom honor is due!

Honor to the one who has again made known man’s true origin, his divine heritage, his divine destiny: — Helena Petrovna Blavatsky, the Light-Bringer, the great Theosophist!

White Lotus Day
May 8, 1918

International Theosophical Headquarters,
Point Loma, California



“MAN is certainly *no* special creation, and he is the product of Nature’s gradual perfective work, like any other living unit on this Earth. But this is only with regard to the human tabernacle. That which lives and thinks in man and survives that frame, the masterpiece of evolution — is the Eternal Pilgrim.” — H. P. BLAVATSKY, *The Secret Doctrine*, Vol. II, 728.

THE ANCESTRAL HOME OF ENGLISH KINGS:

by C. J. Ryan



WINDSOR CASTLE, the ancestral home of the English kings for many centuries, is not only interesting from its historical associations which are naturally very numerous, but from its wonderful picturesqueness, whether it is seen from the Thames, or the flat meadowland on the north side of the river, or even in glimpses from the old-fashioned streets of the royal borough of Windsor. It stands on a commanding position, overlooking the Thames valley for many miles. The general design or plan of the castle is antique, but the majority of the buildings have been restored or even entirely rebuilt in modern times. The dominating Round Tower was an inconspicuous feature until about a century ago, when it was raised thirty-nine feet by Wyatville under direction of George III.

In the picture of Windsor Castle from the Thames the 'Norman Gateway' and the Winchester Tower can be seen to the left of the great Round Tower. To the right of the latter the most striking object is the beautiful Perpendicular Chapel of St. George with its turrets and flying buttresses. In front of this, to the right, is the Curfew Tower, rising white above the quaint red-tiled roofs of the town.

The Saxon kings were attracted by the charm of Windsor to build their simple palaces there; even the Romans had a settlement there, as we find from brickwork remains; but it was not till William the Conqueror looked upon the land and saw that it was pleasant for hunting and of strategic value also that any important work was placed there. He built a stone fortress on the summit of the hill, and also many hunting lodges in the forest, for hunting was, after warfare, the delight of his life.

To Edward III and William of Wykeham, the famous builder, we owe the general plan of the castle as it is today. The Round Tower was erected by Edward III to be the meeting-place of the most illustrious and remarkable of the English Orders of Chivalry, the 'most noble Order of the Garter' (some say 'Garder' or 'Guarder-Warders').

According to Froissart, King Arthur held his court of the Round Table on Windsor Hill, and it is said to be certain that the medieval historian did not invent the legend. A historian says:

"The Tower was built entirely in ten months, in the eighteenth year of Edward III. It was built in great haste by the special command of the King, to receive the Round Table for the new order of Knights of the Garter, then just established. . . . The building was covered by a roof of tiles; part of the wooden arcade of the gallery remains, and nearly the whole of the roof with the fine moldings of the fourteenth century. . . . The Knights sat on one side only with their backs to the wall. The King and his sons dined with them all on the same level, without any high table."

Though the Round Tower has seen very little fighting, it has its other

ANCESTRAL HOME OF ENGLISH KINGS

romantic memories. Here the unfortunate James I of Scotland was imprisoned for seventeen years, having been captured by Henry IV in 1406 at the age of eleven. He was an accomplished musician and poet, and his well-known poem, *The King's Quhair*, was written before he returned to Scotland with his much-loved English wife, Lady Jane Beaufort. Another Scottish king, David, was held in Windsor Castle by Edward III, but was ransomed for the great sum of 100,000 marks. In 1357 King John of France reached Windsor as a prisoner of war after the battle of Crécy. He was honorably treated by Edward III, being allowed to hunt and take his diversion in the forest. Being unable to raise the enormous ransom demanded, he returned, from France, loyally to fulfil his obligation and to die in England in 1363.

The most perfect and striking relic of medieval architecture now standing is St. George's Chapel, a glorious example of Perpendicular Gothic, (1480-1508) worthy of the Order of the Garter for which it is the hall of ceremony. Ruskin calls it "a very visible piece of romance." It is noted for the great size of its windows, which allow a flood of light to illuminate the noble proportions of the interior. The stained-glass windows contain portraits of English Sovereigns, beginning with Edward III; and the fan tracery, or vaulting of the roof — its somberness relieved by the bright colors of the arms of the Knights of the Garter — is very curious and beautiful.

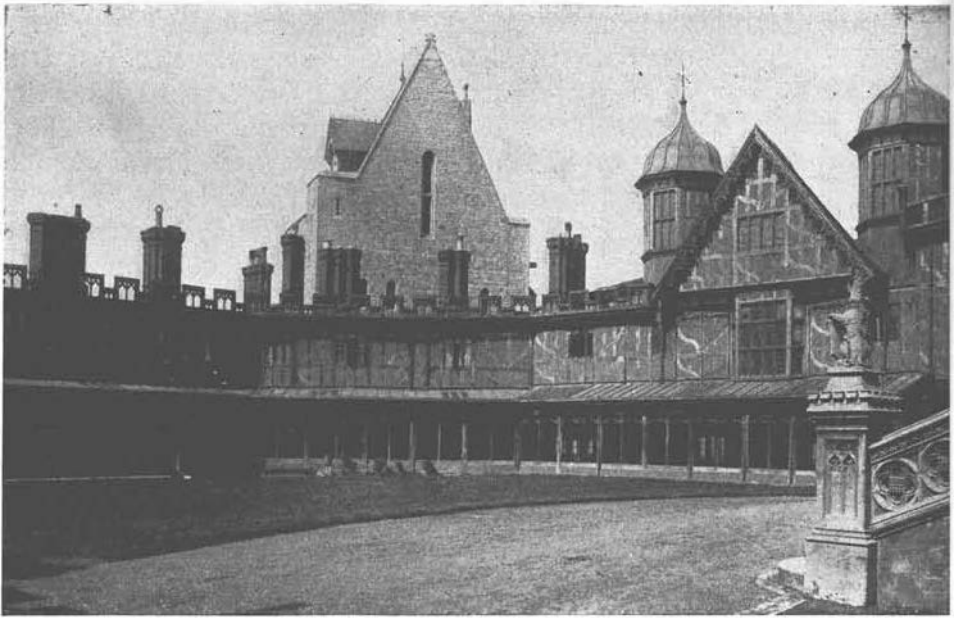
St. George's Chapel has been the scene of many historical events, chiefly weddings and funerals, and the ceremonies of the Order of the Garter. Perhaps the most pathetic was the burial, in absolute silence, of the body of the executed King Charles I in 1649; and the most impressive, the funeral service which was held over the remains of Queen Victoria in 1901.

The Sovereign of Great Britain is always the head of the Order of the Garter, and the ceremonials held in St. George's Chapel are generally connected in some way with that interesting relic of ancient chivalry. There is still a doubt as to the origin of the famous motto of the Order, '*Honi soit qui mal y pense*'; the story generally given of the Countess of Salisbury and Edward III is considered by many to be a blind, concealing a deeper meaning which perhaps would not be easily discovered by a materialistic world. It has been suggested that Richard I brought it from the East, and that the meaning of the words has been misconstrued for centuries by the ordinary scholar. There is some literature available upon this rather unusual subject of interest to those who find it profitable to search in out-of-the-way corners. Hallam, the historian, says the Order of the Garter was founded when England was "the sun, as it were, of that system which embraced the valor and nobility of the Christi-

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an world . . . when chivalry was in its zenith, and in all the virtues which adorned the knightly character none were so conspicuous as Edward III and the Black Prince."

Windsor Castle is famous for its treasures of Art, and the Royal Library. Rubens, Vandyck, and Holbein are in great strength. and there



THE HORSESHOE CLOISTERS, WINDSOR CASTLE

are superb examples of many other great masters of painting. The Library contains a matchless collection of drawings by the old masters, especially Leonardo da Vinci, Michael Angelo, Raphael, and Holbein.

Everything about Windsor takes back the mind to medieval times. There is, however, little of special interest in the town itself except the picturesque streets and the Town Hall, built by Sir Christopher Wren, though considerably altered. The churches and ancient Inns — of which there were once seventy — have been modernized or entirely rebuilt, but the old-world atmosphere is unmistakable and the dominating majesty of the ancient Castle is felt for many miles around.

Of the Horseshoe Cloisters, shown in the picture, one writer says:

"These have an air of immemorial, exquisite, and well-preserved antiquity. In fact they are not older than the flight of broad steps, quite modern, by which the west door of St. George's Chapel is reached. [To the right in the picture] It is almost hard to believe that they were not built in their present form in the glorious days of Elizabeth or her father Henry, but that to Sir Gilbert Scott belongs the credit of having reared in the place of an insignificant and unlovely range of buildings an edifice easily to be mistaken for a piece of genuine Tudor work."

TALKS ON THEOSOPHY: by Herbert Crooke

I — WHAT IS IT?

THIS is the question which I put to a friend of mine as we rode together in the train to a neighboring city on our way to business. He was a bank man and studious, who rarely missed the opportunity given by the half-hour's daily ride to and fro to read what I found later were books on Theosophy. He looked at me in a mild way, a little surprised perhaps at my curiosity, but quite ready to shut his book and chat on a theme which was so much in his thoughts.

“Well,” said he, “that is a big question which I cannot answer fully for I have only been studying it myself during the past year or two, but I can give you my idea of it, and will do so gladly.”

I thanked him and remarked that lately I had heard it spoken of two or three times, and each time I had felt unaccountably drawn to learn something of it, though in a double sense it was ‘Greek’ to me.

In those days, some thirty years ago, little was known about the subject. Now and again one read in the daily press a reference to that remarkable Russian woman, Mme Blavatsky, and comments were made on the phenomena she was supposed to have produced. This did not interest me, for I was not drawn to anything that savored of the uncanny or was allied with what was called Spiritualism and the doings of mediums — it was too remote from the ordinary affairs of a business man's life.

My friend, however, evinced a remarkable enthusiasm as he went on to describe what little he knew about it. “You've heard of Buddhism, I suppose,” said he, “and the teachings of Buddha?”

“No,” I replied, “beyond the names, I know nothing about them except what the missionaries have reported occasionally; and that, I've always felt, was more or less overdone to impress children and their subscribers with the enormities of idol-worship and the crass ignorance of the so-called heathen. It's not Buddhism, is it?”

“No,” he said, “not in its modern form, at any rate, but there are many ideas in it which correspond with the teachings of Gautama the Buddha, as one may see by reading Arnold's *Light of Asia*. Yet I remember my first interest was aroused by hearing a lecture on ‘The Secret of Buddhism,’ in which the modern teachings of the Buddhist priests were in no way referred to, but instead, what seemed to me a new way of accounting for the origin of this earth and its humanity.”

“I suppose that there are only two ways to account for the origin of man and things,” I remarked, “that contained in the Bible and that

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vouched for by science on the Darwinian theory. They seem mutually contradictory rather, though for my part I have considered the contradiction was more seeming than real, since the process of creation set forth in *Genesis* does not eliminate the idea of evolution by which the elemental condition of things precedes the more organized and complex. The dry land and water are before the herbs and fishes and creeping things, and man appears rightly to crown and complete the great process of creation as being the finished product of all nature."

"Yes," he said, "but have you ever thought of it that even in the Bible there are two distinct processes of creation indicated?"

"No," I replied, "I had not seen it in that way, but rather as the description by two different records of the same stupendous work."

"Well," my friend added, "if they relate to the same work it is strange that the one should begin where the other appears to leave off. In other words, man seems to be the crown of creation in the first chapter of *Genesis*, while in the second he is described as the forerunner of all lesser nature."

"Ah! I had not thought of that," I said, "It is, as you say, very remarkable. Yet how is it to be accounted for?"

"Theosophy," said my friend, "seems to give a very consistent explanation of this seeming contradiction. For the process of creation or evolution, according to its presentation, is a very much more protracted and gradual affair than one would imagine from the brief summary of it shown in *Genesis* as the work of the Creator in a space of six days with its seventh of consummation and rest. Indeed you will find that the long slow measured process of evolution, dimly perceived by our scientists, is quite logically and systematically sketched in the Theosophical teachings. Nowhere does there seem to be any record of that sudden coming into being at the fiat of the Almighty, such as our theologians are too apt to credit."

"And then the rise and fall of nations and races," he continued, "the wonderful civilization of an ancient past succeeded from time to time by a reversion to the simplicity and barbarity, if one may so call it, of the nomad of the desert and the backwoods, which have been revealed by our geologists and anthropologists, and which are a constant menace to any theory of the savage condition of primitive man and his subsequent growth and development into the cultured being we know today — these problems seem to me much more seriously grappled with by writers on Theosophy than by any other school of modern thought, whether religious or scientific."

"Tell me," I said, "what you mean by this; are we not evolved then

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from the condition of the primitive man? As one looks down the pages of history one feels at any rate that in our own country there was a time when the people appeared to be very little removed from the state of savages. Gradually law and order have been evolved and the interdependence of man upon his fellow-man has only dawned upon the human mind by degrees, as man acquired the art of communal life."

"That is where we too often delude ourselves," he replied. "We think our present condition so superior to that of our forefathers! But is it really so? Do we understand more of life or its meaning and purpose? Is there greater happiness in our cities and towns than there was in the rude hamlets and villages of olden times? Do we understand and support and comfort one another more than was done then?"

"Well," I said, "it is not easy to answer those questions, because the standards of comfort have varied so much in the different ages. However," I added, "I am anxious to understand how Theosophy makes clear what must be puzzling to the ordinary observer of our modern conditions of life."

"Theosophy," replied my friend, "certainly does throw a new light upon the problems of life. It postulates a great law of Harmony in the universe. Every part of it is dependent on every other part, and nothing can happen to the smallest particle of it that does not in some degree affect and modify the whole. The purpose of the whole universe, and therefore of the life of man, is the acquirement of experience which shall result in freedom — the freedom of the soul of man in the dignity and power of 'conscious godhood,' as one writer has so well put it. The conditions of being, below that of man, are not those of self-conscious entities; there is a blind acquiescence in the universal Law of Harmony; and hence we do not regard animals or plants or any lesser creature as having any moral responsibility. In a sense they are sinless. But man is a being qualified in his evolution to become free, he is capable of exercising a choice in his actions and so, according to his knowledge, he is competent to conform with the Law of Harmony or to disregard it and suffer the inevitable penalties of infringement. For there is no law in the universe which does not exact a penalty if broken. In other words, this great Law of Harmony may for a time be disregarded by the acts of a free self-conscious being, but the process of readjustment is inevitable. It is this process of action and reaction which in Theosophy is called Karma, and which brings about the sorrow and suffering, the reincarnation and rebirth, of this self-conscious entity, man, who having sown the seeds of disharmony in his ignorance or wilfulness, must reap the consequences in his present or a future life. Thus it may be seen that the present life is the outcome of past similar conditions, and is giving

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birth day by day to a future life which will be full of joy or sorrow as the seeds of that future are being sown today.”

“But,” he added, with a smile, “you see we have only just touched on the fringe of this vast subject, and I must now get away to my office.”

With that we parted, but not before I had begged for another chat with my friend on what I now realize was a very profound topic.

STUDIES IN CHINESE AND EUROPEAN PAINTING:

by **Osvald Sirén, Ph. D.**, Professor of the History of Art,
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CHAPTER VII – ART AND RELIGION

MUCH that I had in mind in writing the previous articles has remained untold, though implied in the words that I have used. But that is perhaps not altogether inappropriate in a book that deals so largely with Chinese painting. In this art no complete and exhaustive descriptions are attempted, but only suggestion — something that might attune the spectator’s mind and give to his imagination an impulse in the right direction. Some of the lines of thought that have been touched upon in the preceding pages will here be carried further.

There are indeed great difficulties in reaching conclusions in the study of esthetics. If one simply holds to formal analysis one never reaches an explanation of the origin and significance of various methods of artistic creation. One is simply led into endless descriptions, assertions, and recapitulations, in which books on esthetics abound. The underlying sources of a certain trend in art, a certain manner of vision and mode of presenting pictorially ideas or the symbolism of nature cannot be reached without a closer study of the religious life and philosophy of the time and of the individuals by whom such art was produced. The religious life and experience of a people are obviously products of the spiritual will, which is also, though perhaps less obviously, the origin of all true art. Philosophically, art and religion may be called branches of the same tree; they both draw nourishment rather from the inner emotional or spiritual world than from the outer world of material existence.

If one conceives art in a merely mechanical fashion, if one tries to explain it as imitation of nature or as a product of technical skill and the

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material employed, or as ornamentation, a mere play of forms and colors, one will only be describing various sides of the genesis of artistic creation; but its actual origin will be overlooked. One will be saying nothing about the spiritual mystery which gives to art its power of fascination; one will be throwing no light on the peculiar fact that artists represent infinitely more than what lies within the bounds of visual experience and conscious ideation; one will be giving no hint of the difference between purposive design and the scribbling of a child or an idiot. So long as even esthetically inclined people continue to hold on to a more or less materialistic explanation of art, it can hardly be wondered at that the general public continues to judge a work of art by the test of its likeness to nature.

We have already in a previous chapter touched upon the relation of art to nature; the difficulty of reaching a wider understanding of these questions largely comes from our habit of using our eyes and our understanding exclusively for the collection of material facts. (This is especially true of art historians). We have learnt to face nature catalog in hand, and to put no trust in imagination and intuition. We have speculated to some extent on what we have seen, but we have hardly ventured to draw the natural conclusion that the highest expressions of man's soul-life, one of which is art, must have their origin in a spiritual will. If this were not the case, how was it possible, for instance, that the art of the classic periods, which availed itself of organic forms, could represent these so much more beautifully and expressively than they appeared in nature or that the more abstract art could create designs whose emotional and spiritual significance is still unsurpassed? That which there found expression whether in picture, ornament, or architecture, is not simply a desire for ornamentation or representation but a creative will revealing an inner reality. The same is true of primitive art; the subjective significance is not here obscured by methods of expression, which are relatively undeveloped. This happens more easily when the method of execution becomes more naturalistic, because then artists often lose sight of the inner reality in their pursuit of technical skill.

It has been said, not without exaggeration but with some truth, that for the great artist as for the religious devotee, the physical universe exists only as a means to ecstasy; but the ecstasy may indeed be of many different kinds, from the purely contemplative state of the philosopher who merges his consciousness in the infinite, down to that of mere sensual intoxication. Art may be used as a path to the sublime or as a means to sensuous enjoyment, and the pure bliss of the devotee may find its parallel in the fanatic's fierce joy of persecution. Neither art nor religion find the key to the universe in practical utility, but rather regard the objective world as a symbolic expression of some inner reality which stirs the soul

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to aspiration and creation. This is a necessary condition for the existence of anything worthy of the name of artistic creation, or of a truly religious life. It first becomes possible to draw the parallel between religion and art when one understands them both in their purest form freed from the trammels of intellectual conventionality. The religious impulse has often played an important part in art, though appearing less as a definitely formulated doctrine than as a new spirit which had already found expression in a religious revival.

Thus it can hardly be maintained that Christian art owed its origin to the church or to theological doctrines; but it was gradually molded by the emotional aspiration and mental exaltation which under certain conditions were aroused by the Christian doctrines. They stirred the soul and set the senses in a ferment from which an entirely new form of art was born. They manifested themselves on the one hand in intense yearning for infinity and on the other hand in a scholastic subtlety which infused new rhythms into art and turned creative imagination towards ideals unlike those sought in preceding ages. How far these ideals could be called Christian is another question; in any case their origin was in a transcendentalism that stood in direct opposition to the immanence which characterized the religious conception of antiquity.

A few words about the general modifications of the religious ideals most plainly discernible in the evolution of European art may not be out of place here. To begin with, a few statements by the German author Groddeck may serve to throw light on the classic idea of immanence in nature as understood by the Greeks:

“A fundamental difference between the modern world and the antique lies in the relation of religion to nature. The Greek saw God everywhere. Nature was for him something to be worshiped and feared. We modern men with our cold intellectualism cannot understand why the Greeks of the Great Age maintained such peculiar customs in connexion with the felling of a tree or the hunting of an animal. We smile at their superstitious fears. But unfortunately in our day reverence has disappeared along with fear. We now stand in no other relation to nature than as the user to that which is used. . . . Nature has been robbed of her divine aspect. This change in our attitude toward nature is certainly closely connected with our progress in technical and material civilization, but we have paid the penalty in loss of inner cultural and spiritual qualities. The man of Antiquity did not imagine himself the center of the world and the ruler of the earth - rather the contrary.”

The feeling of unity with nature was doubtless one of the primary conditions for antique art. They conceived nature as ensouled; they felt themselves involved in the organic life of nature, which thereby became for them stamped with something of their own individuality. Their pantheism was anthropomorphic, which fact led to the establishment of the human figure as the highest ideal of art. “Wonders are many but none more wonderful than man,” was said in the *Antigone* of Sophocles — a

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verse that could stand as a motto for all Greek art from the Golden Age onward.

This is hardly the place to enter upon a discussion of how far the Greek conception of art and beauty was bound up with ethical and religious ideals. The central and ruling idea for them in art as in life was the principle of balance and harmonious proportions. It is clearly enunciated by philosophers like Plato and Aristotle, and it is of fundamental importance in the creations of the great sculptors and architects. But the origin of this principle and the standard by which it was tested was the human figure: the symmetry of its construction, the harmonious proportions of its parts, its tectonic organism, had for them the highest symbolic significance and artistic value. They held that man was akin to the gods, and in his ideal perfection became like them. The anthropomorphic ideal in art was a natural result of their conception of life and of the world they lived in.

The question, where does the spirit of Christianity find its fullest expression? may be answered in many different ways according to how religion itself is understood. To us it seems natural that as Christianity was a spiritual movement originating in the East, so it was there, in the Eastern parts of the then existing Roman Empire, that its spirit and essence found their best reflexion in art. It was well within the general tendency of Christianity to seek the highest ideal of life beyond the bounds of material existence, or, as often said, to turn the eye towards the infinite. The art whose aim it was to give expression to such a concept, naturally would not waste itself in representations of mere material objects, however beautiful, but would rather seek to sublimate the earthly form into an image of more purely spiritual character. The problem of this art was highly abstract, its solution could only come from within. It may be that this always is the case, to a certain extent, in an art that seeks inspiration in spiritual movements, and which symbolically expresses religious ideals, though the symbol may be direct or indirect, abstract or concrete. In the former case art speaks through rhythm of line and through qualities that have a direct symbolical significance; in the latter case it borrows the speech of nature and expresses itself by means of representation of organic form. We shall have the opportunity of discussing this diversity in what follows.

No one who has carefully studied the Byzantine mosaics of the sixth century can deny that they have an intense artistic significance and great decorative beauty. Form as a means of expression has here a more direct emotional value than in antique art; it is not weighed down by the necessity to imitate nature. The golden background and the deep-toned jewels of these mosaics intensify the suggestive power of the highly conventionalized figures and suffuse them with an atmosphere of ecstasy

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which well accords with the religious yearning towards the infinite. The inherited esthetic refinement and the ceremonious court-life of the Byzantines provided material for the creation of the new emotional symbolism. The pursuit of the abstract came more naturally to them than to the people of the West; their emotional life was dominated by the general Eastern tendency to drift into vague poetic dreams and contemplation of immaterial beauty.

In the West the Gothic, later on, adopted similar emotional ideals as subjects for artistic presentation, but its forms of expression were never so abstract or sublimated by feeling and imagination as those of Byzantine art. Transcendentalism was here also an element of fundamental importance, but the Christian spirit that inspired the Gothic was in closer contact with life and reality than was the religiosity of the East; it was permeated by the Western love of action and movement in art. This depended naturally on the fact that the Christian culture of Western Europe had been molded by vigorous and active young nations who gradually replaced the older. They had an altogether new craving for realistic character in art unknown to the Byzantines. They create new living types and dramatic forms of expression. They describe and narrate. In spite of all their spiritual yearnings they revel in reality. No matter how much the Gothic cathedral-statues seem to shrink into themselves with ascetic repugnance to the outer world or to stretch out in boundless yearning towards the beyond, yet one may generally find in them some traits that show how closely they are bound to earth. Their artistic significance is often due to a compromise between abstract synthetic line and concrete plastic form. The further the Gothic develops the more it steep itself in the worldly delight of decorative form and undulating line and the more does religious solemnity give place to playful virtuosity.

The art of the Renaissance which sprang up in the soil of Humanism made fertile by the reawakened spirit of the Antique was inspired at its culmination by ideals similar to those of classic antiquity. Once more the conception of nature was colored with the ideal of immanence. The recognition of law-bound life expressed in organic forms more and more replaced the transcendental yearnings for and dreams of the beyond. The desire for scientific investigation and empirical knowledge in no small degree became a substitute for emotional religiosity.

We have already in an earlier chapter pointed out the far-reaching changes that the spirit of the new age brought about in the field of artistic representation; broadly speaking, it led to increased interest in the world of material phenomena and to greater efforts to create an appearance of actual bodily form. To begin with, this increased desire for reality went hand in hand with the passion for scientific experiment. Painters were

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inclined to lose sight of the higher aims of art in their eagerness to represent objects "as they really are," to quote Vasari's expression in regard to the art of Masaccio. But the further they progressed in their studies of the antique and the more deeply they were imbued with its spirit of anthropomorphic pantheism, the more conscious became their efforts to achieve the ideal perfection of organic form, harmonious proportion, and tectonic unity. As the spirit of the time became more classic, so the idealizing tendency in art grew stronger, the naive delight in nature was superseded by conscious ideation; and organic form in art became more an architectonic work than a copy from nature. At length the Baroque appeared as a reaction against the Renaissance with its striving after entirely different kinds of illusion. The artists of the Baroque no longer concentrated their efforts on the representation of objective appearances or on the clear definition of organic form as such; what they sought to express was rather the subjective impression, a vision of form not shut in and limited but scattered and dissolved by the force of unrestrained movement. Their compositions instead of representing an arrangement of balanced and equalized forces were filled with dynamic effects and violent contrasts. This tension of sudden and violent emotion finds its expression in a movement that carries us beyond the limitations of objective form. The general tendency of the Baroque mode of expression is clearly related to that of the Gothic, but its inspiration is less transcendental than is the spirit of medieval art. It is the spirit of the contra-Reformation and Jesuitry, which pervades the most characteristic creations of the Baroque, and this did not aim at any liberation from the sensual world, but at an emotional intoxication, an ecstasy which was apt to lead the adventurous soul far from the balanced and peaceful state which was the ideal of the Renaissance. It was like stormy autumn after a sunny summer.

From a deeper standpoint, the Baroque period must be regarded as less spiritual than the Renaissance. The direction of this art is not towards emancipation from or elucidation of material phenomena, but towards the creation of illusion or optical deception which will produce the most pleasing impression of sensuous beauty. Its magnificent churches became more like foyers of opera-houses than like temples for worship; and its angels and saints like mundane beauties more or less fired with the fever of the senses.

Then comes the Rococo and makes play with the forms of the Baroque and gives them more freedom and suppleness. The opera becomes vaudeville; the saints shepherds and shepherdesses. The stream of spiritual life becomes still more shallow. The Neo-classic style then renews the bond with the ideals of the Antique and thereby places art again on a broader spiritual foundation, but as an art movement it is highly in-

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tellectual, more fostered by the scientific and literary interests of that time than supported by such a general and spontaneous will and enthusiasm as we find in the Antique, the Gothic, or the Renaissance. This is probably also the reason why it soon dries up in theoretical doctrines and does not set free any greater fund of spiritual power for the renewal of the inner life in art.

As a whole, European art, in spite of all variations of style, remained closely bound up in the problem of material form. Its true field of activity is the world of objective phenomena; it was only occasionally, during periods of intense emotional life, that it entered upon a path leading away from organic form towards the abstract and the purely subjective. At such times emotion had more reality than the objects of the phenomenal world which were reduced to material for pictorial symbology and poetic imagery. But Western culture for the most part provided us with no permanent soil for the growth of such an art. The emotional and religious yeast was soon swept away in the flood of material desires and the pursuit of outward appearances. Whatever subjects this art dealt with, whether it was religious or profane, still the real starting-point was the concrete bodily motive or an anecdotal interest. European art devoted itself so completely to representation and description that the Western world has almost forgotten that art may be a poetic creation capable of directly expressing spiritual and emotional impulses.

One need not have seen much of Chinese painting to perceive that pictorial art is not necessarily dependent on imitation of nature as generally understood. It may express even without the intermediary of material illusion, inspiring emotional qualities (present in all true art); it may arouse one's perception of the life and soul in things — without a complete description of their organic structure and composition. How this is accomplished in Chinese art has already been discussed in a previous chapter and there we had also occasion to observe how an extremely abstract mode of representation may serve for most intimate and living descriptions of nature. This supple vitality, this intense striving for movement, both inner and outer, plainly distinguishes old Chinese painting from the more or less abstract primitive art of Europe. There is indeed in both cases a certain denaturalization of objective forms by means of decorative conventions (or abstract deductions), but the points of departure are quite different: in the primitive art of Europe the aim is accomplished through a schematic simplification of form and a deliberate accentuation of contour, which brings out the decorative beauty of the symbols, without necessarily enhancing their expressional value. In Chinese painting the forms are sublimated into vehicles for living rhythm, which may be accomplished by means of tone as well as by line. The transformation

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here more than in the primitive art of Europe is a conscious inner process of recasting impressions, which is intended to enhance the suggestion of movement and life. Chinese painting proves beyond question the fact (discernible also in primitive art) that the artistic life of a picture by no means depends on faithful imitation of nature or correct representation of organic form.

We have also tried to show that form as such cannot be regarded as the essential vehicle of life in art. It is in itself dead and expressionless if it is not vitalized by rhythm. Rhythm is the pulse-beat in a work of art. It transmits to the spectator those elements of inner or outer movement which inspire the artist, and by it a connexion is established with the pulse that throbs in the spectator's own organism. The more intensely we feel the rhythm in a work of art, the more is our vitality stimulated and the deeper is our feeling for the living form, the movement, nay, the whole work as if it existed in our own organism. It is through the medium of rhythm that we may enter into a work of art and experience something of the exuberance and glow of the creative energy that fired the artist's soul. If the rhythm has once taken hold of us, we are led as if by an unseen hand further and further towards the hidden springs of life from which the artist drew his inspiration; our own vitality submits to the will of the artist, we respond to his appeal and we share in some measure the joy of creation.

Through what organs this subjective merging of our own perceptive consciousness into the life of the work of art is accomplished it is not necessary to inquire here in detail; we only wish to draw attention to the fact that the sense of touch is a most important factor in the interpretation of our visual impressions. Rhythm plays however on other organs as well in our perceptive system without our always knowing how the message reaches us. But certainly the responsiveness of our own instrument is of the greatest importance. There is no lack of people to whom art makes no appeal.

If one explains the appreciation and assimilation of art in this manner, if one sees in rhythm the real instrument for the transmission of life, movement, and expression in art, then one will easily understand that the formal method of representation is not necessarily of decisive importance for the inner significance of a work of art. Rhythm can be conveyed in relatively concrete as well as in abstract form, it can be expressed by line or tone, plastically or pictorially. But it cannot be achieved by a mechanical, faithfully detailed reproduction of outer form; it must be created from within, out of the union between the artist and his motive.

The esthetic definition inherent in our conception of rhythm concerns less the relation of a work of art to its outer material subject than its

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relation to the inner motive of spiritual, emotional, or physical life, which inspired the creative faculty of the master.

As rhythm, however, according to our explanation, is a subjective phenomenon, an abstract quality, it must naturally find its best expression in modes or schools of art which are not hampered by an absorbing interest in the imitation of nature. Abstract forms of art such as architecture and ornament often display the most striking qualities of rhythm, and in pictorial art, with which we are here most closely concerned, it is certain that the importance of rhythm increases in the same proportion as the slavish dependence on material form diminishes. This relative emancipation from the bonds of material form corresponds on the other hand, as we have seen, with the evolution of the whole emotional life of the people in the direction of transcendentalism. We have quoted as examples the early Byzantine and Gothic art, two lines of artistic development which were both stirred by the emotional impulse of Christianity and which in regard to their form of expression were wholly dependent on the quality of rhythmic movement of line. An essentially religious art which seeks to rise above the sensuous world of phenomena naturally always has particular need of the vitalizing power of rhythm.

Nor is this general rule contradicted by classic art as might easily be supposed from its persistent devotion to the representation of organic form, - here rhythm was closely allied to the pursuit of balance and harmonious proportion, it was objectivized and made to serve in the demonstration of the interplay of organic forces. Its function here is perhaps less directly emotional - the spiritual atmosphere of Antiquity did not conduce to emotional exaltation - but not on that account less significant, for it is through rhythm that the life-flow and the inner structure of the ideal organism are revealed.

It is only when art entirely loses itself in representation and description that the organizing power of rhythm disappears. The creative energy is then diverted into side-channels, it sinks into the sands of scientific analysis and historical narration and is lost. The desire faithfully to reproduce material objects closes the vision to the deeper aims of art. We can see this from our own experience. If we find ourselves before a carefully worked out naturalistic picture the first thing that attracts our attention is, in nine cases out of ten, the descriptive motive, and it requires a distinct effort to get away from this purely literary or historical interest to a strictly esthetic analysis of the work. Undoubtedly the greater number of spectators will not take the trouble to do this; for them consequently art has no independent inherent value.

That which is not material is not necessarily spiritual, even in art, and emotional intoxication is indeed mostly a purely sensuous condition

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(*cf.* the art of the Baroque). The deeper spiritual qualities will be revealed rather in the harmonious relationship of soul to body, rhythm to form. During the Golden Age of Antiquity this harmonious relationship was sought in the perfect proportions and the organic form of the ideal human figure. The ancients anthropomorphized art as well as nature and looked upon the ideal man as a divine being. Thus the creations of art assumed a religious significance independent of the mythological or historical motives they represented. The subject was of little consequence in that regard; the decisive factor was the concept of immanence.

In later times when European art followed the same general current as the Antique with regard to the problem of form, the desire for anthropomorphic symbols was not elevated by the belief in the divinity of man which ensouled the creations of the highest classic period. Even the great masters of the Renaissance in their happiest moments did not attain to the same religious conviction of the immanence of the divine in nature and man. The Christian conception of nature as inherently evil and of man as a miserable sinner had already been too deeply ingrained in the minds of men to be supplanted by the ideal vision of antiquity. Man's faith and trust in objective reality were shattered, his realization of his inner identity with the soul of nature was disturbed by the consciousness of iniquity, the fear of retribution, and the yearning for redemption. It was no longer possible to find in the organic forms of the material world ideal beauty or religious and spiritual harmony. But the creative will was still directed towards corporeal anthropomorphic imagery. The outer garment was preserved even though the wearer of it was dead. Art was once for all bound down to concrete representation. Never, not even during periods of exalted emotional life, when the incitation of the Christian religion was most active, could art free itself from the insistence of material form. Even Gothic shows the same anthropomorphic tendency, though at times it did violate organic unity of form in the interest of emotion.

Western art thus in later times never attained the same spiritual value of expression as it had during Antiquity. It became in great measure a compromise when it devoted itself to religious subjects. It was never able to free itself from the dominance of the human figure as a standard of representation, because it had nothing better to put in its place. It never found the path that leads beyond the differentiations of the material world and the limitations of space towards that great rhythm which blends life with infinity.

This was the path of Chinese art. We have endeavored to point it out through the analysis of different paintings. We have seen how this Eastern art sought to pierce through the veils of the phenomenal world

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and to awake a suggestion of a purer and richer existence beyond the bounds of sensuous perception. Man is to it but as a grain of sand upon the shores of the great ocean of life, a tone in the harmony of the universe, and like all other living things he finds his artistic significance in the spiritual rhythm that flows through all that lives. His form is a symbol like all else in objective nature, but his spiritual nature is an exhaustless fount of life and beauty. In his soul is mirrored a greater and more beautiful reality than any we can behold with our eyes or perceive with our senses. There alone all limitations are dissolved, all discords harmonized. The more clearly the image is mirrored there, the deeper will be the religious value of the creation. More than this no art can reveal.

THE COLD CLEAR SPRING

From the Chinese of Li Po (A.D. 702-762)

BY KENNETH MORRIS

BLUE Night o'er the mountain wilds — but there's company here,
For the Cold Clear Spring is quietly chattering so:
A ripple and twitter of tune that I ought to know
Is caught or wrought in the rush-rimmed waters clear.
A wild little witch of a runlet, lonely and dear,
In the mountain wilds, and the wind in the pines to blow—
Night broods in the sky — but there's excellent company here
While the Cold Clear Spring is quietly chattering so.

I know — 'tis the songs I left unsung I hear —
The songs unsung and the thoughts unspoken flow
In its lilt and twitter and ripple and whispering low;
And the wind in the pines is the lutanist. — Dark and drear
Night broods o'er the mountain wilds — but there's merriment here
While the Cold Clear Spring is quietly chattering so. . . .

*International Theosophical Headquarters,
Point Loma, California*

THE YELLOW-CRANE PAGODA

From the Chinese of Ts'ui Hao (A. D. 703-755)

BY KENNETH MORRIS

HERE, by the banks of Yangtse Stream,
Of old Wang Tzu-chiao sailed away,
A-craneback, into realms agleam
Beyond the blue of night and day.
Now from the Peaks of Heaven, they say,
He sees the night-skies wandered o'er
Far under foot, by stars at play --
Only the Crane flies down no more.

Lest you should think the tale a dream,
Here stands the old pagoda grey
Watching the Yangtse flash and gleam,
Watching the green long rushes sway;
And there the white clouds drift away
Blue, silver, river, clouds and shore
Just as in old Wang Tzu-chiao's day;
Only the Crane flies down no more.

Eastward — the drear, dark forests seem
Lost in the cold blue far away;
Out of the west, o'er Yangtse Stream,
Warm little bloom-breath'd breezes stray
With whisperings sad and dear and gay
From flowery fields they fluttered o'er
This very morn, or yesterday —
Only, the Crane flies down no more. . . .

L'Envoi:

Wang Tzu-chiao's heart was fain, they say,
For Laotse's Heaven. — Oh, longing sore,
Westward *my* heart turns, night and day —
Only, the Crane flies down no more. . . .

*International Theosophical Headquarters
Point Loma, California*

REINCARNATION, AND THE COUNCIL OF CONSTANTINOPLE HELD IN A. D. 553: by the Rev. S. J. Neill

PART II

IN the former article an attempt was made to give a general outline of the state of things which existed in the early Christian Community, in order that a better idea might be formed of the causes at work during the early Christian centuries, and which led to the calling of councils, and especially the second council at Constantinople, where it is supposed by some that reincarnation was discussed and condemned.

We have seen that at first the followers of Jesus were regarded as simply Jews of a peculiar type or sect. For a considerable time they continued to be so regarded by the governors of Roman Provinces and by people at Rome. Gradually, as Gentiles were received into the new body, and its scope became more and more extended, a juster estimate was made by some of the nature and purpose of Christianity. Greek thinkers took interest in it and mingled Greek ideas and Greek philosophy with Judaism. What the United States of America presents today with elements of various kinds streaming into it from Europe and other places, that the Christian religion was in the early centuries of our era in regard to the various elements of the world of thought. We know something of what a power the Greek world had for spreading its influence in many lands. Not only in Asia Minor, but also eastward towards India, and westward to Italy and Spain did the Greek language and Greek thought find congenial homes. Rome conquered Greece, but the language and thought of Greece ruled the conquerors, so that the Greek tongue and not the Latin was for a time the chief language at the capital of the Roman Empire. One illustration of this is to be found in the fact that the New Testament was given to the world in Greek, not in Latin, and when a Latin version was made, it was produced not in Rome but in North Africa, where the Latin tongue had long been spoken. Another illustration may be found in the fact that Greek writings swamped the early Latin literature, so that we find the Greek model, and the Greek thought, permeating most of the Latin authors for hundreds of years.

But it was in Egypt, and in Alexandria, the capital of Egypt, that Greek influence was especially dominant. Whatever influence of old Egypt survived was given to the world in large measure through Greek channels; and the influence of India, and of the East generally, found in Alexandria its best channel of connexion with the western world. It is well to think of this because it helps us to understand how Christianity, a form of religion springing out of Judaism, very soon, through the in-

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fluence of St. Paul and of many others, soon transcended the limits of its origin. Jesus said he was not sent but to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. And on one occasion he even charged his disciples not to mingle with the people of Samaria, a stock of people hated by the Jews because of their foreign origin. No doubt towards the end of his ministry Jesus spoke with a universal outlook, charging his followers to make disciples of all nations, but for a time the Christian Church was a 'liberal departure' in Judaism -- a sect, like the Essenes and others. The Epistle of James affords us perhaps the best insight into the thought of the new Community at its start. Along with this we may read the first three Gospels, and the letters of St. Paul who did much to mix the spirit of the Jewish Rabbi with that of the Greek philosopher. But about the same time another powerful influence was springing up in Egypt. Egypt had long been the home of a powerful Jewish colony or settlement. In the course of time the Jews in Egypt while retaining their old religion became better acquainted with Greek than with Hebrew so that the Old Testament had to be translated for their use out of Hebrew into Greek. This was nearly 300 years B. C., and it gives us, perhaps, the first translation of any extent existing in the world. Now there arose out of this Jewish colony, if we may so call it, in Egypt, a man named Philo. This man wrote about the Old Testament, and in doing so he read into the Jewish Scriptures many ideas derived from Greek thought, and also from Eastern thought, through Greece. We mention him because of the far-reaching influence which he had on many writers after his own day. One of these was also a remarkable man called Origen, also from Egypt. Origen's influence spread far and wide, in Palestine, in Asia Minor, and elsewhere, and exists to this day, and will always exist. Now it was in large measure on account of ideas springing out of *Greek thought*, and also out of the teaching of Philo, Origen, and others, that a great many of the disputes in the early Christian Church took place. Humanly speaking they never would have taken place had Christianity not been permeated with the Greek thought and the Greek cast of mind. The tendency of the Greek mind was to '*philosophize*'; hence it is that nearly all historians maintain that Greece and not Egypt or India, or any other place, is the home of '*philosophic thinking*.' Other peoples, say these historians, may have had lofty teachings, but they were given as *teachings*, and not, strictly speaking, as the results of '*philosophizings*.' Now this spirit of philosophizing was always to express in human language the infinite, the inexpressible, the absolute; and the thing cannot be done. Hence all the trouble, hence the Councils, and disputes, and all the strife that took place afterwards, and which still exists in much of the world of thought today. The Hebrew mind was very different from the Greek.

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On the one hand it spoke of God in terms of human experience; and it also largely ignored secondary causes, except in the case of prophets and angels. On the other hand it was conscious that God could not be comprehended by the human intelligence: "Canst thou by searching find out God, canst thou find out the Almighty to perfection?" "As heaven was high above the earth, so was God above man, and his ways above man's ways." It is the fashion with some to profess to believe that the Jewish God was only a tribal deity, and to neglect all those passages which show the Hebrew thought of God as the Creator and upholder of all things, the Self-Existent and Eternal One. No doubt among the Hebrews as among peoples of today there were many who had very imperfect, very limited conceptions of God. Men in all ages and lands make God in their own image and likeness.

With the Greek it was very different. It is true he also made Gods and Goddesses after a very human fashion, but the philosophers among the Greeks were ever trying to think more and more accurately, more clearly, more logically, about things divine.

Of course the Greeks, like all men, in trying to express the Divine had to use negatives, such as Infinite, incomprehensible, immortal, and the like. This way may seem learned but it is really a cloaking of our ignorance. There is more truth, more wisdom expressed when we think of God as Light or Love, than in half the philosophies. Now as Christianity became less and less Jewish, and more and more Greek, attempts were continually being made to say what was the nature of God, and what the nature of Christ. Different minds saw the question at different angles; and the words used to express these different points of view were not universally satisfactory. Even to the same mind words had not always quite the same meaning. The attempt at nicety, at correctness of the use of words, led to disputes, and divisions, and strife.

As is well known, the matter which was deemed important above all others, and which was the most difficult to put satisfactorily in words, was the nature and person of Jesus Christ. To get some idea of this one has only to take a survey of such a voluminous work as Dorner's *History of the Development of the Doctrine of the Person of Christ*; or Harnack's many volumes of the *History of Dogma*. And these are but two works out of many. It would be impossible in a short article to go into any details of the various elements of thought which year by year and century by century gradually were mixed up with primitive Christianity. In Harnack's *History of Dogma*, in the third and fourth volumes, one gets some conception of how the Greek ideas of the Logos became incorporated into the philosophy of the Christian religion. And in Hatch's *Essays on Biblical Greek* one gets some notion of how the Greek language

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was strained to give expression to changing ideas, from the time of classical Greek, and the age of the Septuagint to that of Philo and the early Christian centuries.

One or two cases may be taken at random, such as the use of the words for 'body' and 'soul,' or 'body' and 'flesh'; or the higher and lower uses of the word soul; or *nous* and *pneuma*, mind or spirit. And perhaps the one of the most importance of all was the word *hypostasis*, substance, essence, or reality. This word includes a veritable history in itself. When we remember that it was translated into the west by the very different word *persona*, and that this word person has been used in a philosophic, as well as in a vulgar sense, we need not marvel at the troubles that arise from the 'confusion of tongues.' These remarks may serve to show that the questions which arose, and which were discussed at Councils in the early Christian centuries, are not so simple as those who have not studied these matters imagine. It should never be lost sight of that the forms of belief called creeds were not made on the spot by any man or body of men, but were declared to be the accepted teachings or belief of the majority of Christians at that time. It also should be noticed that the attempt was always made to found the teachings on the New Testament, and that in doing so Greek words had to be used. We have to ask: "How or in what sense were they used?" Were they used as by Plato or Aristotle, or by the Septuagint, or as by Philo, or by later writers? This is important, for Dr. Hatch concludes that "the endeavor to interpret Pauline by Philonean psychology falls to the ground."

These were some of the elements at work, some of the difficulties to be met during the first three centuries and afterwards. And the first general or oecumenical council, that held at Nicaea in 325, had to discuss, and if possible, settle some of these problems which arose because Greek thought had been interwoven with the New Testament writings.

The Council of Nicaea was convoked by the Emperor Constantine, and the chief matter of debate was the terms to be used in expressing the Godhead, the nature and person of Christ, and of the Holy Ghost. A man called Arius, a presbyter of Alexandria, held that there had been a time when Christ was not; and that he was a *creature*. He held, however, that Christ had a pre-existence, and that by him the worlds were made.

Arius was represented, twelve centuries later, by Socinus, and to this day by Unitarians. The Council of Nicaea condemned Arius, and the form of words which it drew up has been accepted in all lands and all centuries till today as the orthodox Creed, by Roman Catholic, Greek Church, and Protestant. Of course the Nicene creed was enlarged with time, until we reach the modern developments such as the 'Westminster Confession of Faith,' — probably the high-water mark at creed formulation.

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In all this mingling of thoughts from East and West many of the ideas familiar to Theosophists were discussed. And it would be interesting to try and find both points of similarity and points of contrast between the orthodox wording of statements about the Eternal, and about manifestation; and statements, say by Gnostics, Arians, and the Theosophical text-books of today.

Of course the fundamental thought of all ages is, "What *is* Being, and how does it manifest?" Is the universe Spirit only, and is what we call the material universe only Mâyâ, only illusion? According to the modern Theosophical teaching as given by H. P. Blavatsky in *The Secret Doctrine* and other books, manifestation is periodic — Days and Nights of Brahmâ. All the manifested universe returns to the unmanifest at Universal Pralaya. Then the Dawn of a new period is produced by the Unmanifested Logos which having produced the Manifested Logos returns into the bosom of the Eternal. From the Manifested Logos all the Universe is produced stage by stage downward; and man himself is a microcosm of the Great Macrocosm. Man is now on seven planes of the universe. The Âtman, the God in man, is the inmost or highest, and is essentially One. This is the real basis of all real unity — the Brotherhood of Man, and the Unity at last of all things in the Eternal. "Trailing clouds of glory do we come from God who is our home" says Wordsworth. Now the early Christians starting on a Judaistic basis of thought, and then becoming interpenetrated with Greek thought, tried to combine the two. The terms used in the New Testament were taken by Greek thinkers and made to correspond with Greek philosophy from Plato to Philo and Origen.

In all this arduous struggle to define and express the Infinite and Inexpressible there was *strangely lacking any clear conception of man himself*. Therefore when the disputants in the early centuries spoke of the human nature, or of Christ's taking on him the 'flesh,' or of 'body and soul,' there was a lack of definition. Various views were held. One of the earliest was that as the Logos, or Christ, could not become defiled with matter, therefore the physical body of Christ was only an appearance — only seemed to be, hence these believers were called 'Docetae,' thought by some to be derived from the Greek word *dokein*.

Then there were different views as to Christ having a human soul in conjunction with the Divine soul or Logos; or only a Divine soul in a human body. Along with this was the problem of the *Hypostasis*, the most difficult of all, and made more so, unfortunately for after ages, by the rendering of this term by the word *person*, meaning a mask. According to the orthodox party there were three persons in the God-head, all equally infinite in every way. Also in Christ there were two

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natures united in the one person. The word person is to be read hypostasis. Some have tried to find analogies to illustrate this union of persons, and of natures: such as the three sides of a triangle; or light, heat, and energy in a ray of light; but all confess that no material thing will illustrate quite correctly the Infinite.

Perhaps the word 'Aspect' as used by H. P. Blavatsky will come the nearest to represent the ancient use of *hypostasis*. But he would be a rash philosopher who would attempt to lay down accurate terms, or to state anything as a finality.

It was this attempt for a finality that made other Councils follow that of Nicaea. Some one point or other had to be added, or made clearer. Or some one had taught things heretical, and he must be tried. So there were synods, professedly oecumenical Councils, held at Constantinople in 381; at Ephesus in 431; at Chalcedon in 451; then there was the celebrated second Council at Constantinople in 553, at which some have thought the doctrine of reincarnation was condemned.

PART III

Now we have attempted to give an idea, however imperfect, of the current of thought which had moved through the early Christian centuries; and to explain why it was exceedingly improbable that reincarnation was ever so much as mentioned.

It is true pre-existence was often taught, but that is not the same as reincarnation.

If Origen was mentioned, and if some of his teachings were condemned at this Council, it was not so much the doctrine itself, as the man who was aimed at because of other than dogmatic grounds.

We say, 'On other than dogmatic grounds,' and this is the truth. For if Origen had been a little man and his bishop of Alexandria a great man, instead of the reverse, then, most probably, there would have been no case of heresy, no persecution of Origen and none of the long years of trouble afterwards. But Origen was a very great man, one of the greatest in history. He was the pupil of Pantaenus, after that teacher returned from India. He was also a pupil of Ammonius Saccas, and probably knew much of what was to be known then of Theosophy. This was the real cause of that opposition started by his bishop, and kept up by other small vain men. Only, in this case, as in so many similar cases, the real cause of the opposition was hidden from sight, and other causes put forward. One of these was that Origen had taken a too literal meaning out of a passage of Scripture — *Mat.* 19, 12. Other objections were because he gave a too fanciful interpretation to Scripture and was not literal enough! Others were that he taught the pre-existence of souls,

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and the restitution of all things, and that the planets were inhabited worlds. In fact, as we might say, Origen was much nearer the truth than his adversaries. But as an illustration of how difficult it is to be wholly in advance of one's surroundings, Origen taught the resurrection of the body. However, we have here one of the great lessons of all history — a man so far in advance of his time in many respects, who was a disciple of the ancient wisdom; who left many illustrious followers; and who also powerfully influenced all theological thinkers since — this man is set on by his bishop, and some other nobodies, as the result of wounded vanity, and was banished. And afterwards he is denounced by certain bigoted and narrow-minded monks. This led to dispute and bloodshed; and the famous 'Three Chapters'; and to the 5th Council at Constantinople, held under the Emperor Justinian.

When we think of Justinian and the Council of Constantinople there rises before the mind a great variety of pictures. We see the old Roman world slowly changing and passing away, and new States in Europe rising in its place — the forerunners of the nations of modern Europe. We see Rome enervated as the result of riches gathered from all the conquered provinces. We see the Papacy on the banks of the Tiber gradually rising as old Rome slackens its grip on power. The transference of the Seat of Government to Constantinople no doubt sensibly aided the growing power of the Bishop of Rome. Then there were the varied fortunes of northern Africa, of Spain, and of Gaul, and of the East: while all the time the tribes of northern Europe, and of Russia, that pressed into Europe, were slowly hemming in and crushing the frontier of the Roman Empire; encircling it with a strip of barren land which no man dared to cultivate; and consequently making the Roman taxation all the heavier on other portions. We see the Christian Church after nearly 300 years of persecution rising to be the dominant religion of the Roman world; and coming very near at one time being officially recognised (as Nestorian) in China. Then we see the rise of differences of opinion in regard to the way of stating articles of faith, and the consequent weakening of the Spirit of Christianity, and the weakening to that extent of the Roman Empire. This afterwards made the progress of Mohammedanism easier. These facts help us to understand many things. The Roman emperors had on their hands a political task complicated by hot religious controversies. Naturally their aim was to produce peace, to bring the contending factions together, and if possible to harmonize them. Or, if this could not be done, to get the decision of the majority and endeavor to make that the law of the State. This was the position of Justinian, this was why the Council of Constantinople was called together in 553. But the Emperors were not always successful. And the wisest men were

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not always the leaders of a majority, too often the reverse. In the great field of the world the tares oftentimes choked the wheat. Majorities are not always right. And the Christian Councils, in too many cases, were not much in advance of a noisy political meeting where all want to speak at once, and none cares to listen.

Speaking of Justinian and of his reign, the historian Milman remarks on the contrast between the man and the empire during his reign. As a man he united in himself the most opposite qualities, "insatiable rapacity and lavish prodigality, intense pride and contemptible weakness, unmeasured ambition and dastardly cowardice." And yet during his reign the Roman Empire seemed to put on something of its ancient strength. The great generals Belisarius and Narses lead the Roman legions to victory from the confines of Persia to Italy and northern Africa. The Vandal and Gothic kingdoms give way before the generals of Justinian. Not satisfied with martial undertakings the Emperor embarks on at least two other important enterprises; that of legislator and of theologian. "He aspires," says Milman "to be the legislator of mankind; a vast system of jurisprudence embodies the wisdom of ancient and imperial statutes, mingled with some of the benign influences of Christianity, of which the author might almost have been warranted in the presumptuous vaticination, that it would exercise an unrepealed authority to the latest ages." Speaking of the legal work known as the *Pandects* of Justinian, the writer in the *Encyclopedia Britannica* says: "It is by far the most precious monument of the legal gains of the Romans, and indeed, whether one regards the intrinsic merits of its substance, or the prodigious influence it has exerted and still exerts, it is the most remarkable lawbook the world has seen." It should be noted here, however, that we possess very little information as to the legal knowledge possessed by Justinian. Just as the generals Belisarius and Narses were the cause of the Roman victories, so Tribonian and other lawyers did the work of reading and marking extracts of 2000 treatises for the *Pandects*.

In regard to Theology, the other field in which Justinian aspired to fame, he was not so fortunate. Theology is not always a safe ground for amateurs to dabble in — the dabbler may suffer, and the theology may suffer still more. Like the "most high and mighty Prince James" whose name adorns the preface to the 'authorised version' of the Bible, Justinian wished to combine the spiritual with the political. It was not enough to codify or to formulate laws for mundane affairs; he must legislate for the kingdom of heaven also. The result was lamentable.

The peculiar character of Justinian must be continually kept in mind if one is to get any sort of correct clue to several things in his reign. He was something of an ascetic in regard to food, drink, and sleep, but

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at the same time very dissolute, if Procopius is to be believed. He was fond of building churches and hospitals, but was not so careful in the means used to raise the money for such purposes. To this man belongs the lasting stigma of having in 529 closed the schools of Greek learning at Athens. He also enacted that all pagans and heretics should be excluded from civil or military office. The banished teachers of the Greek schools at Athens went to Persia hoping to find a congenial home there, but were soon glad to return to Greece, where they were allowed to live unmolested, owing to the Persian king having obtained an agreement to that effect with Justinian. We now come to one of the strangest and most pivotal points in the history of the time. Justinian had raised his wife Theodora to be partner with him in the empire. And from all accounts she was the power behind the throne, as were the generals Narses and Belisarius, in a military sense. Now Theodora and Justinian held two opposing views as to the Council of Chalcedon, the last general Council; and some writers have supposed that this outward opposition of views was a thing agreed on by the Emperor and Empress, as a matter of State policy! Anyhow, Justinian upheld the Council of Chalcedon, but Theodora did not. She was a Monophysite, or a believer that Christ had only one nature, a position held to be heretical by the Council -- the orthodox position being that in Christ there are two natures in one person. The Empress had a strong following and managed to have Anthimus, an enemy of the Council of Chalcedon, appointed Patriarch of Constantinople. About this time Agapetus the Bishop of Rome came to Constantinople on a political mission on behalf of the Gothic King Theodahat. Agapetus failed in his mission, but he, with the help of the Catholic party at the Capital, brought a charge against Anthimus whom the Empress had made Patriarch. Anthimus was deposed, but Agapetus died at Constantinople soon after. The Bishop of Rome had an archdeacon named Virgilius. Theodora secretly approached him, offering him money and support to make him bishop of Rome, on the secret understanding that he would take her side in opposing the Council of Chalcedon. However, before Virgilius reached Rome another person named Sylverius had been chosen as bishop. Within a year the Roman General Belisarius deposed Sylverius on the ground of having held treasonable correspondence with the enemy. Virgilius was then elected bishop of Rome, having paid Belisarius two hundred pounds in gold. The bishop, or pope, was now in the very unenviable position of being secretly bound to the Empress to oppose the Council of Chalcedon, while as bishop of Rome he was obliged to uphold that Council! All this it is necessary to know in order to follow the strange course of events at the General Council of Constantinople some years afterwards. The im-

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mediate cause, or course of events, which led to the calling of the Council of Constantinople was a dispute in Palestine between opposing sets of monks there. There was a *new Society* which favored the teachings of Origen. Against this there were some other schools of monks that were bitterly opposed. There was much fighting resulting in bloodshed. The Patriarchs at Antioch and Jerusalem could not put down the fighting, and the emperor Justinian was called upon to settle the disputes. Such a theological position was after the desire of his heart. He at once entered, not as a judge but as a disputant, and published a letter in which he took the side against Origen. In this letter he referred to certain teachings which he claimed to be either extracted from the writings of Origen, or *inferred from them!* And then he declared that these doctrines of Origen were borrowed from Plato and Mani, the founder of the Manichaeans. Now, most people of sense will consider that borrowing an idea from Plato is very far from being derogatory. But what shall we say of the ignorance of Justinian that could permit him to speak of Origen borrowing from Mani, seeing that Origen was born about 185 A. D. and Mani not till about 215 A. D.! However, Justinian was emperor, and no doubt the orthodox party, whose cause he espoused, was strong. The emperor not only launched ten anathemas on his own account against Origen, but called upon Mennas the Patriarch of Constantinople to assemble a special synod to judge the case — which, of course, under these circumstances, simply meant agreement with what the emperor had already written. Probably in 543, Mennas called the Synod, which was known as a *home (endemousa)* synod, and had no claim to be of much authority. Indeed, few of the so-called ‘General Councils’ were anything more than a gathering of those clergy in that province or part of the world. The ‘Home Synod’ of 543 under Mennas passed fifteen anathemas against Origen or anyone who believed as he did. Neither in these nor in the previous ten anathemas fulminated by Justinian is there any reference to reincarnation. Some of the other points in these anathemas which are now most likely to provoke a smile are the ones that apparently were the things most deserving of condemnation; such as: “If any one says or thinks that at the resurrection human bodies will rise in a spherical form, and unlike our present form, let him be anathema.” And, “If anyone says that the heaven, the sun, the moon and the stars, and the waters that are above the earth have souls, and are reasonable beings let him be anathema.” And, “If anyone thinks or says that the punishment of demons and of impious men is only temporary, and will one day have an end, and that restoration will take place, let him be anathema.” These are extracted from the ten anathemas pronounced by the emperor. The fifteen anathemas pronounced by the synod after-

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wards, are on much the same lines, but are too wordy to give here, except the first one which reads: "If anyone maintains the legendary pre-existence of souls, and the fanciful apocatastasis [restitution of all things] let him be anathema."

This is the nearest reference to anything like reincarnation; but it is not that, it is simply pre-existence. It may be safely said that neither in this nor in any of the early Councils, as far as we have records, was reincarnation condemned, or even discussed. The main current of thought during the early centuries, had to do with very different problems.

These anathemas of the *Home Synod of 543* got mixed up with the records of the *General Constantinople Council of 553*; and by some have been regarded as part of the minutes of that Council. This seems to have been an evident mistake. The Council of Constantinople was called for an altogether different purpose, *viz.*: to discuss the 'Three Chapters.' Its finding has relation to those 'Three Chapters,' as we should naturally expect. To suppose that this General Council, called for this avowed purpose, should go back to a 'Home Synod' held in 543, which met for a quite different purpose, seems absurd, and incredible.

The supposition becomes all the more incredible when we know that the secret mover to call this Constantinople Council was Theodore Ascidas the Archbishop of Caesarea in Cappadocia; and that his object was to divert the attention of Justinian from launching anathemas against Origen, whom he venerated, to quite different subjects, *viz.*, what is known as the 'Three Chapters.' He knew that the Emperor was anxious to bring a body of people, the Acephali, into conformity with orthodoxy. So he persuaded the Emperor that their opposition was not so much to the Council of Chalcedon as to certain Nestorians such as Theodoret and Ibas. If these were condemned, along with the reputed father of Nestorianism, Theodore of Mopsuestia, the Acephali might be won over. The device was successful. The Emperor was called off from his attack on Origenists to attack Nestorians.

The Emperor at once issued an edict in which he condemned Theodore of Mopsuestia and his writings, Theodoret's writings in favor of Nestorius, and a letter from Ibas to a Persian named Maris. This letter had severely condemned the famous or infamous Cyril of Alexandria, but the orthodoxy of the matter of the letter had not been questioned by the Council of Chalcedon.

This action of Justinian, which he supposed might bring harmony, produced quite the opposite result. To condemn persons who had died in the full communion of the Catholic Church was held by many to be beyond the power of the Emperor or any body of men. Hence, while some of the Eastern bishops agreed to the edict (those who did not were

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banished), the African bishops, less under the influence of the Emperor, protested. The Roman, or Western Church, also refused to sign. The bishop of Rome, Pope Virgilius, was summoned by the Emperor to Constantinople where he was detained for over seven years. The Pope refused to attend the Constantinople Council, and wrote again and again defining his position. But he had entered into a secret agreement with the Emperor to uphold the Emperor in condemning those mentioned in the 'Three Chapters.' This agreement Justinian made public! The arrest of the Pope was ordered. He took refuge in a Church under the altar, and when the soldiers tried to pull him out by the feet and by the hair he clung so firmly that the altar was like to fall. This caused such an outcry to be raised that even the Praetor thought it wise to desist. Much else of a lamentable nature took place in regard to Virgilius, but that is foreign to the subject in hand.

The Council of Constantinople, 553, discussed the 'Three Chapters,' and of course came to a finding in agreement with the wishes of Justinian. In the eleventh chapter the name of Origen is mentioned along with a number of others whom the Council repudiates, but no charge is made against him. Some maintain the name to be the insertion of a later age.

A word of explanation may be given as to the sense in which the term 'tria capitula,' or three chapters, is to be understood. It usually means articles or propositions, but in this case it means:

1. The *person* and *writings* of Theodore of Mopsuestia.
2. The *writings* of Theodoret against Cyril of Alexandria.
3. The *letter* of Ibas to Maris.

Dr. Philip Schaff, the historian, remarks that much confusion has been caused by this unusual sense in which the term is here used. He also says, and very truly: "Thus was kindled the violent controversy of the *Three Chapters*, of which it has been said that it has filled more volumes than it was worth lines."

A study of these early centuries leaves the strong conviction that the so-called guides of the Church were in not a few cases the chief cause of most of the trouble into which the Church fell. There were no doubt many upright and self-sacrificing bishops, and the mass of the common members seems to have been, on the whole, animated by a right spirit; but too many of the clergy were moved by a love of victory over some one whose views differed slightly from their own. And it goes without saying, that where there is an over-ruling ambition, trouble for the ambitious one, and for others, is certain. The course of evolution seems to move slowly but it is sure.

"Yet I doubt not through the ages one increasing purpose runs,
And the thoughts of men are widened with the process of the suns."

FIESOLE AND ITS INTERESTING ASSOCIATIONS:

by Carolus



WARCHI, an Italian historian of medieval times, wrote:
“Not more than two miles distant from Florence shines Fiesole, once a city, now a fruitful hill. Of a truth the position on this charming hill is so pleasant and delightful, that the fable about its being built by Atlantas under a constellation which bestows peace of mind, repose of body, and piety of heart, seems to be true.”

For centuries Fiesole was a serious rival to Florence; the former was by far the older, being an Etruscan city of importance long before the Roman conquest. Florence was at first only a small trading village belonging to Etruscan Fiesole, but it gradually became a municipium, or Roman city. Fiesole took the part of Catiline in his struggle against Antony; after being defeated by the Romans it had to yield in importance to the newly established Roman city of Florence. It stood a long siege by the Goths and is said to have been rebuilt by Attila, who destroyed Florence.

The Roman remains are very interesting and fairly well preserved.

Much more would have been left if they had not been used as a convenient quarry from which materials were taken for the building of various medieval churches in the city of Fiesole. The Theater, which is in good condition, was discovered in 1809 and fully excavated in 1872-73. An interesting museum of antiquities found in the Roman excavations stands nearby.

The town of Fiesole is famous for its splendid views over the Valley of the Arno and Florence and the surrounding towns and hills. Ruskin says:

“Few travelers can forget the peculiar landscape of this district of the Apennines, as they ascend the hill which rises from Florence. They pass continually beneath the walls of villas bright in perfect luxury, and beside cypress hedges, inclosing fair terraced gardens, where the masses of oleander and magnolia, motionless as leaves in a picture, inlay alternately upon the blue sky their branching lightness of pale rose-color and deep green breadth of shade, studded with balls of budding silver, and showing at intervals through their frame-work of rich leaf and rubied flower the far-away bends of the Arno beneath its slopes of olive, and the purple peaks of the Carrara mountains, tossing themselves against the western distance, where the streaks of motionless cloud burn above the Pisan Sea. The traveler passes the Ficsolan ridge, and all is changed. The country is on a sudden lonely.”

On the hills of Fiesole Cimabue, the first distinguished painter of medieval art, found Giotto, as a shepherd boy, sketching his sheep on a stone, and took him home to Florence, where he soon excelled his beloved teacher.

The people of Fiesole are said to be still very different from their near neighbors, the Florentines, and it is even hinted that the ancient hostility between the Etruscan and purely Roman cities has not entirely

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died away. Fiesole suffered greatly from Florentine conquests in the Middle Ages. The Fiesolans have little of the urbanity and polish of the Florentines, but are people of the hills, a reserved and rather irritable race.

Fiesole is famous for the many notable persons who have been attracted by its beauty and commanding views and its seclusion from the bustle of Florence. Nearly every one of the white, picturesque villas, embowered with roses and surrounded by tall, solemn and stately cypresses, so characteristic of the Tuscan landscape, has its history. Lilian Whiting, in her delightful 'The Florence of Landor,' says:

"On one of the picturesque hillsides between Florence and Fiesole is the Villa Landor which is said to have been built by Michael Angelo. The lawn before the villa is a large oval plot, guarded by rows of motionless cypress trees that stand like a double row of sentinels, spectral and solemn. A great gate with high, stone pillars opens into the grounds. From the west and the south side of the villa there are enchanting views of the Val d'Arno, with gem-like glimpses of Florence gleaming in the heart of the valley. The location is one of the choicest in the environs of Florence. The sunset panorama over the Arno, with the heights of Bellosguardo and San Miniato in the distance; the purple mountains, changing through all the hues of rose and violet shades, crowned with the ancient town of Fiesole from which an Etruscan town looks down; the luminous air, shimmering in a thousand opalescent lights — contribute to form a poetic atmosphere in which Landor could dwell as in a majestic harmony. Noble thought and lofty vision might well be the daily companions of one thus fittingly enshrined. 'Milton and Galileo give a glory to Fiesole even beyond its starry antiquity,' wrote Leigh Hunt; 'nor is there, perhaps, a name eminent in the annals of Florence with which some connexion cannot be traced with the ancient town.'"

There is hardly a spot within easy walking distance of Fiesole which does not preserve the memory of some illustrious name or some romantic deed. Michael Angelo was born close by, in the village of Settignano; Machiavelli had a house in Fiesole; Boccaccio laid the scenes of his *Decameron* on the sides of the Maiano stream; Dante lived on the river Mugnone. Lorenzo the Magnificent lived and died in a villa embosomed in gardens on the slope of the hill of Fiesole. Among the radiant band of scholars, poets, artists and philosophers surrounding that illustrious tyrant, and associated with Fiesole in that way was the noble humanist, philosopher and poet, Pico de Mirandola. Lorenzo de' Medici wrote, "There are few men for whom I entertain such an affection and respect as for Pico." Dr. Sirén says:

"His intelligence was not satisfied even by the addition of the regular Platonic studies to those of Christendom. He penetrated into the esoteric systems of the Oriental religions, and was among the first Western students who, in recent times, tried to interpret the symbolic writings of the *Kabala*. In his indefatigable strivings to reach the foundations of the various forms of religion, to find the unity in widely separated philosophic systems, his conception of the worth and possibilities of the human soul was greatly enlarged."

—*The Theosophical Path*. Vol. III p. 374

"Pico afterwards resided in Florence, where he had a true friend and protector in Lorenzo de' Medici. The influential Medicean prince even tried to prevail upon the Pope to rescind his

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condemnation, but in this he did not succeed. Not until later, after his death, were Pico's writings declared harmless.—p. 379

“His whole efforts were now devoted to becoming a helper on both spiritual and material lines, through the application of his science and unusual knowledge of human nature to the welfare of others, and of his material wealth to the relief of want and suffering. When he himself was unable to seek out the needy ones, he commissioned a friend to take food and money to those who lacked the most. He spent a peaceful and retiring life. The following significant lines of Lorenzo de' Medici show this:

‘The Prince of Mirandola lives here, in our neighborhood; he passes an unostentatious, holy existence; he avails himself only of the absolute necessities of life. In my eyes he is a truly ideal character.’

“Pico writes:

‘Pain and sorrow seize me when I see those who call themselves philosophers hunting after reward and payment. He who is striving for gain, he who is not able to bridle his ambition, can never get knowledge of the Truth. Frankly and freely I can say that I never turned to philosophy with any other motive than to serve it. The hope of recognition or reward did not attract me to it. The evolution of the soul and the knowledge of the truth I desired to have been my sole aims. My desires were concerned with the acquirement of the Truth, and I put my whole soul into my efforts to find it. I relinquished the common cares of the day, and devotion to private and public matters I considered unimportant in comparison with that. . . . Deep knowledge endowed me with philosophy to make my own conscience and not the opinion of the multitude the judge of my actions.’—p. 379

“Pico, like many other of the most enlightened minds of the age, was convinced that an original, common, basic religion can be found, whose truths are obscured by creeds and dogmas. He tried to extract the original living meaning in the teachings of the Christian Church, and to show the correspondences with other religious forms. He believed that the Trinity and the Incarnation of the divine in man were plainly expressed in the *Kabala*. According to Pico, spiritual knowledge was revealed to mankind by great Personages, who arose from time to time, and proclaimed the truths in various forms in consonance with the development of their age. Among such Teachers, he said, were Moses, Plato, and Christ. Each of those Teachers have often employed forms and allegories which are not very easy to understand. According to what Plato writes to Dionysius they did so intentionally: that one should only utter his thoughts about the highest and ultimate things in obscure terms, so that what one wishes to impart to initiated friends may not be understood by the uninitiated also.

“Nor can Moses' writings be understood except in the light of older and more primitive religions. The words and images in *Genesis* are like beautiful vessels which conceal precious wines within them.”—p. 380



“SELF-CONSCIOUSNESS belongs alone to man and proceeds from the SELF, the higher Manas. Only, whereas the psychic element (or *Kâma Manas*) is common to both the animal and the human being — the far higher degree of its development in the latter resting merely on the greater perfection and sensitiveness of his cerebral cells — no physiologist, not even the cleverest, will ever be able to solve the mystery of the human mind, in its highest spiritual manifestation, or in its dual aspect of the *psychic* and *noetic* (or the *mânasic*), or even to comprehend the intricacies of the former on the purely material plane — unless he knows something of, and is prepared to admit the presence of, this dual element.”— H. P. BLAVATSKY