

THE THEOSOPHICAL PATH

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“Bhante Nâgasena,” said the king, “are there any who die without being born into another existence?”

“Some are born into another existence,” said the elder, “and some are not born into another existence.”

“Who is born into another existence, and who is not born into another existence?”

“Your majesty, he that still has the corruptions is born into another existence; he that no longer has the corruptions is not born into another existence.”

“But will you, bhante, be born into another existence?”

“Your majesty, if there shall be in me any attachment, I shall be born into another existence; if there shall be in me no attachment, I shall not be born into another existence.”

“Your are an able man, bhante Nâgasena.”

— Translated from the *Milindapañha*, by Warren

RELIGION AND RELIGIONS

H. T. EDGE, M. A.

FHEOSOPHY has always been, and must ever continue to be, the earnest champion of Religion. For Religion is man's consciousness of those supreme powers and intelligences which govern all life and the universe; it is his recognition of the fact that duty, honor, loyalty to truth, compassion, stand superior to all selfish passion, and constitute the necessary breath of human life. But religions and creeds are imperfect instruments, which change from time to time. Starting full of life and useful vigor, they gradually become old and incrustated with conventions and dogmas; so that, instead of accommodating themselves to the growth and expansion of man, they may act as deterrents.

There is ever more and more turmoil in the churches, as the ministers and their flocks recognise how inadequate the old forms have proved for the present needs of humanity; and yet how necessary it is that the spirit of Religion itself should never be suffered to wax dim or die out. Christianity has been handled very severely by many of its most influential exponents; but their hope, for the most part, is that their severe criticisms may not destroy it but purify it. They are trying to convince themselves and others that Christianity may prove after all to be the supreme and final revelation. They admit that Christianity during its history of well-nigh two millenniums, has somewhat fallen short; and that it has not only failed to prevent much violence and injustice, but has often promoted these evils. It did not prevent the late war nor mitigate it after it had started. It is full, they say, of antiquated and false science and outworn beliefs. But they still hope that, with these excrescences pruned away, Christianity may prove the saving power of humanity and take its place supreme among religions. They point to the Gospels, and particularly to the sayings of Christ in the Sermon on the Mount.

These sayings are indeed worthy of respect and earnest attention, and all Christians should lay them to heart; for much help and light can be found in them. Yet it must not be forgotten that the teachings of Christ in the Gospels bulk very small in comparison with the vast mass of similar teachings that are to be found in the world's scriptures taken as a whole. There is no saying of Christ which cannot be paralleled from the recorded utterances of other great spiritual teachers. Only recently in this magazine a quotation was given to the effect that the mythical hero-teachers of several races of Central and South America were

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“credited with an ethical elevation in their teachings which need not blush before the loftiest precepts of Old World moralists. . . . The doctrines of Tonapa were filled with the loving-kindness and deep sense of duty which characterize the purest Christianity. . . . The Iroquois sage, Hiawatha, probably an historical character, made it the noble aim of his influence and instruction to abolish war altogether and establish the reign of universal peace and brotherhood among men.” — DANIEL BRINTON, *Myths of the New World*

It cannot be made out that Jesus was the first to teach compassion; the numerous quotations from India, China, and many other lands, dating back to pre-Christian times, which are printed in this magazine and other Theosophical literature, prove compassion has always been the fundamental note of the purest Religion. We may justly regard Christ as a great and truly divine Teacher; but he was not the only one, nor yet the first or the greatest. If we would go back to his teachings, we should at least recognise not that he himself ever claimed them to be original, but that he frankly confessed himself to be inculcating eternal truths, revealed to the purified soul of man in all ages, and accessible to all loyal disciples ready to follow the Path.

That Path has always been the same: the Path of purity in deed and thought, by following which man rids himself of the encumbrances that hide the light from him, and achieves true Freedom — freedom to obey the everlasting moral law that is inherent in him and in all creation.

In admitting that Christianity needs reform, and in seeking for the means of its reformation, the Christian ministers always look to man himself — as indeed they must. No new and startling revelation comes thundering from the skies; and man must rely upon his own divinely-inspired Intelligence and Conscience, both in learning how to lead his present life and in giving a new interpretation to his ancient documents. Thus we see that Religion dwells eternal in the human breast, while creeds are devised by the mind.

It is not easy to see how Christianity can be changed to the extent demanded by many people, without changing it into something else altogether and taking away its distinctive character. If we deny that an entirely new dispensation was introduced by the vicarious sacrifice of a Christ two thousand years ago, we seem to knock the very bottom out of the religion. But if we insist on this doctrine, how can we hope to enlist the millions of other and older creeds? The only way is to recognise that the atonement of Christ is an eternal process, known to the great Sages and Teachers of all times, and often symbolized in allegories and mysteries in many lands. It is only human frailty that has sought to render it an exclusive privilege, bestowed upon a few and pertaining to a special brand of civilization. History tells us that the original Christianity became the subject of dispute among rival sects, and that it was turned into many strange forms, and finally converted into an ally of imperial state-

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craft. To find the vital essence of Christianity, we must go back beyond this; and we shall inevitably make the grand discovery that Religion, in its vital essence, is and always has been the same, the religions and creeds being merely local and temporal manifestations, each more or less imperfectly representing the inward spirit, each destined to the never-ceasing processes of change and growth.

But the important thing for humanity is to seize upon the vital truths of life and cease quarreling over names. We may use Christ as an exemplar in this, for he teaches plainly enough the divinity of man and how to evoke light and help from within. His teaching of the second birth, as explained to Nicodemus, is quite one of the cardinal tenets of universal Religion. When giving his sacred teachings, he speaks as the Self, using the first person, as does also Krishna in the *Bhagavad-Gitâ*. Divine sonship was taught by him as applicable to all men, and as realizable by all who would follow the Path. Jesus was a Master of Wisdom, an Initiate. Mystical interpretations of Christianity are nothing new, and such clergy as propose to adopt such an interpretation will find the field already occupied. But such interpretations cover too narrow a field, for they do not take into account other religions, and hence their teachings are too much limited by racial boundaries and colored by racial idiosyncrasies.

The Gnostics taught the mystic Christ; and their system is thought by some to have been a perversion of Christianity, when in truth it is much nearer to the original thing. The mystic Christ is the Higher Self in man, which has been 'crucified' on the 'cross' of material life, and whose destiny it is to redeem the human soul, by weaning it from its attachment to sensual life, and uniting it to its divine counterpart. Jesus came to point the Way to humanity, and his instructions are those of all the great Teachers of the Way or Path. As to the historical question, whether or not there was a man Jesus, and when he lived, there is much controversy; but it seems indisputable that some Master of Wisdom must have appeared in Palestine about the time of the opening of the Christian era, and that his work was to a considerable extent spoiled by perversions of his teachings after his departure. The influence exercised over the world for so many centuries proves that a seed was planted; and perhaps it may, even after all this time, germinate anew.

Thus we see that Religion is one and eternal, while its outer forms vary in different places and change with different ages. Religion itself must be as invariable as Man himself, for it is founded on human nature; and its outer forms must change as the nations and ages of mankind change. But we cannot subscribe to the opinion that, when all the husk has been removed and the kernel found, that kernel will be found to be Christianity. Is it not obvious that, in making this claim, we should be

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rivaling the similar claims that could be put forward by other great religions? The kernel is common to them as well. To expect that Christianity will be the creed of the whole world is like expecting to make the world talk some one of the existing languages. The world may possibly acquire a common language, but it is not likely to be any one of the languages spoken today.

The bond of religious unity is Religion, not a particular religion.

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A TEACHER

IT is a commonplace, which, however, needs continual urging, that the first attempts to reform a grave abuse lead to extreme reactions that tip the balance too far the other way. It is scarcely necessary to refer to the French Revolution, where the intelligent moderate party was at first entirely swamped by the extremists, who brought on evils not less, if of a different kind, than those before; nor to mention those food faddists, who, because our food is too rich, want us to munch wheat ears and eat raw turnips straight out of the ground; or, alternatively, to keep this mortal coil turning on an exclusive diet of raw beef and hot water.

The same thing is found in educational matters. Old methods have run into a rut and become too formal; authority has been too arbitrary; discipline and control have waned with the waning prestige of their sanctions. Everybody knows something is the matter; a good many know what is the matter; but not so many understand the cure. Extreme measures, as usual, find favor with the multitude.

This is one of the evils attending reforms. Another is the advocacy of doctrinaire methods as opposed to the practical measures of experience. To sit in a chair and dictate a theory for the use of the man of affairs on the field of action is more convenient for the chairman than for his agent; for the difficulties of the former are theoretical; those of the latter, practical. The former deals with men in the abstract; the latter with men of flesh and blood. Thus in education we find the tendency to impose an office-made system on the real teacher with the real children.

It is proposed to intrust children to the guidance of 'nature'; that is, to the guidance of an abstraction which may look very well on paper but cannot be trusted to act up to schedule. If nature is the sum-total of operative cosmic intelligences, then man, as one of these intelligences,

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is a part of nature. One may be excused for not seeing offhand just why it is natural for a bee to make honey, and unnatural for a man to toast his bread. Why the help of a superior human mind should be regarded as an unwarrantable interference with nature, is hard to grasp. We do not deny our babies the help they need from our superior intelligence in their tenderest years; if we left them to 'nature' then, 'nature' would probably soon relieve us, by their absence, of all care for their presence. This kind of 'nature' is a hard stepmother; and we surmise that even the birds in their nests take more care of their offspring than that.

Why, then, should we deprive our children of the help we owe them when the question of the cradle gives place to that of the schoolroom? Or just where should we begin to leave them to 'nature'?

It is obvious that children cannot, any more than men and women, be free to do exactly what each one likes, without infringing on each other's rights and comforts. Those primary instincts, which, as we understand, go to make up what is called 'nature,' are found in practice to be mainly selfish, and can only be kept from doing mischief by the exercise of a superior control, emanating from a superior intelligence, and brought to bear by a paramount authority. If such superior influence can be found in the children themselves, and can be brought into operative effect by simply letting them alone, well and good; but can it? Try it in the infant schoolroom and see. And we gather from reports that certain actual teachers of one of these doctrinaire systems have discovered that they cannot work if their hands are to be held for them and their movements guided; and so are trying to cut loose from the office and be guided by their own actual experience.

And what they are probably finding out is that the child does not want to be left to nature.

The child wants to be taught: not merely the three R's, but also how to behave. He does not know this instinctually; his instincts are wayward, selfish, passionate. If left to them, he may have a few brief pleasures, but a thorn to every rose; and it is quite certain that he will grow up inefficient and unhappy. To leave him to 'nature' is to deny him the rights due from parentage.

Discipline and order are boons which even the lowliest creatures adore; much more man, with his fine appreciations. Harmony is the life-breath of the soul. Because we may often have failed to secure these boons for our children, are we therefore to abandon discipline and order altogether? Because we have made mistakes, are we to make worse ones? This would be a foolish yielding to petulance where patience is needed.

What *is* the matter with education? Mainly and broadly, it is that

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we have starved it of the life of the spirit. Whereunto have our energies been devoted? To all those multitudinous activities that go to make up what is called modern civilization. What enthusiasm has there been as to the development of character and the production of beautiful men and women? What kind of ideals of life have we held out before our children? The result is that our education has been largely a counterfeit; it has waxed enormous in form and outward machinery; it has run thin in substance. The teacher may wax enthusiastic at finding himself or herself in contact with radiant young human souls; but what chance has he or she to give utterance to those sweet and noble impulses from the higher nature, which such a sacred association prompts? There is a schedule; there are hours — half-hours; there are sixty pupils in a class. There are livings to be made, exams to pass, certificates to fill out.

Again, take the parents. How many parents have dwelt earnestly on the sacred and happy duty which is theirs in having children to initiate into life? How many have reflected that birth means the entry into earth-life of an immortal soul, with an unknown past behind it and an illimitable future before? How many have vowed that the responsibility shall entail upon them a new order in their own lives, and that they will henceforth watch with jealous care their every deed — nay even thought — lest they should mar the promise of those young lives?

So it seems that what we want is, not to give our children less care, but more. Not to leave them to a cruder 'nature' but to lead them reverently to the portals of a higher. And to be able to do that, must we not reverence and cultivate that higher nature in ourselves?

The nature of a child is, like our own, twofold — duality is the essential characteristic of man as such. Moreover, in the child the lower instincts are developed ahead of the higher; he is a little animal, as biologists admit. If turned loose in the field, he will eat deadly nightshade berries. Shall we let him or tell him not to? Is it an unwarrantable interference with nature to tell him not to eat the berries? Will all children, if left to 'nature,' pass the plate or help themselves first? Will not some of them help themselves off other people's plates? Is it advisable to let them acquire this habit of selfishness? Will it conduce to their future happiness and earn us their gratitude? We can imagine such a child, in after years, striving in vain to forgive that neglect and resolving never to repeat it towards his own children. Looking back on our own past lives. . . .

More *intelligence* needs to be brought to bear on the educational problem. A ray of *Sophia*, the wisdom from on high, must be shed. The wisdom emanating from the microscope and scalpel of biology — we will not call it names, but is it quite the wisdom from above? It has put into our minds an abstraction called 'nature,' based on imperfect observation

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of the facts. In this view of the facts, reflexes, subconscious impulses, and a miscellaneous assortment of biological and psychological factors with technical names, have played a predominant part over intelligent study of human character. History has retired into the background before science. We have gotten a misleading idea of human nature. On this we have tried to found educational systems. They do not work. What wonder!

Human nature is dual, and essentially dual; man is not dual by accident, but he is dual because he is man. Neither god nor animal, he is both in part, and neither in entirety. What religion teaches not that man is a portion of the universal divine spirit incarnate in an animal body? And just because we have a science that does not concern itself with the divine — or, shall we say, the human — part of man; but confines itself to his animal side; is it to be expected that the facts will bow the knee and forthwith accommodate themselves to our theories?

If we neglect to feed the higher nature of our child, we shall leave it to the mercy of the lower nature. This might be all very well upon two conditions: (1) That we desire to rear a young barbarian; (2) that the brains of the child can be trusted not to interfere with the natural and harmless working of his instincts. Neither of these conditions obtains. As to the latter, it seems necessary to point out that man differs from the animals in having brains; and that therefore what is natural and harmless in the animals becomes vicious and perverted in man. We cannot prevent our children from using their brains. The question for us is whether they are to use them in the service of the animal instincts or as ministers to their higher nature.

Discipline, then, is essential. It is loved and expected by the child. But the angry arbitrary restraint of a parent or teacher who does not base his edicts on any principle and does not carry them out in his own conduct — this is not discipline. Discipline is the control of the lower nature by the higher; and the function of the parent and teacher is to show the child how to invoke this discipline, to help him with strength where he is weak; to direct his steps till he can walk alone.

But we can no more separate the educational problem from the whole problem of life in general, and treat it separately, than we can cure a local complaint when the patient's whole system needs overhauling. The educational problem is a part of the whole problem grappled with by Theosophy. Hence we must look for the spreading of Theosophical ideals and principles, that the foundations may be laid for better ideals of education, resulting in better practical achievements.

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C. J. RYAN



VERY diverse opinions are popular upon the subject of progress; some thinkers go so far as to deny that there is anything worth calling progress on earth; others point with pride to modern scientific discovery and mechanical improvement and call these progress. Several distinguished university professors have lately written articles or delivered much-quoted lectures on progress, and the unexpected results of the great war have attracted great attention to the subject. A few suggestions as to its meaning from the Theosophical standpoint seem to be in order.

Without mincing matters, Theosophy, as I understand it, agrees with those philosophers who declare that much that is called progress is merely change, and that very few of the changes on the material plane are of real importance in the long run except those which positively help in the evolution of the soul. There is a fine aphorism well known to students of Eastern philosophy: "Nature energizes for the soul's experience." If this is seriously considered, meditated upon, a new light breaks upon the mind, and many obscure events find their explanation. We are very slow to learn. Nature tries time and again to hammer some decency into us, but without much result. Then she tries another method and another, and after a while harks back again to the first according to the law of cycles, so universal.

What a shout of delight was raised when means of communication became easy; sanguine prophets declared that now surely we should become so delightfully united in the bonds of commercial interchange that the millennium would come before its time! Can anyone honestly say, after a dispassionate survey of the rivalries, the jealousies, and the enmities among nations and classes, that human nature has been improved by the progress in transportation? Perhaps nature will throw us back again to a greater isolation and let us try that condition again. Let us recollect that intercommunication is not a modern invention, hitherto undreamed of. It largely disappeared in the Dark Ages, of course, but before then many countries had excellent means of communication. Take for example the new discoveries in Asia Minor. Professor Sayce, of the British Museum, has recently described the republican colony in eastern Asia Minor, a distant province of the great Babylonian Empire of 4300 years ago, whence many tablets, consisting of business letters and legal documents, have given us a clear idea of the high civiliza-

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tion of that remote age. We learn that there were excellent roads throughout the country, through which the mails were carried regularly from city to city. They had a system of bank checks which were sent and honored just as they are today. Even the women had equal rights with men, and an equal share in the republican government, and there was a woman's college or university in the city of Burus with faculties of 'Literature' and 'Arts.' Professor Sayce remarks:

"The old Oriental world was wonderfully like our own. It was not acquainted with the mechanical contrivances of the twentieth century . . . but on the cultural side it was on a level with ourselves, and in some respects even in advance of us. Culture, as opposed to mechanical civilization, is always confined to the few, and what is still the high-water mark of the few had already been attained four thousand years ago."

In the ancient Roman Empire, as we all know, there were splendid means of communication; even fish was brought fresh to the epicures in the capital from far distant provinces. Yet it was not long after the Fall of Rome that the learned men in Constantinople looked upon parts of Western Europe, formerly quite familiar, as mysterious, unknown, and magical lands where the most fanciful conditions prevailed. The Romans had an extensive trade with China at one time; but all knowledge of China disappeared, and when Marco Polo returned from his daring travels in Asia such was the ignorance that he never entirely convinced the Venetians that his story was true.

We cannot say that facilities for easy communication have yet done much to bring about the reign of universal brotherhood, but nature tries every method, sometimes many times, and never gives up her efforts to induce man to find his real greatness, his essential divinity.

Let us trace a few of the cyclic changes in history so as to realize more clearly what an important part they played in the race-life. The study of the past and its advanced civilizations makes the question of progress a puzzle to those who have not realized nature's method of leading the soul onward by the experiences gained in many lives on earth — Reincarnation.

In South America two definite native cycles of high civilization are well-marked; the Inca Empire, and the immensely more ancient and greater one whose impressive ruins of mighty cities and cyclopean walls in Peru and Bolivia command our wonder. Archaeologists have no definite information about the actual antiquity of the latter, but it must have flourished before the Andes were elevated to their present height, because the climate where many ruins are found is too cold, owing to the altitude, for the production of the necessary food. In the Chimcana Valley, Peru, wonderful irrigation systems have been found, and well-made pottery, decorated with beautifully modeled heads, full of humor

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and expression. From the evidence of the amount of decomposition on the surface of some of the artifacts, archaeologists have suggested that this Chimu civilization existed ten thousand years ago. Other Peruvian remains have been estimated at not less than seventy thousand or more than eight hundred thousand years old.

In Central America we are familiar with the fascinating remains of the great Maya Empire. Though we cannot yet read the inscriptions, the dates on the monuments have been deciphered, and evidently refer to events happening hundreds of thousands of years ago and more.

When the magnificent remains of advanced civilization were found on the island of Crete in the Mediterranean Sea, the law of cyclic rise and fall was strongly brought to mind. The costumes of the fashionable ladies of Crete, several thousand years B. C., were ultra-modern, with high heels and pointed shoes, tight waists, flounces, and low necks; the sanitary arrangements in the palaces were so admirable that engineers declare nothing so good was known since, until the end of the nineteenth century. Innumerable instances could be given of high culture in ancient times, did time permit, but a few remarks about the prehistoric continent of Atlantis may be added because of its bearing on the problem of progress.

As far back as human records reach, we find accounts of vanished lands upon which people once lived. The Bible story of Noah's Deluge is the most familiar of these to us, but far older accounts have been found in Mesopotamia, one of which actually gives names to several of the drowned cities. China has a similar story of the escape of the Chinese Noah, Peiru-un, and his family, from the destruction of the primeval country because of the wickedness of the inhabitants. India and Persia have the same story in their ancient religious writings. In western Europe several variations of it are found, and circumstantial accounts have come down to us from Greek authors. An industrious German scholar, Schwartz, collected sixty-four separate legends from the Old and New Worlds about the destruction of Atlantis. Madame Blavatsky says, in *The Secret Doctrine*, that if there had not been such an enormous destruction of ancient manuscripts by a Roman emperor or two, and by religious fanatics, we should have far more knowledge on the subject. The few records we possess of ancient wisdom are practically nothing in comparison with what has perished.

Since Madame Blavatsky called attention to the Atlantean world as the predecessor of ours, scientific opinion, then utterly skeptical and even contemptuous about the possibility of lands where the Atlantic now rolls, has so changed that geologists now fully accept their existence in moderately recent geological periods. The study of the ocean bed, and of the distribution of certain animals and plants, has shown the necessity of a former

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Atlantis of some kind. At a meeting of the American Philosophical Society on April 24, 1920, a paper was read describing the Middle Cambrian strata of Newfoundland, which are part of a widespread sheet of marine sediments deposited millions of years ago off the shore of the ancient North Atlantic continental land-bridge between such parts of Europe and America as were then above the sea. The writer said it was seldom that geologists discovered such clear evidence of one of these old land connexions as that presented by the fossils in these sediments and their correspondences in Europe.

The problem of human life on Atlantis has not been properly studied by science, but we have fortunately no longer to face the objection that man could not have inhabited a continent whose last vestiges perished about eleven thousand years ago, because Adam was not created then! The orthodoxy of the last century is no more. Among the reasons for believing in an Atlantean civilization two stand out prominently. Science demands a vanished territory between America and the Old World to explain the similarities between plants and animals found on both sides of the Atlantic; — very good. But there are other resemblances not to be explained except by an Atlantean linking civilization, and no reasonable objection has been offered against the possibility of human life on Atlantis in the Tertiary Period. A large number of artistic motives are found widely spread in the Old and the New Worlds whose close resemblance calls for a common origin. The idea that the Egyptian Tau-cross, the winged-globe, etc., in ancient America, the great pyramids of Mexico and other buildings, owe their Egyptian, and sometimes East-Indian, design to accidental coincidence is incredible. The mysterious serpent-mounds in North America have a counterpart in Scotland. This symbol — the serpent swallowing an egg, said to mean the winding cycles of time periodically destroying world-conditions — is widely distributed. In this connexion it is worthy of attention that among other dates recorded in the inscriptions on the Maya temples the important epoch of 8755 B. C. is found. This harmonizes with the date approximately given by Madame Blavatsky from other sources as the period of the final submergence of the last of the Atlantean Islands, a most striking event.

The second line of evidence rests upon the similarities between certain legends on both sides of the Atlantic. Not only do we find such traditions as the Flood, the creation and rejuvenation of the world, and others closely resembling Hebrew, Chinese, Babylonian, and Indian accounts of world-events, but even minor stories such as that of the confusion of tongues at the Tower of Babel. The study of the literature now available on this subject, with the assistance of Madame Blavatsky's *Secret Doctrine*, greatly strengthens the Atlantean hypothesis. The subject has only been

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mentioned further to illustrate the difficulty in assuming that progress has moved in a steady current. There are constant changes, smaller and larger cycles, risings and fallings; but the undaunted spirit of man passes onward, reincarnating according to its needs, learning this now and that then.

In Atlantis there must have been a variety of cultures, for man inhabited it for ages. In its greatest days, according to the imperfect accounts that have come down to us in Greek, Indian, and other traditions, arts and sciences reached great perfection. Some of their astronomical calculations have been preserved in the Hindû literature, and they seem to have carried warfare to a more terrible pitch of devilish ingenuity than we have. Flying-machines are frequently referred to. An Oriental writer in the British scientific magazine *Discovery* for June, 1920, gives a list of Sanskrit words in connexion with flying in airships; words for airship, aviator, to pilot an airship, and others. These were special words used in reference to artificial flying, and, as the writer points out, it is absurd to think such words would have been invented if there had been no necessity for them.

Madame Blavatsky says the early Aryans learned the art of aviation (*Vimâna-Vidyâ*, "the knowledge of flying in air-vehicles") from the Fourth Race, the Atlanteans, but they evidently lost it ages ago.

Now if progress in material affairs is a very slow process, and if the law of life proceeds in cycles of rise and fall, what about the spiritual advancement of mankind? Has religion made steady onward progress from barbaric forms of darkest ignorance to the so-called noontide blaze of modern western church theology? Or is there ground for belief in a primeval revelation of the essentials in religion? Can it be that religion has only changed in outward form according to the needs and limitations of the ages? Theosophy says that the ancient Wisdom-Religion has existed ever since man became intelligent enough to need it. Madame Blavatsky says:

"The Secret Doctrine was the universally diffused religion of the ancient and prehistoric world. Proofs of its diffusion, authentic records of its history, a complete chain of documents, showing its character and presence in every land, together with the teaching of all its great adepts, exist to this day in the secret crypts of libraries belonging to the Occult Fraternity. . . .

". . . All these exist, safe from . . . spoliating hands, to re-appear in some more enlightened age. . . ."— *The Secret Doctrine*, Introductory, pp. xxxiv-v

"There never was, nor can there be more than one universal religion; for there can be but one truth concerning God. . . .

"Thus it is that all the religious monuments of old, in whatever land or under whatever climate, are the expression of the same identical thoughts, the key to which is the esoteric doctrine."— *Isis Unveiled*, I, pp. 560-1

Man's great need has always been to learn the reality of his higher, divine nature, and the object of religion is to help him to find it. In

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finding this he discovers the truth of human brotherhood. Every founder of a great faith brought the vital message of brotherhood, and every religion has departed from it and become exclusive and sectarian in greater or less degree, and obscured by superstitions and dogmas alien to the original teachings. The simple universal truth 'to love your neighbor as yourself' means to love the divine part in both, not the selfish, animal nature; to 'do unto others as you would they should do unto you' is true because we are all brothers, united in an unbreakable bond, however we may try to ignore it and act like enemies. One might almost say that a truly progressed religion would be one that had the fewest forms.

While we must admit that this is a time of great unrest and extraordinary transition, with unknown abysses of worse things threatening on all sides, a hopeful sign is that some of the more liberal theologians are moving away from dogma towards simplification. Not long ago a 'World's Sunday School Congress' was held in Tokio at which the Rev. D. W. Kurtz, D. D., of Kansas, said:

"The proud nations of the past had fallen because they had disobeyed the law of 'survival' which is the 'law of human brotherhood'; the present world crisis is due to fear and hate and selfishness, to the lack of the spirit and practice of brotherhood: diplomacy, science, industry, force, and governments have failed to solve the human problem and create peace and good-will among men. There is a best way of living which is God's way revealed in Christ. To live right men must relate themselves properly to their fellow-men, which is the spirit of brotherhood. . ."

This is excellent Theosophy, but we should add that Jesus was not the only nor the first Teacher who set before men by his life and teachings "God's way," the true way out of our troubles — the practice of brotherhood: man has never been without the key to the situation. In the whole of the Rev. Dr. Kurtz's address as reported there is no word about dogmas, sacraments, propitiation of a jealous Jehovah by the physical sacrifice of Jesus on a material cross, but a great deal about the control of passions and baser appetites, of justice and equality, of the corruption of luxury in nations in which "there is no vision." It is plain that a few, at least, in the churches are realizing that they have made a fearful mistake in taking the shadow of dogma and ritual for the substance of religion, and that they must turn their back upon all the old superstitions that have failed to uplift the world a little bit — or retire from business and let something else take their place.

Perhaps we can broadly divide ideals of progress into two great divisions. First there is the ordinary one; we have one life to live, after death the unknown; nearly everyone is pushing, elbowing others away, for money, power, position in society, the satisfaction of personal ambition in all forms. Sage advice is given the young to curb their grosser appetites,

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to act with prudential eye to the future, so that they will more surely reach their ambitious aims. The forms of religion, social conventions, even the appearance of good-nature, are all convenient stepping-stones to personal success. In national life too there is a false ideal of progress: more territory for commercial exploitation, more political control of so-called inferior races, more luxury and more production to gorge the never-satisfied desires of the intellectualized animal side of our nature, more population of physical workers to supply these desires, larger cities with excitements to attract people from the wholesome natural country, more legislation to make us behave, more battleships and poison-gas, more lawyers and politicians, more physicians to cure our increasing ill-health, faster means of transportation, and many other things which will naturally come to mind, and which are mistaken for signs of the progress of civilization.

Leaving this dark picture, begotten by ignorance, let us look on the other side. Perhaps we should not go too far if we declare that beauty in our surroundings and in ourselves would be a true sign of progress. When the Devil said he would make the people of the nineteenth century sad and curse God he induced them to make factory towns and call that progress. Those who grew rich moved out into the suburbs, but the majority had to stay in the squalid streets. Large parts of the industrial countries are striking comments on this kind of progress. Those who have traveled in that extensive manufacturing district in England called the 'Black Country' will recollect the desolate and blasted look of the land where hardly a tree will grow. An industrialism which will reverence natural beauty and preserve it would be a sign of progress. The disappearance of war and the transmutation of the war spirit from the desire to kill and conquer other people to the effort to kill and conquer the enemy within each one's personal citadel would produce a marvelous effect. Systems of government would be reduced to the smallest limits, for the need of external compulsion, however well-meaning, proves that man has not the wisdom which does the right thing naturally. Statesmen and rulers would be simply advisers and guides, chosen and obeyed because they possessed superior insight. True progress will be marked, of course, by the diminishing of heinous crime, and by a change in our application of the word: for instance, ingratitude and selfishness, now regarded as regrettable but inevitable elements in society, will be looked upon as definite and shameful crimes against the state.

In a progressed society, Science would take a larger field of action than it does today; it would not be confined to material problems, and its greatest efforts would be directed towards the improvement of conditions which obstruct the spiritual life of man. In fact, religion and science would

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no longer be opponents but allies. When the Lost Mysteries of Antiquity are restored and a more spiritual science has discovered something of the hidden greatness in man, the craving for more complicated and ingenious mechanical processes will abate; we shall look into ourselves and find powers of research into Nature's deepest secrets only suspected today by the most intuitive. We shall be able to dispense with cumbersome instruments and machines, and science, like religion, will become immensely simpler as well as greater and more powerful.

Take the following point as a faint suggestion of the change that will come in some distant age. Years ago, Madame Blavatsky, in discussing the claims of Spiritualism, said that telepathy explained a large proportion of the phenomena. Telepathy, however, was utterly scouted by psychologists. A short time ago Professor Münsterberg of Harvard declared that telepathy was incredible, and an absurd superstition, because it was contrary to all our established science of psychology. But times have changed, and today the eminent Professor Barrett of Dublin assures the learned Congress of the Anglican Church that telepathy, or thought-transference without material means, is fully and scientifically demonstrated, and that it explains many spiritualistic phenomena, though by no means all. We do not know how to control telepathy; we do not know its laws; but we can see that in some future age it will no longer be necessary to construct complicated and expensive telephone apparatus to do what will be a normal and easy operation for every human creature.

It is a remarkable fact that the great spiritual Teachers said little or nothing about material progress. Jesus speaks of rendering to Caesar the things of Caesar, but rather suggests the detachment of our minds from worldly matters than concentration upon the development of the means of satisfying more artificial desires. Character development by discipline and interior illumination is the kind of progress the sages have urged upon mankind as the way to peace and joy. Yet they had the knowledge of Reincarnation. They knew that the conditions of their age — any age — gave all the opportunities needed for soul-development.

We may as well face the facts bravely. What are we going to put before ourselves and our children as the true aim of life, the true ideal of progress? Is it worldly prosperity and power, the god of the short-sighted and spiritually ignorant? Is it intellectual advancement, the praise of men, the glory of being known as a public benefactor? Theosophy says no; these things turn to dust and ashes, but the cup of cold water given in the name of that which is above all personal desire becomes a fountain of eternal joy. In plain language, the only progress which we can afford to spend time and thought to bring about lies in the practical application of the divine principle of Universal Brotherhood.

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“The hope of progress lies in the collective effort of humanity which is hardly conscious of its oneness as yet, and has not imagined what it might perform if it worked with one purpose and together.”—*Times Literary Supplement*, London, June, 1920

Progress consists in the putting into practice of the ideals of those purified individuals who have risen higher in the spiritual understanding of things. And the highest ideal is the attainment of Universal Brotherhood, the will of the divine on earth as well as in ‘heaven.’ Once this is attained all things will be given.

Collective effort has been tried lately in warfare; and with surprisingly successful results as we all know. How marvelous would be the results if we could try it in peace! But instantly the pressure of enthusiasm was removed, the compulsory bond of unity was broken and the old selfishness showed its evil head again. The bond was only a temporary and material and not a permanent and spiritual unification.

For true progress we must look within daringly, without flinching at what monsters we may see in the darkness, but always searching for the light that is there and that lighteth every man that cometh into the world, as a great Teacher says. The light is there; we have to purify the atmosphere to let it shine through. Then we can see utterly to destroy the evil desires beyond power of recovery.

According to the ancient wisdom the control of the restless mind, swayed in every direction by the desires, is the pathway to a true civilization. It was always taught that he who could control himself fully, impersonally, and with the welfare of others always in view, gained the power and the right to command nature because he was working in perfect harmony with the Divine Law. In that life there is no fear of death, no death, but pure joy. A few intuitive men and women throughout the ages have experienced and reported for the help of others a glorious state in which they saw ‘God’ or the Truth that is beyond all darkness. This is the kind of progress that we must strive for or else we shall have to endure the blows of karmic adjustment for weary incarnations.

Lest anyone should think that Theosophy teaches the abandonment of the ordinary duties of life and the responsibility for the improvement of mundane conditions, it must be plainly said that the reverse is the truth. From every standpoint sensible people would prefer to find a better world than this when they return in their next rebirth. But the essential thing to consider is what kind of efforts should be made to produce conditions in which it will be easier to develop the divine in man and to reduce the animal man to his proper place. These efforts will lie in the direction of brotherhood; of more kindness for all that breathes, more unselfishness, more pleasure taken in the performance of duty; and they can be made under any conceivable conditions, even under a return to a great sim-

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plicity of external living in a new phase of terrestrial experience, for we have many ups and downs before us.

Let each man and woman who feels the great and pressing need of humanity for help and light begin by setting aside the personal element from which not even the best are free, and the inner light, the intuition, will give all that is needed to guide the mind into right action. Without going outside one's simple duties, without self-conscious anxiety as to the results, this method will lead silently, in the way nature works, to a moment when progress will be found in full success, sweeping onward. And as the race is made of individuals, as they win onward to the spiritual victory, so the world makes progress.

The Theosophical Movement, active in all ages, represents the great tide or current of thought in advanced spiritual minds moving on towards the liberation of mankind from the fetters of the lower nature, and the realization of the true divine self within. The Universal Brotherhood and Theosophical Society is a body of workers, united under a Leader, for the purpose of practically helping toward those great ideals, which will, of course, when attained, mean the presence of a real brotherhood of humanity. The members find the teachings of Theosophy, which is nothing new, inspire them with a clear understanding of the nature of man and therefore with more power to help wisely. At the International Headquarters at Point Loma, California, a center has been established where the principles of Theosophy are applied to life and demonstrated to be essentially practical in every sense of the word. We believe that they can be applied with equal success in the world at large, and that real progress, evolution of the immortal in man, can be made on no other lines. We therefore invite the fullest inquiry into our activities and principles.

ART FROM A THEOSOPHICAL STANDPOINT

R. MACHELL



WRITERS on Art frequently assume that the word itself needs no definition, being perfectly intelligible to any well-educated person; but in the course of their observations it becomes evident that the term is used by them in a variety of ways with no indication of the nature of the definition adopted at any particular moment, nor any assurance that the writer has any fixed point of view. Naturally enough the more familiar the term the more difficult will be its definition, for 'familiarity breeds contempt,' and unfortunately often passes as a substitute for understanding with the average man.

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After many years of thought upon the subject, I am convinced that there must be as many interpretations of this word as there are minds to think seriously about it; and that, before attempting to write upon the subject at all, one ought to try to define one's own use of the term, without dogmatizing or claiming any finality for the definition adopted.

The popular use of the word is so vague as to be no definition at all, and adequately expresses the confusion of popular opinion on the subject. But among art-lovers we might expect to find some common standpoint from which some general view might be obtained. Yet even here we find the standpoint is so variable and so personal as to afford no common ground for study and comparison of experiences. In fact it is evident that many enthusiastic patrons of art and some serious students have never quite made up their minds as to what art really is, nor even as to what they themselves mean by the term; while many of them have movable viewpoints, which allow them to entertain a variety of opinions on the subject, and which also provide them with an 'exit in case of emergency' when hard pressed in a discussion.

It is probable that the most general conception would be that art is particularly concerned with beauty in any and all of its aspects, and that the mission of art is to give pleasure. Now beauty is a vague term and may mean almost anything; but to people who do not think deeply it has a clearly defined meaning which is purely personal: so that there may be as many conceptions of beauty as there are people to formulate them. To such people the only test of beauty lies in their own emotions. The only thing that enables them to agree amongst themselves is their lack of real individuality, and their general tendency to think with the crowd whose emotions they share.

Sometimes you may hear the admission made by some honest art-lover: "I know nothing about art; but I know what I like," which sounds candid but is only half true; for while the ignorance may be admitted without question, the knowledge of what is pleasing is very doubtful and is open to suspicion on the score of the rarity of any individual taste. What is generally popular is that which appeals to the most ordinary emotions; and people who have cultivated their natural faculties will not be pleased so easily.

But to real lovers of art something more is necessary; even if they rise no higher than to demand enjoyment, and have no loftier standard of enjoyment than the gratification of their emotions; for they will have refined their emotions, and may have purified their ideals so far as to seek pleasure in the gratification of intellectual desires that may be unknown to the crowd, whose emotions are almost entirely sensuous.

The conception of beauty too may be so intellectualized as to appear

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unrecognisable to the ordinary person and yet be a variation on the same theme.

But the Theosophist who loves art will probably pass by all forms of art that satisfy the ordinary taste, not with scorn, which betrays vanity and intolerance, but with the same kindly feeling that may prevent one from throwing a child's doll on the trash-pile, however much one may object to the thing itself.

The Theosophist will probably feel that most of what passes for art in the general world is soulless, much sensuous, and a considerable part wholly objectionable, if not actually degrading. But a too general condemnation of art will bring us to the Puritan position of mere denunciation of beauty and joy, which cannot possibly be considered in connexion with the spiritual teachings of Theosophy. For beauty, to a Theosophist, lies in "the eternal fitness of things," where truth reigns and joy is the natural condition of life. There is no room for fanaticism in Theosophy, nor can beauty and truth be parted.

What then is a Theosophical conception of art and beauty? It seems to me that a Theosophist must feel that true art is the effort to express the prompting of the soul. For although soul is the essential element in the complex being we call man, yet at the present stage of human evolution the majority of mankind (at least in so-called civilized countries) are individually almost entirely unaware of the existence of the soul. Whereas a Theosophist will think of a man as a soul veiled by a material body, blinded by ignorance of his own nature and unconscious of the purpose of his existence.

To the pure soul, beauty must be harmony, or the fitness of things; and this conception will naturally arise in the soul and seek expression through the personality, which will necessarily stamp the expression of the sleeping soul with the characteristics of the awakened personal self, with its sensuous instincts and vulgar ideals of life. So that even the most crude and material expression of joy may have had its origin in the, as yet, unawakened soul. Evolution I take to be the awakening of the soul. And it is certain that we are not all equally evolved, nor are we as yet more than partially awake.

The love of art seems to be a prompting of the soul; while the character of the art that satisfies the individual will be a fair indication of the stage of his evolution. Ask him what he conceives to be the mission of art, and his answer will show you what is his conception of life and its purpose. A Theosophist might say that the function of art is to reveal the beauty in nature and the significance of life. To the ordinary man life has no significance: to him the phrase will have no meaning: but to the student of aesthetics, the significance of life is the source of true beauty.

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'High art' was a cant phrase at one time, and became ridiculous because so many pretenders learned to talk about it without any understanding; and the phrase received its death-blow at the hands of that brilliant satirist W. S. Gilbert, author of so many popular operas, in the Gilbert and Sullivan operetta of *Patience*, when he put a piece of pure philosophy into the mouth of the ridiculous Bunthorne, who says: "High art is for the few; the higher the art, the fewer the few: the highest art is for the One," and the house roared with laughter. But the same sentiment expressed in the same words in the mouth of a dignified character in a serious drama would probably have been applauded as a noble expression of a lofty truth. The utterance of profound wisdom by a fool has been a favorite trick of many dramatists; and is justified by nature who sometimes emphasizes the discrepancy often existing between the deep wisdom of the soul and the grotesque folly of the personality through which that wisdom finds a mangled utterance, or a perfect expression rendered impotent, by the absurd appearance of its exponent.

Returning to popular conceptions of art, it would not be too much to say that the ordinary mind looks upon art as a producer of fictions, wholly concerned with the appearance of things and only true in so far as these appearances are correctly reproduced. Whereas the more cultured critic of art in our day will speak contemptuously of such reproductions as mere mechanical work having no relation at all to art.

Certainly truth must be measured in ways adapted to the occasion: it may be that a most conscientious reproduction of a scene in nature may entirely misrepresent the real significance of the subject, while some essential quality or characteristic of the same scene may be vividly suggested in a work that apparently exaggerates or falsifies the facts of the case as they would be seen by the camera, or by a man with a photographic eye and the intelligence of a photo film.

In making truth a test of art we must remember that it is more difficult to define truth, or to explain its real nature, than it is to say what is true art. For instance, it is easy to see that the appearance of a thing is illusive, delusive, and dependent upon the power of man to see and to understand what he sees; and further it is evident that the appearance of things is not the same as the reality of the things. What then is truth? And what has art to do with truth, seeing that it deals entirely with appearances?

Truth in itself may be absolute. The human mind deals only with relativity, comparing and contrasting things and their opposites. To the mind truth appears as relative to falsehood; and being relative is not absolute. So that if we are to measure art by its truth we must first find a standard of truth, or else assume one and try to get others to accept it.

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This is the usual method; and it has many and obvious advantages.

Knowing so little as we do of the nature of truth, it is strange that we should make it the touchstone of all experience. Perhaps the impossibility of producing it and actually applying it as a test is its real recommendation; for it throws us back on our own resources and makes each one responsible for his own judgment on all important matters. This individual responsibility for our own decisions is perhaps the greatest truth we have to learn, except the still simpler lesson of our unity, which is the last step in wisdom.

The search for truth in art may lead in opposite directions, and does give rise to endless controversies; for truth is everywhere; and yet it can never be placed anywhere.

Perhaps realism in art is the most illusive of all ideals; for art is never realistic in the literal sense. Its methods are all appeals to imagination, no matter how narrow may be the artist's conception of his art. Art can never be other than suggestive.

The realism lies in the belief that the appearance of an object is a reality, and consequently that a very faithful reproduction of its appearance will create an impression of reality in the mind of the spectator. But it is easy to see that every object has innumerable aspects, all of which are conditioned by the faculties of the perceiver, and can only be appearances, never realities. So that even in contemplating the original object the observer is dealing with his own impressions, and not with the object itself. How then can his reproduction of his own impressions be other than a suggestion of an appearance? Where does realism come in? Even if the suggestion is so strong as to delude a spectator into the belief that the reproduction is the original object; what is it more than delusion? Is delusion truth? Is successful suggestion realism?

Therefore I would say that the realist starts with self-delusion as to the nature of truth and the reality of nature; and ends with an attempt to deceive the senses of others, or to excite admiration by his industry and skill. His work will please many who are anxious to believe that appearances are realities; for the thought that the world may be an illusion frightens them; and they spend their lives laboring to persuade themselves that things of the world are very real. These unawakened souls constitute a large part of our present humanity, and are to be met in all classes of society. So realism in art has a sure support in public taste, but for the true art-lover it has little interest.

Those of them who still look for beauty in art have a standard that is unintelligible to the masses, whose ideals of beauty are all sensuous; whereas the more advanced critic is interested by the significance of color and form, of life and action. This word 'significance' has for him an overwhelming importance. In many cases it has entirely ousted the more

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popular ideal of beauty, appealing as it does to the intellect rather than the senses. And yet it may be said that many of these advanced students, in substituting the intellect for the senses as their foundation for beauty, have made no advance towards a spiritual concept of art, however much they may despise 'mere beauty.'

Beauty is greater than either the senses or the intellect. It is an eternal principle of harmony, or fitness, that may be discovered on all planes of conscious existence; and I venture to think that he who repudiates beauty turns his back on the source of inspiration from which all art flows; but of course I am now using the term beauty in its higher sense.

The old Chinese painter Hsieh-ho, in his canon of art, placed first on his list of essentials in a work of art "spiritual rhythm," translated by Okakura as "the life-movement of the spirit in the rhythm of things."

To the ordinary lover of western art such an ideal would be simply unintelligible; but it is easy to see that some such spiritual aspiration was recognised in the East as the first essential in art; and a study of the best Chinese work will convince an unprejudiced student that the prime object of art was held by Chinese artists to be neither sensual nor intellectual alone, but spiritual. Our civilization is now so sunk in materialism that the word 'spiritual' has almost lost its significance to even well-educated westerners. For this reason it is hard for our people to understand what the Chinese artists were driving at.

In their paintings they sought continually to suggest infinity: in every material object represented, there was a suggestion that some abstract quality in the composition was the real 'motif,' even when the object was reproduced with the most minute exactitude. A flying bird was a suggestion of flight rather than of a bird: a landscape obviously served merely as the foundation for a suggestion of some emotional quality or spiritual aspiration. I think that to them art was sacred, as though the world was ruled by spiritual powers of various kinds and qualities. Their concept of the Universe was of a spiritual world, mirrored in various conditions from the highest to the lowest; in all of which spiritual powers ruled and were worshiped with suitable rites.

Europeans and Americans are beginning to wake up to some appreciation of Chinese art, which of course has had its ups and downs in the long and turbulent history of that old civilization, and a few of the critics have realized that there were times when art reached a higher development there than has yet been achieved in our land. But it is only a few of these explorers who have grasped the fact that the life and art of China were impregnated with the ancient Wisdom-Religion, while the people were familiar with spiritual ideals that have been utterly lost to the nations of Europe, and that are now gradually finding their way back into the

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consciousness of the people through the aid of the Theosophical revelation brought to the world by H. P. Blavatsky. In Europe and America the word 'spiritual' had sunk to the lowest depths of misinterpretation and was associated in the popular mind with all sorts of gross superstitions; and even now the word seems generally to be taken as referring merely to the most material plane of the astral world. But Theosophy restores it to its true significance as the plane of causation that underlies and vitalizes all the astral and physical conditions of existence; as the source and origin of all intelligence; the cause and creative energy that calls the manifested universes into being; that reveals itself as natural law in the mineral and vegetable kingdoms, as instinct in the animal, and as the redeeming spirit in man; that leads evolution, and guides the countless universes in their appearance and their disappearance. To the Theosophist the spiritual world is formless and comprehensible only to the spiritual self of man by means of intuition.

It is this spiritual principle in man that must inspire true art, according to Theosophy as I understand it. No Theosophist is entitled to dogmatize on such a subject. Without it art is imitative merely, not creative: and surely the mission of art is to create. But what is creation? Is it the making of something out of nothing? That is hard to believe; but it surely is the giving of a form to that which was formless.

That is what nature is doing all the time. The creation of the world goes on continuously through its seven ages, or 'days,' till it achieves perfection; and the creative energy, exhausted, rests for a period incalculable perhaps, but still measurable by analogy, even as we measure the night through which we pass in sleep unconscious of the hours.

It is a common thing to speak of a work of art as a creation; but creative art is rare. So much is merely reproductive, or imitative. The conception of creation has been so terribly degraded by our ancestors, who truly fashioned a creator of their own and called it 'God'; creating their God in their own image, and then endowing him with the power to make something out of nothing. All of which was merely a perversion of the old teachings, which showed the creative hosts engaged in giving form to that which was formless, so creating worlds, and peopling them with such creatures as they were able to produce. Then came the spiritual lords, whose evolution had been accomplished in preceding universes, and these redeemers of the world took up the task of human evolution where nature left it, and so became the Gods who walked with men and taught them all the arts and sciences which they themselves had learned in former worlds.

So the creation of the world continues day by day; and so man rises in the scale of evolution through the long ages, falling and rising, seeking

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and finding, and again losing the path of spiritual progress, to find it later, thanks to the guiding of the 'elder brothers' of the race. And so the arts are brought to man and so they flourish for a time and then become materialized, losing their power to uplift. Then comes a ray of spiritual light, and art revives. A new golden age is born, to be succeeded by the inevitable turning of the wheel which brings the night as surely as the day and the cold winter-time as regularly as the spring and summer.

So art may well be called divine, and surely it is creative, for the spiritual impulse ever gives new form to everlasting truth, leading men up to higher concepts of that truth by the creation of new standards. Then the forces of chaos grasp at these forms and destroy their beauty, seeking to adapt them to low uses. Thus every ideal has its perversion in the world, and thus art seems to perish periodically. But the spiritual impulse does not die, and art is born again as soon as man is able to feel in his heart the spiritual urge that men call genius. He may respond or he may fail; but the origin of art is still the spiritual world, and the artist must rise from the mud of mere material existence if he is to be a fit interpreter of the divine impulse which seeks to lift humanity from degradation, and awaken in the soul the consciousness of its divinity.

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MAGISTER ARTIUM



CLERGYMAN of liberal views is quoted as saying:

“The form which the doctrine of resurrection assumes in my mind is the survival of death by a personality which has shed its physical integument for ever. By survival I mean full survival of all that constitutes whatever is essential to a human personality; in short, all that is meant by the term ‘personal identity.’”

Thus we see that the Modernists allow intelligence to compete with implicit acceptance of authorized dogma: a course which has often visited the too daring inquirer with proceedings for heresy, followed by consequences more or less dire.

But the declaration is broad and vague enough to permit indefinite discussion. It all turns on the definition of personality; and, this being undefined, the clergyman has not really defined his position at all, except in so far as to say that the physical integument is not included among the essentials of personality. He commits himself to the statement that a personality can continue to exist without the physical integument. Thus his surviving and resurrecting soul might be the ‘shade’ of classical belief, the *doppelgänger* or *gebannt* spirit, the wraith, the *bhûta*, or whatever

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other name we may choose to cull from the records of a universal belief in such entities. But such a survival, such a resurrection, such an immortality, will scarcely recommend itself. A human personality, with all its desires and habits, but minus its body, would seem to be a very unhappy entity, destined to haunt the abodes of the still living, as it is always said to do, in the hope of deriving a little support from those who still have their physical integuments intact.

The pastor must mean that other encumbrances besides the physical integument are stripped from the human personality in order to render it immortal and to entitle its liberation to be called a resurrection from the dead.

The fact is we can never solve a problem until its terms have been defined, and we are far indeed from having defined personality or personal identity. Take the case of my father. Knowing him so long and intimately, yet what in truth did I ever know of his personality; or what do I know now, turning over the leaves of a vivid memory? I know very well what he would be likely to do, if he had his physical integument intact; but I cannot by any means imagine him employed or happy without that encumbrance. Or, if by chance, I can persuade myself to imagine that he dwells, a bright soul, in a region whence his love can send a ray back to the life whence he has vanished, it is only because I forbear from filling in the details of the picture. His personal identity was either something I never knew, or something unfitted for immortality. The being I knew was fitted only for life on earth, in a physical body; that which was immortal, unearthly, I either did not know, or, knowing it, did not recognise it for what it was.

We can scarcely get along with the use of the single word 'personality'; we need more language. In the terms familiar to Theosophists, the word 'personality' is used to denote the very things which we have to shed in order to achieve immortality and resurrection. Personality is indeed an integument; for there are other integuments besides the physical one. This is recognised in the allegorical presentations of ancient teachings; for instance, in those teachings outlined in Virgil's sixth Aeneid; where the shades which have already by death shed their *earthly* impurities, have still to shed their *watery* impurities, before they can stand as spirits of pure *air* and *fire*, and be ready for reincarnation.

It is this point that we wish to impress; for it is one of those ancient and universal teachings of which Theosophy is the modern exponent. Theosophy does not tolerate the view that the destruction of the physical body causes the entire dissolution of the identity. The very nature of our own consciousness forbids such a supposition, which would make life a hopeless enigma and deprive man of all interest or concern in the affairs

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of the world. But, on the other hand, we cannot suppose that the earthly personality either remains what it was or is fitted to remain so; and, once we allow that it may be purified and refined, we must perforce admit that there may be sundry and various stages of purification and refinement. The matter is made much clearer by the use of the term Individuality, as distinct from personality. The Individuality is what survives, and the personality is what disappears.

Yet even this is not enough, and leaves room for obvious objection. For the teaching, left in that vague form, would seem to imply that the man has two souls, with no connexion between them; and is in fact, not one, but two.

But it will be found, in the chapters on Reincarnation, in *The Key to Theosophy*, that the Reincarnating Ego (the Individuality) does not separate itself entirely at death from the mortal man, but takes with it the 'aroma' of the past life — all that was best in the personality of the man that was. There is thus a link between Individuality and personality. What is meant by these terms is of course not easy to conceive, for naturally such mysteries must lie beyond ordinary ken; but we may by continual reflexion approach indefinitely nearer to comprehension. One useful analogy is that of a light, representing the real Self, and a picture thrown by the lamp on a screen, the picture representing the earthly personality. Or we may regard the true Self as a pure light, obscured by a great number of screens, which dim its luster and impart numerous hues, as a globe dims a lamp. Our personality is a compact of ideas and feelings and habits and memories; behind all of which there is an observing consciousness. We can purify our mind indefinitely by clearing out these mental images; and then we are removing much of the earthly dross and drawing nearer to that which is essential.

The Soul has often been compared to a man seeing his own reflected image; he falls in love with it, or he mistakes it for himself. An ancient Eastern philosophy represents the Soul as being hampered by the movements of the mind; and prescribes rules and discipline for overcoming these hindrances, so that the light of knowledge may be unobstructed. The whole question of immortality hinges on the question of what is the true Self.

We are driven to admit, on the one hand, that the mere personality of a man is relatively unimportant in the vast scheme of life; and, on the other hand, that there is in us something that is not unimportant. To achieve immortality, it is evidently necessary to forsake, to give up, much to which we are attached. There is no attainment without sacrifice, even in the most mundane affairs; and presumably the magnitude of the sacrifice is proportional to the magnitude of the attainment.

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Those that are dead have put off mortality for immortality; but we are still inwrapped in mortality, and we see them not. Why is death such a mystery? We cannot be in two states of consciousness at the same time; and we cannot bring the truth down into the confines of our ordinary thoughts. How can the mysteries of death and resurrection be communicated to those whose thoughts are bound by the restrictions of physical life? But such barriers are not altogether impassable. The human race has for ages concentrated its attention on material things; but there are many signs abroad that a change is taking place. The question of survival occupies much attention. As the leaven of Theosophy gradually permeates the mass of human thought, it will bring about greater capacity for conception, keener intuition, less materialistic views.

Meanwhile the increasing interest in the question of survival is fraught with considerable liability to error. I have in my imagination a very vivid image of my mother. This image could be seen by a clairvoyant; who would perhaps inform me that my mother's spirit was watching over me. But the spirit would not have the form that she had when she died; but the form which she had twenty years before, when I knew her; for that is the form in my mind. It might be possible at a séance to go a step further and to render that image visible to other persons, or to obtain written messages or verbal communications through a medium. But such phenomena would never convince me that the Individuality of my mother had any concern whatever with the matter. I well know that many extraordinary things can happen, which science knows nothing about; but I do not confound the new with the true, or the strange with the holy.

The war between those who mistake psychic survivals for evidence of immortality, and take spooks for departed spirits, and those who deny such phenomena altogether, is thus irrelevant to the great question at issue.

Reincarnation has always been the favorite belief of mankind, and is every day gaining ground with the present generations. It is the only hypothesis that fits logically into the scheme of inferences which we draw from facts and from our convictions. Poets and others have risen to heights of inspiration when they have felt that their soul contained an element which was eternal, which had lived before, which would live again on earth. In such moments they have risen above the limits of the ordinary personal consciousness. We are compact of mortal and immortal elements. Death does not compass us utterly; we die down, but not out. That which survives beyond the death of the body, *beyond the death of the non-physical integuments*, is the reincarnating Ego, destined, after its period of heavenly rest, to draw to itself a new personality and live

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again on earth. Let us not try to console ourselves by recalling the fading shade of the past life and revivifying it in séances; for such an image is indeed a sorry mockery of the pure heavenly Soul. Let us rather seek to rise to the plane where dwell the mighty dead, than to drag them from their peaceful abodes back to our earthbound limits.

THE LIGHT OF THEOSOPHY OVER EASTER ISLAND

GERTRUDE VAN PELT, M. D.

IN the December number of the *National Geographic Magazine* is a most interesting article entitled 'The Mystery of Easter Island,' by Mrs. Scoresby Routledge, who with her husband visited this island for the purpose of studying its archaeological treasures. The expedition presented difficulties which one might not at first imagine, and evidently called for much courage, perseverance, and energy to carry it through. To begin with, there seemed no way of making the journey, as the island is off every line of traffic and can be reached only by means of a vessel sent not oftener than once a year by the Chilean government, which uses the place as a sheep ranch. After an exhaustive investigation, the only feasible plan presented was to build a ship. Finally, launched, the voyage occupied thirteen months.

There is, in the article, a very careful description of what is to be found there of archaeological interest, besides an account of the general conditions. The statues are half-length figures of varying height, mostly from twenty to forty feet. When first seen a century and a half ago, they were standing around the coast with their backs to the sea, but now with one exception, have fallen in this location. There are hundreds all over the island, some buried up to the neck. Probably excavation would reveal many more. Often they are cut into the solid rock. The surface of the island is covered with extinct volcanoes. These mountains are composed of compressed volcanic ash, of which, with a few exceptions, all the images are made. Apparently the work of carving was done in the craters of the volcanoes, where they are found in all stages of their evolution. She says there is evidence that the work of building was suddenly stopped and that in the crater of Rano Rareku, for instance, they lie about by the score, "just as they were left when for some unknown reason, the workmen laid down their tools for the last time, and the busy scene was still." Often the statues form part of the rock. "A conspicuous image first strikes the beholder; then, as he gazes, he finds

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with surprise that the walls on either hand are themselves wrought into figures, and that resting in a niche above him is another giant. He looks down and realizes with a start that his foot is resting on a mighty face."

Where the workers could have come from is a query, for the island as it now is could never have maintained an adequate number. How statues of such size could have been transported from the crater-quarry to other parts of the island, is one of the many mysteries. One statue there, not yet separated from the rock, was 66 ft. in length. They assume that on account of the size, many people at once worked on these figures; and in this connexion the author says: "The most notable part of the work was the skill which kept the figure so perfect in design and balance that it was subsequently able to maintain its equilibrium in a standing position."

Also, scattered over the island, about 260 in number and chiefly found near the coast, are long walls built from huge stones, generally fifteen feet in height and running often to three hundred feet in length. Along the shore they are buttressed on the land side with a great slope of masonry. When first seen, the statues were standing on these walls. They have been assumed to be burial-places by the present-day observers.

There are fanciful stories among the natives as to the falling of the statues, and the cessation of the work, but nothing that throws any real light on the subject. Nor does Mrs. Routledge offer or report any theory which seems probable to her. She says: "Around and about all are boundless sea and sky, infinite space and a great silence. The dweller there is ever listening for he knows not what, feeling unconsciously that he is in the antechamber to something yet more vast which is just beyond his ken." "In many places it is possible, in the light of great monuments, to reconstruct the past. In Easter Island the past is the present; it is impossible to escape from it. The inhabitants of today are less real than the men who have gone; the shadows of the departed builders still possess the land." "Voluntarily or involuntarily, the sojourner must hold communion with those old workers; for the whole air vibrates with a vast purpose and energy which has been and is no more. What was it? Why was it?"

Fifty years ago some remarkable wooden tablets were discovered, bearing an unknown script. This, like all the rest, is undeciphered; a secret book, baffling, mysterious, hidden.

She asks whether the builders could have come from South America, 2000 miles to the eastward; whether they could have sailed against the prevailing winds from the distant western islands; and adds in passing that it has even been conjectured that Easter Island "is all that remains of a sunken continent."

This conjecture alone solves the mystery. H. P. Blavatsky, in her

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monumental work, *The Secret Doctrine*, has revealed it. But until her full and satisfying explanation is realized, a mystery it must yet remain to the world of science.

She states that Easter Island is one of the peaks of a mighty continent, Lemuria, which stretched across the Pacific and included Australia, archaic India, a large strip of California, and reached down to the Antarctic Circle; whereon were born, about eighteen million years ago, the Third Race of our present humanity, the first human beings which in any way resembled our physical man of today. Easter Island belonged to the earliest civilization of the Third Race, one of the first cities ever built being about thirty miles to the west of it. But the statues were carved at a much later date, after the continent of Atlantis, the home of the Fourth Race, had risen above the waters and nourished powerful civilizations, and before Lemuria had been fully submerged except in certain parts. They were made by men as tall as the figures themselves, who had therefore no difficulty in transporting them, and no need for scaffolding nor for assistance in working on a single statue. They are representations of the Fourth-Race giants, belonging to the Atlantean continent, their faces being of a distinctly sensual type such as the Atlanteans are said to have had in the Esoteric Hindû books. Mme. Blavatsky compares their faces to those of much larger statues, one being 200 ft. high, in Central Asia—those near Bamian, which are portrait-statues of Buddhas who had been evolved on earlier worlds and were therefore in advance of the men of this. In another place, when speaking of Easter Island, she calls attention to five Bamian statues of varying height in regard to which there has been much conjecture. Archaeologists have called them Buddhas, but in this she says they are incorrect. The largest figure is 173 ft. high; the second, cut out in the rock as is the first, is 120 ft. high; the third, 60 ft. (it immortalizes the first race born after separation of the sexes, the last descendants of which are represented in the statues on Easter Island), and the other two, smaller, the last being only a little taller than the average tall men of our present Aryan Race. Some Buddhist ascetics found these statues and covered three of them with plaster, which they modeled to represent Lord Tathâgata; the largest is draped in a 'toga,' which has given rise to the belief of the archaeologists. But these coverings have been shown to belong to a much later period. The statues themselves are the handiwork of the Initiates of the Fourth Race, who, after the submersion of Atlantis, sought refuge on the summits of the Central Asian mountain-chains. They represent the five races which have appeared on our globe, our Aryan Race being the Fifth. The First was ethereal and of enormous stature. Gradually there was contraction and solidification; the first physical race, as said above, appearing in the latter part of the Third.

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“Thus, the five statues are an imperishable record of the Esoteric Teachings as to the gradual evolution of the Races.”

The Great Races overlap, of course, by enormous periods, parts of Lemuria being in existence after the rising of Atlantis from the waters, and in fact, Atlanteans appropriated the remnants of Lemuria for a long time. The remnant of the latter was submerged about four million years ago, after having been destroyed by volcanic fires. The teaching is that great continents are destroyed alternately by fire and water. The latter was the fate of Atlantis, and the former will bring the next great destruction thousands of years hence. Easter Island was suddenly uplifted “after it had been submerged with the rest, untouched, with its volcanoes and statues, during the Champlain epoch of north polar submersion, as a standing witness to the existence of Lemuria.”

Mme. Blavatsky does not say that the walls described by Mrs. Routledge were burying-places, but she does say that “the oldest remains of Cyclopean buildings were all the handiwork of the last sub-races of the Lemurians”; and that the stone relics found on the small piece of land called Easter Island, are very much like the walls of the Temple of Pachacamac or the Ruins of Tía-Huanaco in Peru.

There is a suggestive and illuminating fact regarding the statues, not mentioned in the short article from which we are quoting, though doubtless it is in a more detailed account of the findings of the Routledge Expedition, given in a book by the same author under the same title: namely, that “on the backs of these images is to be found the *ansated cross*, and the same modified to the outlines of the human form.”

This is proof that they are the work of Initiates. It is the seal which marks their presence as unmistakably as do the foot-prints of a lion mark the passing of the king of the forest. It is a symbol, based upon the numbers 3 and 4, known to every initiate and found wherever the foot of ancient man had journeyed. It is the cube unfolded, or the Egyptian Tau. The author of *The Source of Measures* reports that it is found on the Easter Island statues; on the crest-walls of the mountains of South America, where they “exhibit the outlines of a man stretched on a cross, by a series of drawings, by which from the form of a *man* that of a *cross* springs, but so done that the cross may be taken as the man or the man as the cross.” Mme. Blavatsky says as to this and other symbols: “Identical glyphs, numbers, and esoteric symbols are found in Egypt, Peru, Mexico, Easter Island, India, Chaldea, and Central Asia — Crucified Men, and symbols of the evolution of races from Gods.”

A French writer says that the three summits of this old continent, the Sandwich Islands, New Zealand, and Easter Island, are distant from each other from fifteen to eighteen hundred leagues and the groups of

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intermediate islands are themselves seven or eight hundred to a thousand leagues from any of these extreme points. All navigators agree that the inhabitants of these islands with their insufficient means of transport and ignorance of the compass, could never have communicated with each other. Moreover, the aborigines of the Sandwich Islands, of Viti, New Zealand, and of the others, *had scarcely known or heard of each other* before the arrival of the Europeans. *And yet each of these people maintained that their island had at one time formed part of an immense stretch of land which extended toward the west on the side of Asia.*

Mme. Blavatsky adds that geographically this description clashes slightly with the facts in the Secret Records, but it shows the existence of the traditions.

Of course, Mme. Blavatsky has amply supported her statements by corroborative evidence, and established her details through the perfect whole into which they fit. But how did she know all these things? She had access to records of which the world has no knowledge at present.

THE GREAT HUNGER

E. M. S. FITE

“As the hart panteth after the water brooks,
So panteth my soul after thee, O God.”



RECENTLY I read a book called *The Great Hunger*, by a Danish writer, in which is depicted the life of an individual who, from early childhood to past middle life, when the record ceases, is conscious of ‘the Great Hunger’ within himself; who is conscious of aspirations to contact that which is inarticulate — ever conscious that just beyond the ugliness of conditions there was a spirit hidden, of which everything visible through the senses was but a partial manifestation: a great soul striving for attainment to *That* without which all life is barren. It is a book which I think could have been conceived only by one who had learned the meaning of sorrow and its beauty, through suffering, and who had experienced ‘the Great Hunger’ for the Divine in his own life. To such a one suffering loses its mystery and becomes a revelation.

We have but to look into the faces of people all about us, whether in city or districts remote from the congregations of men, to realize that ‘the Great Hunger’ is not confined to individual instances; it is universal. It makes its want known through as many different modes of expression

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as there are individuals; no two may manifest it in an identical way, but it manifests soon or late in every one whether consciously or unconsciously, and is born of the eternal urge within that each soul has towards its Divine Source. This 'Great Hunger' or search for the Divine may be likened to water in its effort to regain its own level, the Spirit seeking to rise to the Divinity whence it came.

We make the finding of the Divine infinitely difficult for ourselves because we start the search from without. We look upon ourselves individually as separate, apart from life as a whole. We stand aside and view life about us as having no direct relation to us other than what we choose to permit. This sense of separateness is largely due to the old theological conceptions of a personal God and special creation: a new soul being specially created for each new body, which lives its own separate, selfish existence through one incarnation and at death goes to a specially created heaven or hell according as its acts have met with the favor or disfavor of a god made in its own image. This god may be a larger concept than earth-man, be it granted, but by attributing personality to Divinity do we nevertheless create it in our own image, with limitations of the personality; for personality is an attribute of the lower man, which through development of his higher powers one day he will transcend. He who would know the Divine must first attain in himself that much of divinity, a pure spirit; this is absolutely essential, for without a measure of Spirit can there be no understanding of Divinity.

It may be well here to state the Theosophical concept of God or Deity. In *The Key to Theosophy*, the book in which H. P. Blavatsky gave to the western world the fundamentals of the Wisdom-Religion, we find that

"Deity is the eternal incessantly *evolving*, not *creating*, builder of the universe; that *universe itself unfolding* out of its own essence, not being *made*."

Many men seek to appease 'the Great Hunger' through religions, but religions are only so many methods employed in the search; methods so incomplete and confusing that the vast majority of such seekers lose their way and know not whither to turn for an exit to freedom. Others seek God through channels of greater materiality only to find that all external methods produce the same results of doubt and disbelief, or else leave the soul with 'the Great Hunger' as an inseparable companion. Broader methods must be employed in the search than are afforded by either religion or science alone; the one concerns itself only with man's spiritual nature, the other with the animal nature. Through no methods which are limited may we hope to gain aught but incomplete results.

Now the vast majority of human beings are not sensible of the fact that they are seeking something that may be soul-satisfying; many of

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them are not even conscious of their need, and feel no lack in the general scheme of life as they live it; but it is with them none the less, as is evidenced by their lack of repose, their constant seeking some form of excitement which they construe as the pleasures of life; the will-o'-the-wisp existence which ends more often than not in tragedy. To these souls will come in time a realization of the utter barrenness of their existence, and then they too will consciously experience 'the Great Hunger,' and begin the search consciously. It lies within the process of evolution.

It is the law that each individual shall develop through individual effort. Up to the point of awakening to a suspicion of his own divinity, and the possibility of Deity being more than a super-man, it is true, as has been said, that "Most people are other people, their thoughts are some one else's opinions, their lives a mimicry."

How wise is the evolutionary law! Until one has been brought by normal and gradual growth to the point where the inner meaning of life may be revealed, a forcing-process would but produce an unequal balance. In our Theosophical writings we find evolution defined as "not the expansion of the man by means of an external force acting upon inert tissue, but an impulse from within outward and upward, enhanced by such favoring environment as his conditions may permit him to assimilate." Emerson wrote:

"No man can learn what he has not preparation for learning however near to his eye is the object. A chemist may tell his most precious secret to a carpenter, and he shall never be the wiser, the secret he would not utter to a chemist for an estate. God screens us evermore from premature ideas. Our eyes are holden that we cannot see things that stare us in the face until the hour arrives when the mind is ripened; then we behold them, and the time when we saw them not is like a dream."

Now in what way is 'the Great Hunger' to be appeased? In other words, how is each of us to go about the finding of the Divine? No one can find it for us, it must be and has ever been an individual search.

With the Theosophical teachings to be drawn upon no one can justly complain that he or she is left alone to grope blindly in the search. Theosophy is a spiritual treasure-house which to the conscientious seeker will reveal untold riches. Theosophy, or Divine Wisdom, is religion, science, and a philosophy of life in one; it is all-inclusive in its teaching, and depicts "science as sacred and religion as scientific."

It teaches that man's essential divinity is the factor which places him supreme in the kingdoms of the universe, and that he has lost the consciousness of his divinity, very largely, through ages of materialism. The twin doctrines of Reincarnation and Karma are of its teachings, but primarily there is the teaching of the duality of man's nature which one must study, and is forced to accept if one is to understand in any degree

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the constitution of man, for with that as a basis of operation with which the karmic law and the law of rebirth work, life, which has heretofore appeared somewhat in the nature of a Chinese puzzle, with apparently no method of solution, begins to straighten out and to take reasonable shape. It appears to have a *raison d'être*, and as the pattern unfolds it spreads out before our wondering gaze in a wealth of line and color, a harmonious unity of purpose in its make-up, which no human mind or superhuman mind could have conceived; and one is led by easy stages, by steps both reasonable to the brain-mind and satisfying to the intuitional nature, to an understanding of the truths which lead to *Reality* — the Divine.

Very readily we come to understand that our physical bodies and all else in the material world are phenomena, the result of causes which are not tangible to our finite senses and through which runs a something vital to all forms of life, a unifying force. This unity of life becomes impressed upon us more and more convincingly the deeper we go into the subject. At last we realize that man is not a being separate from life as a whole, but that by virtue of his essential divinity he takes his place at the top, and by reason of this position at the head of the kingdoms his responsibility is equally supreme.

It appears to me evident, if I am to find the Divine, that I must turn within and study my own nature, for I may make a life-long study of externals only to be thrown back upon the self, and what do I find? Just this — that no matter what may have been apparently solved, what mysteries revealed through study and research of things exterior to myself, I am brought back to face the fact that there has been no complete solution and that there is no greater mystery in the universe than myself. The ancients knew this; knew that the key to the universe was to be found in man; hence the injunction "Man, know Thyself!" So if I am to understand the great teeming life about me, I must first have some understanding of my own nature.

Without going into a more detailed division of man's nature than the threefold, which is even the accepted modern conception, we have Body, Mind, and Soul; but while accepting this division, the average individual is very hazy as to the actual attributes of each. Science has for ages been making elaborate study of the body, its structure and functions, but because it considers the body as separate and apart from the other principles, and takes nothing else under consideration, its findings have been necessarily limited; and so with the mind: research in this field has been a separate matter in modern times until recently, when it has begun to dawn upon us that there is something back of mind which needs considering if we are to get at any understanding of mind itself. It has been

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stated that "All thinkers who have tried to analyse the mind have been forced to admit that it proceeds from something higher than itself, and that thoughts are but the conditioned manifestation of this inscrutable something behind. All that we can know of ourself are the manifestations, the mental phenomena, the emotional phenomena, and the physical phenomena: the real Self, the real I, lies beyond them all."

As to the soul, this has been left alone to the tender mercies of religion for investigation, with the resultant weird theories which we are asked to accept on blind faith; theories which are lacking in foundation or which are derived from a part-truth of the Wisdom-Religion, and so distorted as to be unrecognisable and wholly inadequate. Theosophy teaches that body, mind, and soul are all equally subject to evolutionary law. The physical body as we now see it is the result of long ages of evolution in the animal kingdom: until endowed with the higher principle *mind*, the animal cannot "develop the self-consciousness and power of choice that are characteristic of Man. There comes a point in the evolution of the animal kingdom when progress can go no further *in that cycle* without the entry of something else." It is at the point here referred to that we meet the demarcation line between the Thinker, Man, and the lower animals; and mind is but the 'by-product' of the Higher Mind or the reincarnating Ego, known as the Soul. To me it seems that the absurdity of considering the three separately is apparent; while each has its own attributes and separate functions to perform, yet the all-pervading Spirit, which is the manifestation of the One — the Divine — inheres throughout and is That which is prior to all manifested life which runs through and connects all life as does the thread in a string of pearls.

The Theosophical teachings go very fully into the evolution of these three divisions, which make for the perfected man. We learn also that as man's principles may not be considered separately, if a complete understanding of the whole man is to be had, neither may individual man be considered separate from others if we are to gain knowledge toward the ultimate good of mankind as a whole and his relation to the universe.

Brotherhood is a fact in nature, as declared by Theosophy, and only by working on that hypothesis do we attain anything of spiritual progress; when we live in the concept of the individual life as being primary in importance, only a slight observation of the results is needed to prove to us the error of this concept; it makes for selfishness, ambition, callousness to the needs and suffering of others, and an obscuration of the spiritual vision which is the birthright of every soul. As perfectibility may be reached only through complete harmony existing throughout the various divisions of man's nature with the divine aspirations ever kept as the supreme attainment, so only may man as a whole be raised to a knowledge

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of his divinity, and a higher state of conscious expression, by the recognition of this universal brotherhood, each individual unit working unselfishly for the good of the whole.

Theosophy recognises service as the keynote to the attainment of our highest ideals. Through unselfish service marvels within us are performed. We attain to a higher consciousness, and by the identification of the self with the highest consciousness accessible on this plane, we are enabled to graft upon our life the highest ideals which may be reflected by our thoughts and words through our every act; so may we become a radiating center of Light.

After all is said and done, the simplest or most erudite writings can only point the way for the seeker, and all point *one* way. Man must turn about and search within if he would find the Divine; he must purify his life by the conscious exercise of his will if he would find it. Will and Purity are the Open Sesames to God. By the determination to overcome selfishness — which is the inherent root of all evil — and the exercise of the will to that end, there is a twofold gain, for the will is strengthened and a step towards purification is made; will, like knowledge, increases in proportion to its use. Somewhere it is written that “Feeble souls content themselves with wishes; great ones have wills.” The majority of us need a long hard schooling ere we learn to discriminate between the Real and the unreal; between the attributes of the Higher and the lower nature; between that which is permanent and that which is impermanent. Even when we have learned a measure of discrimination, and know the impermanency of things pertaining to this plane, and to the personality, we still cling to many things from force of long established habit if from no other cause.

Very few of us are single-hearted: we are unwilling to renounce, to throw aside entirely personal habits and desires which are encumbrances to spiritual ascent. We are continually compromising with our earthly attractions and our spiritual aspirations, hoping to slide into heaven, bearing with us, in part at least, some of our most cherished habits and desires belonging wholly to the personality. But we are forced by the Law to rise superior to the desires and habits of personality if we are to realize our spiritual aspirations; the two will no more mix than will oil and water.

Note that I have used the expression *rise superior to*; for repressing desires will not answer. Nothing which is done by forcible repression through the power of will, as a penance toward spiritual attainment, can be of any lasting value to the individual. The object of repression but accumulates unto itself strength by the process, and will sooner or later find expression on either the mental or physical planes, in this incarnation

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or in another. Only he can free himself from an undesirable attachment who is willing to recognise its undesirability from a spiritual standpoint while admitting its power on a lower plane, and by effort of the will overcome, or rise superior to, the desire by calmly and deliberately directing the mind into a channel of spiritual thought; bringing it back to that channel as often as the thoughts may tend to revert to and dwell upon the undesirable object. So in time will the old desire be dismissed from the heart, the will by such exercise be strengthened, and the whole Being lifted to a higher plane of consciousness.

One of the Theosophical devotional books tells us that "each sincere attempt wins its reward in time." This is true, but the effort must be persistent and very genuine in order to overcome the desires of self, the little personal self, of which they are an integral part. When the little self is all-important with us, we are, as it were, hedged in: we are caged, our thoughts and acts are limited by the personality; but when we rise superior to that little self, though it be but once, we go through a transformation; we are initiated into higher realms; the air we breathe seems lighter, more buoyant, more redolent with the sweetness of life. The sunshine seems brighter and all life filled with a divine benediction. Our highest aspirations appeal to us as not only possibilities, but as possibilities here and now, not as something to be realized in the actual present, in a far-distant future.

A worldwide impetus has been given to the appeasing of 'the Great Hunger' by the present Leader of the Theosophical Movement, Katherine Tingley, who in her crusades around the world has opened the pathway for many pilgrims in their search. With all true Theosophists lies a paramount responsibility at this crucial period, for *they* are awake to the universal demand of the soul, and in their understanding of the Law they hold the key to the situation. It is to Theosophy that the world must turn in this hour of need. Time and space preclude touching upon many things in the teachings which are most helpful to the earnest seeker; Karma, Reincarnation, the meaning of death — which is but the dropping of a physical garment — each falling into its rightful place in the beautiful pattern which makes up the great universal scheme of life, back of and throughout which is the Divine. The great difficulty lies in trying to express in concrete and finite terms that which is Infinite. Divinity is everywhere, expressed in everything about us and within us. That which we see is the Divine manifest; how better may we know it than to have an inner realization of our own divinity? Is it not worth while so to live that this state of realization may be ours as a normal everyday condition? Is it not worth the necessary effort to be able to live daily in the consciousness that we have found the Divine, appeased 'the Great

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Hunger', to learn that it is within us, inseparable from us? If we concede this, then let us awaken to the duty before us, let us act, act in behalf of others; let us through the overcoming of our own lower nature purify our lives, and through unselfish service for others in which we put forth our heart's best love, our most sincere and earnest endeavor for good, attain to Divine Wisdom through which the Divine will be revealed to us.

It is written in the Upanishads that neither "by the sensuous organs, by austerity, nor by sacrifices can we see God. Only the pure, by the light of wisdom, and by deep meditation can see the pure God"; and the Master Jesus said: "Only the pure in heart shall see God."



OLYMPIC MOUNTAINS

M. G. G.

WHILE bygone eons, careworn, winged o'er Time,
And Titan gods all wrought amidst the roar
Of war on Chaos, in her darkest prime,
These lonely peaks were piled; their spoils of war
Far-thrown, wild-hurled, bewildered. No man knows
What timeless mystery broods round each height,
Companioned now with the eternal snows,
Beneath the turning jeweled dome of night.

There, hand-in-hand, above the forest green,
Whose confines sprawl along the somber shores
Of deep, dark seas, the mountains loom serene:
Grim guides for mariners who steer their prores
By stars, across the vast and purpling main.
Storm-girt, aloof in sullen sovereignty,
Spurning the works of man in sheer disdain,
They share their secrets only with the sea.

*International Theosophical Headquarters,
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THE KNOWLEDGE OF LIFE IS THEOSOPHY

GRACE KNOCHE

 HE subject — given by Madame Katherine Tingley — seems to bring one in some imperceptible way into relation with the spiritual past. We find ourselves in the atmosphere of the old temples — schools of the people they were in ancient days — seeking for a deeper than the ordinary knowledge, and truly aspiring to live it; for a ‘knowledge of life’ that could in any sense be called ‘Theosophy’ is necessarily a profound knowledge. We are thus obliged to use the word in its ancient meaning: the *Gnosis*, which H. P. Blavatsky called “an echo of our archaic doctrine” and Pythagoras “the knowledge of things as they are.” It was called ‘hidden’ or ‘secret’ knowledge, not because it was arbitrarily kept away from any one, but simply because it could not be grasped by minds not ready to receive it; and in every period that we know much about historically, this included the great majority. It was ‘hidden’ in the sense that light and color are hidden from a person who cannot or will not open his eyes, or higher mathematics from a child just learning his tables. It is ‘revealed’ knowledge, always, to those whose sight is unveiled.

Now it was this so-called ‘hidden’ or ‘secret’ knowledge which H. P. Blavatsky gave out in her writings and which it was the purpose of her life to give to every one who could receive it. It was a knowledge not only of philosophy or wisdom *about* life, but a knowledge of life itself. It was the possession of the Teachers of old, and the great ideal, the consummation, of spiritual endeavor in every age among those who aspired to something higher than the coarse dead-level of material satisfactions and aims. It was the treasure of treasures, the ‘pearl of great price,’ a possession so precious that the personal life had no weight in the balance when this lay in the other scale. For it let in the light, and the cry of the awakened soul in every age has been, ever and ever, “More light!”

This gives us the key to H. P. Blavatsky’s work, for it brings us face to face with one of the most inspiring facts in connexion with it and disposes at once of two-thirds of the aspersions that have been cast upon it. And that is the fact that there exists, and always has existed, a great body or compilation or repository of spiritual truth — a *Wisdom-Religion* — which has never been permitted to perish, which has always had its Guardians, its Custodians and its Teachers, which has been kept intact through all the vicissitudes of human wickedness and of time, and which has been passed down from age to age and given out freely to all who would

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fit themselves, by right thought and pure living, to receive the light.

Never, except in very small part, was it committed to writing in any age, but was passed from teacher to disciple, "at low breath," that is, by word of mouth. The latest of these Teachers was H. P. Blavatsky, and the very nature of the wisdom which she brought disposes of the wild statement made by the ignorant that she 'invented' Theosophy. For not only did she state plainly that she never invented nor did she originate anything whatever of the truths she gave out as Theosophy, and the aim of which was to impart a true 'knowledge of life,' but all history is a witness that the same doctrine had been given out before — though not in many thousands of years so fully, it is true — and had been defended before by this Teacher and by that, often at the cost of life itself.

"My doctrine is not mine, but Theirs who sent me," she said, and every Teacher of Truth has said the same. It is one of the great texts of the Christian religion, interpreted in different ages, however, in very different ways. We find one of the Christian Fathers, Clemens Alexandrinus, defining the "Gnostic," or one who possessed this ancestral Theosophy or *Gnosis*, as "the enlightened or perfect Christian."

It was the wisdom taught by that great contemporary of Jesus, Apollonius of Tyana who, like Jesus, founded a great spiritual school and taught the same ancient truths. It was the wisdom for which the old Gnostics suffered persecution that finally terminated only by the death of the last of them and the extinction, outwardly, of the teaching for which they fought: Basilides, whom H. P. Blavatsky speaks of as the "central sun" of them all, Valentinus, Marcion, Montanus, Nicolas and Menander of Antioch, Maximilla and Prisca among women, and others. It was the wisdom of the great Theosophic school in Alexandria, passed on by Ammonius to his pupil Plotinos, by Plotinos to *his* pupil Porphyry, by him to *his* pupil Iamblichus, and so on in a great spiritual chain, to die at last with the death of its last representative, the murdered Hypatia. H. P. Blavatsky has much to say about the *Gnosis* and its adherents in *Isis Unveiled*.

This was the wisdom for which courageous souls were hunted down for centuries, and even in our own day, as the martyrdom of H. P. Blavatsky and William Quan Judge, the first two Leaders of the Theosophical Movement, goes to attest. And it was all this because it answered the one great central question of every aspiring heart, the question asked by every one who believes that man is more than he seems to be and who demands "a knowledge of things *as they are*," namely: "What is the meaning of life?" For a knowledge of life has been in every age the jewel sought by those who could not content themselves with the notion that life was but an arena of injustice or the playground of 'fate' and 'chance.'

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What is this knowledge, then, that it should be so precious and yet so little understood — knowledge whose value can be measured in no material way?

To answer this we must answer first another question: “What is *life*?” and from the casual point of view the answer is not easily to be had. For life in this view is not the same thing to any two people, the world over. Life is one thing to the mystic and another to the materialist; one thing to the alert, industrious, contented, optimistic worker and quite another to the agitator and the malcontent; one thing to the child in the sunrise of his life and something very different to the aged pilgrim waiting in life’s sunset-glow for the great change. So that from this outer aspect one might seek for an answer forever and arrive no nearer a definition in a hundred years than when one began the search.

But Theosophy shows that there is another aspect, for it is one of the conditions of life that everything is dual in its nature. As one of the ancient writings puts it: “these two, light and darkness, are the world’s eternal ways.” And while it is true that life in its outer, casual seeming is a perfect riddle, with no sign of rime or reason and with no apparent solution of its innumerable problems, in the deeper aspect this is not the case.

There is a deeper life which is not different with every person. It is that life which we share in common and which is the same in essence to us all — or becomes so with experience and in time. For it is the life in which experiences give up their meaning, in which we reach down to the essence of things, and which in its very nature proves that Brotherhood is a fact, not a theory, and that we are all children of one Father, whether we know it or not. Every one meets with grief, disappointment, discouragement; the great halls of sorrow open for every one to pass in at some time or another and no one is shut out. Every one meets with disillusion, and with the temptations to become hard, cynical, materialistic, or embittered, which follow in its wake. Every one has to mingle with his brothers in the great ‘give and take’ of life, and every one needs the same ‘gifts of the spirit’ to make that mingling beautiful, profitable, or even endurable; and every one, everywhere, meets sometime with the great mystery of death.

So that in this inner, deeper, common life which we all share together, we do meet on common ground, and thus when we speak of a ‘knowledge of life’ we speak of something that is entirely existent and real. Best of all, it is the possession of every one in the world who really wants it. If this were not the case, then truly life would be an uninviting prospect, a veritable forum of injustice, and we ourselves no better than undefended victims in a tribunal mortgaged to wrong, no better than marionettes pulled hither and thither by the many strings of passion and desire.

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But this is not the case. To show that it is not was the purpose of H. P. Blavatsky in bringing back to a world that had lost it the ancient Wisdom-Religion, Theosophy. And to bring this true and wonderful 'knowledge of life' to every one in the world is the object of Katherine Tingley her Successor, and of those who, under her leadership, are trying to make the world a better place to live in. For the knowledge of life in its deeper essential aspect, obviously *is Theosophy itself*. Mystically it is the Path and also the traveler upon it; it is both the Way and the way-goer; and seeing this we can see why the Teachers of Theosophy have always insisted upon Brotherhood first and foremost, and have always protested so vigorously against the travesties labeled 'Theosophy' that have been foisted upon a long-suffering public for so many years.

Theosophy is *not* phenomena-hunting, nor a running after the so-called 'spirits' of the dead; it is not mediumship nor clairvoyance nor astralism nor 'sitting for development' nor so-called 'Yoga practices.' It is not mere intellectualism nor the study of books alone, nor a special and exclusive secret-box for the opening of the few; nor is it anything at all that panders to selfishness or curiosity or greed or love of power or ambition or the lower side of man's nature on any line. Theosophy is an "ocean of knowledge" whose living waters are free to *every one* thirsting for spiritual things, waters from which *every one* may drink and from which none who wishes to drink can be shut away. It is a great tree — indeed wisdom is symbolized as a tree in many of the old scriptures,— whose leaves are for the uses not of a select few, but for "the healing of the nations," the uses of "God's great family" which is greater than all the nations: Humanity. "A tree is known by its fruits" and the fruits of Theosophy are healing fruits, for they save and nourish and cure.

To show this very clearly one need only examine some of the great principles of Theosophy: Karma, for example. The word *Karma* is an ancient word, added by H. P. Blavatsky to our language because it expresses in a single concise term what otherwise would require a sentence to explain it. Karma, very simply, is the law of cause and effect, the law that "as ye sow so shall ye reap."

This challenges at once the cheap contention that life is a mere game of chance, a place in which the best religion is to look out for oneself and cultivate what H. P. Blavatsky has so well described as "a ferocious indifference to the fate of one's neighbor." No; under Karma life is a great Hall of Law, but law which is spiritual in its trend and scope and of which the common law and the principles of equity, which are usually all that the ordinary person thinks of when the word 'law' is used, are but a dim and wavering reflexion. Under this law of Karma, as Theosophy interprets it, a knowledge of life is possible; indeed to the student the

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very circumstances of life seem to conspire to show us that "all things are under the guidance of law," as Mr. Judge has said. They show us that we are reaping today the harvest of seeds sown in the past, and the justice of this appeals to one who is naturally honest. Moreover, we see that under Karma — so wonderfully interpreted by H. P. Blavatsky in her books, *The Key to Theosophy* and *The Secret Doctrine* — we are absolutely masters of our destiny. While it is true that we may be fettered now because we forged chains for ourselves in the past, and may admit it gracefully — just as a man to whom a note is presented for payment knows that if he gave that note the manly thing to do is to brace up and pay it and make no complaint — it is equally true that we may stop forging chains if we want to, that we may stop mortgaging the future, and stop it now, if we want to, and that if we do this the future will find us not only free and unfettered, but with great resources at our command.

Not so easily done, you will say, considering the wild confusion of ordinary life and the difficulty of telling, many times, just what is the right thing to do! No, not easily done if we lack faith in ourselves and a knowledge of the Plan; but very easily done if we possess that knowledge and then will use our will. And it is this knowledge that Theosophy gives in its great principles, of which Karma is one. It is in one sense the most basic principle of all, for it grounds man in a conviction of the justice of things and that always means contentment, self-reliance, and growth.

When we throw aside the foolish notion that we can escape the consequences of our deeds, and equally throw out of our natures a sneaking desire for something that does not belong to us, a willingness to benefit by that which we have not earned, then something happens to us; for in so doing we throw ourselves back upon the infinite resources of the soul: we are truly reborn. This is well illustrated by a passage in the book of *Ezekiel* in which the prophet is bidden cease his supine complaining and find his backbone: "Son of Man, stand upon thy feet, and I will speak to thee." Not until we can stand upon our feet will the divine message ever come that shall give us the deeper knowledge of life that alone can bring us peace. The scripture goes on to say: "And the spirit entered into me when he spake unto me, and set me upon my feet," and truly that happens to us. An unseen hand reaches out to us and we reach up to it; and we clasp it and rise and stand upon our feet in the dignity of the godhood that belongs to us by right.

When that happens it is easy to understand the great fundamental teaching of Theosophy as to the Immortality of the Soul and the Divinity of Man. We have found the Divinity within ourselves and, because we have found it, we are able to perceive it in others. Out of this compassion is born, charity for the failings and faults of others, sympathy with them

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in their struggles, mercy for them in their mistakes, a great unfolding conviction of the brotherhood of all mankind and of all the creatures of the earth. We begin to value spiritual treasure as of more account than material things or than even the best in the intellectual life. We begin to long to help others, and soon or later, in proportion to the purity of our longing, we gain the power to do so — a power that is so simple, truly, in its really effective use, that the majority of us pass it by, thinking it surely must be something else. It takes a great soul to use simple means and work the marvelous with them.

Self-reliance is the key to growth, and with every real advance in it life is gathered, more and more, within the mighty jurisdiction of the soul, a jurisdiction in which there can be no ebb and flow for it was vested in the soul on the day when man became Man. It is subject to no external changes or decrees and nothing less great than the soul itself can ever limit or abolish it.

What a blazing light is turned upon life's confused and winding ways, too, by the teaching of Reincarnation! How apparent injustices disappear, giving room only for courage and the confidence of knowledge itself. Before we know it we have taken our place among the great and wise of all time,— for Reincarnation, or the doctrine of many earth-lives for the sake of the soul's experience — has been taught and defended by the sages and seers of the world from immemorial days. From Buddha to Jesus the Christ, from Confucius and Lao-Tsze of China to Plato and his followers in Athens, the Neo-Platonists of Alexandria, the Cambridge Platonists of seventeenth-century England, and the Transcendentalists of Brook Farm whose dream will never die while the writings of Emerson are read. From the eager circle of learners in the ancient Schools of the Prophets to the persecuted Gnostics of the Dark Ages and to students of Theosophy wherever found, we find the teaching of Reincarnation defended by the noblest minds and its echoes reaching into aspiring lives everywhere as one of the great keys to conduct.

The doctrine of Cycles is another Theosophic guide in shaping conduct, for it explains and illuminates Karma and Reincarnation, and it answers questions that without it could not be answered at all. It shows us that life flows on not in a straight line but with ever recurrent ebb and flow; and then, not only the individual life but that of the world as a whole, all the long course of history, becomes full of meaning, with constant lessons of helpfulness all along the way. We can understand the rise and decline of nations, can look into the causes and perceive, in respect to our own day, what will be the effects of certain causes when they are set in motion again — as they will be if we do not act to prevent, for cycles tend to repeat themselves. We can understand why history repeats itself

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and why it is not only profitable to study the past and try to understand its lessons, but absolute folly for us not to do so, for under the great law of cyclic return, the same temptations will come to us in the future that came to the nations of the past. They may even be confronting us now, and it rests entirely with us whether we shall meet them in ignorance and a spirit of carelessness and selfish apathy, or whether we shall see in them great opportunities, a challenge to step out of old ruts and away from old tendencies and be more and do more and aspire more than we ever did before.

We will observe our own life with greater care, under this new knowledge of a cyclic law in life, for it will explain to us, among other things, the mysteries of habit, about which modern psychology has so many things to say and so very little to tell, so many explanations to offer but so little revelation to bestow. It will place us in the enviable position of one who, being forewarned, can be forearmed, and temptations, vicissitudes, dangers within and without, will lose their old power to wreck the happiness of one's life or drag it down to decay.

And what is there so strange in all this? If cycles are the unvarying law in physical life — and astronomy, biology, physiology, history, in short, every science and every art are witnesses to this fact — why should they not be the same in respect to the mind and the soul? Theosophy not only shows us that this *is* the case, but *why* it is. In *The Secret Doctrine*, written by Madame Blavatsky and indubitably the greatest book that has appeared in thousands of years, she says somewhere that the tendencies and occurrences in human life which spell such disaster when they come, are no fortuitous happenings that mankind must submit to helplessly and receive all unawares, but that they are as calculable in advance as an eclipse. To give a single citation, in which she speaks of this fact:

“In the prognostication of such future events, at any rate, all foretold on the authority of cyclic recurrences, there is no psychic phenomenon involved. It is neither *prevision*, nor *prophecy*; no more than is the signaling of a comet or star, several years before its appearance. It is simply knowledge and mathematically correct computations which enable the WISE MEN OF THE EAST to foretell, for instance, that England is on the eve of such or another catastrophe; France is nearing such a point of her cycle, and Europe in general threatened with, or rather, on the eve of, a cataclysm, which her own cycle of racial *Karma* has led her to.”

— *The Secret Doctrine*, I, 646

This citation is significant, considering the present universal unrest, with pestilence and famine decimating whole nations. And when, in addition, we find learned statesmen and experienced diplomats seriously advocating *Brotherhood practically applied* as a solution of the tangle in which our civilization is admittedly helpless and enmeshed; when we consider the fact that the Theosophical Society was founded more than a generation before this awful catastrophe fell, and for the stated purpose

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of forming "a nucleus of a Universal Brotherhood" that humanity might be spared the otherwise impending blow; when we remember how H. P. Blavatsky, privately and in public, through her articles, her editorials, and her books, sent forth philippics of warning and protest both, that Brotherhood might be considered by mankind seriously enough and early enough to do some good — considering all these things, we cannot deny that Theosophy is the 'knowledge of life,' or that, inversely, 'the knowledge of life' is Theosophy.

For under Theosophy life has a purpose and a meaning. In endeavoring to build one's life on the great plan and principle of Brotherhood, one reaches down to the basis of conduct — and conduct is the key to the whole situation. If individual lives were what they should be, the life of the world would be no source of worry nor a mere repository of unrest. Nations, studied Theosophically, are more than the simple aggregate of the individuals composing them, it is true, yet it is equally true that they cannot have in their united life anything that the individual men and women who compose them do not have, at least potentially. And if enough men and women bring their lives to a fairly high point of aspiration and brotherly conduct, the community or the nation whose keynote they set will stand forth as an example.

So that Theosophy gives one, as Madame Blavatsky said, "an ideal to live for," and a supremely high ideal, for it is nothing less than to make a kingdom of Heaven out of this quarrelsome and neglected earth — an earth that might be so beautiful and so happy if only enough people could make up their minds to have it so. The aim of Theosophy, therefore, is nothing short of this: to make over the world. "Too high an aim," some will say; but we shall never achieve anything if we are always content to aim low. The archer who would hit the mark must aim a little above it. Mr. Judge brings this out clearly in one of his writings, pointing out the fact that, just as the archer has to allow for the trajectory — that is to say, the curve which an arrow describes in the air as it speeds on its way, and which is due to the pull of gravitation — so the aspirant to a spiritual goal has to make allowance for the downward pull of the desires. Never while we are clothed in garments of the flesh will it be possible to reach quite so high an objective as we aim to reach at the start. So much the more reason, then, for aiming at the highest ideal it is possible for the mind to frame, and the noblest pattern in our life. We cannot aim too high, providing we do our full part to sustain that aim by courage, unremitting perseverance, trust, pure motive, and will. All this may not be easy, of course, but effort is expected of one who aspires, whether to climb mountains of shale and granite or those invisible heights of purity and honor that tower in the Theosophic life. And when one does

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aspire unselfishly, with no thought of personal happiness or reward, but with the single idea of helping others and of making life on this earth a little less difficult, a little more bearable and sweet, there is absolutely no limit to what may be accomplished, given only perseverance and time.

Perhaps that is one reason why Madame Tingley so often speaks of the great Foundress of the Theosophical Movement, Helena Petrovna Blavatsky, for her life illustrates the possibilities of high ideals, high aims, and sustained effort in a supreme way. It is only today that the world is beginning to understand her and sense the greatness of her life. And yet — marvel though it seems — what H. P. Blavatsky did, all may do, in one or another degree. Her ideal of a better world was not so different, perhaps, from your ideal or mine. Indeed, should we not be ashamed to confess that we never had cherished, at some time, just this dream? But H. P. Blavatsky made a beginning towards making that dream real; she put her shoulder to the wheel, she had the courage to start — while the rest of us mostly do nothing. It is “too much trouble,” so we’ll “leave it to somebody else.” And so we do leave it; and then, when the rain descends and the floods come and the winds blow and beat upon the tawdry house of our selfish hopes and plans, and sweep it away to ruin — we wonder why!

Yet somebody must make a beginning towards better things, if better things are to be: the world is not an automatic toy. It needs and demands and should have its helpers, its agents and agencies, its workers and co-workers, its true creators — and in this lofty company, why not you and I? Why can we not settle upon some high ideal or other and start in upon making it practical, actual, real, even from this very hour? We all intend to start some time — but why not NOW? We have very much that H. P. Blavatsky did not have at first, for we have the guidance of the Wisdom of Antiquity, Theosophy, which can chart for us the whole long course of conduct over all the wide ocean of life — while she had long years of search to find it. And truly it is ‘the knowledge of life’ in the profound and antique meaning. It opens out illimitable vistas of wisdom and happiness, of service and power and peace, before every one who sincerely loves humanity and who dares to work for better things.



“THERE is no idleness for the Mystic. He finds his daily life among the roughest and hardest of the labors and trials of the world, perhaps, but goes his way with smiling face and joyful heart, nor grows too sensitive for association with his fellows, nor so extremely spiritual as to forget that some other body is perhaps hungering for food.”— W. Q. JUDGE

TECHNICAL EDUCATION

CHAS. L. HUNGERFORD

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 HERE are moments when we all would fain be something other than what we are. There comes some longing or aspiration to lead a different life from the one we have been used to — to be in the saddle like some knight of old, to charge, perchance to rout, some of the prevailing follies of the day, whose *soi-disant* savants bow down to the holy molecule as before God's anointed, proclaiming the *material* universe to be the seat of the Most High.

Can test-tube or retort isolate that mysterious force that changes beefsteak and potatoes into brain and brawn? The atoms are indeed the same, but something has been added — the reasoning, thinking mind of man! Serums and bacterines draw not down the gracious vital forces that find free channels only in bodies uncontaminated by the products of a toxic life. Are our innate vices not enough that we must further poison ourselves with the attenuated virus of other animals?

The medical profession today is 'cooking' the banking book of life. Let us beware lest the life-force itself go on strike. All the germs under heaven are being isolated, cooked and stewed in retort and blood-stream, to render us immune to the natural results of ignorance, dissipation, and of "I don't care for the consequences."

Oh for a sanitation that will *rid* the world of its misery, instead of trying to

"Skin and film the ulcerous place,
Whilst rank corruption, mining all within,
Infects unseen."

Microbes are nature's scavengers, and when we cease to generate poisons upon which they feed, health will come to our much-abused bodies. Life, to manifest itself, must have a form and food through which to function. If you do not furnish food for grippe the grippe will pass you by.

"Oh," you say, "diphtheria and smallpox are practically stamped out and contagious diseases are on the decrease." Maybe so — but as long as cause and effect are equal, the infected tube that is patched below will break through above. If the result of dissipation and vice cannot show as disease in the virus-pickled body, how about the increase in suicide, insanity, perversions, cruel and inhuman crimes, mental and nervous

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break-downs? That these and scores of others are on the increase, no physician will attempt to deny.

Every massing of the white blood-cells to repel a specific invasion beyond that which they are normally capable of resisting, throws open or at least weakens the bodily fortifications at some other point. So even the blocking of a common cold may open the door to pneumonia, and yet, while the germs of pneumonia are omnipresent, they would lose much of their virulency if nose, throat, and mouth were kept reasonably clean.

The body has many lines of defense against invasion, and the mouth is the first great barrier. Why then should it not receive more attention?

Men and women are dying all over our country every day of long-lived Latin-named diseases, but whose demise has been really due to the accumulated filth of ages. I grant you it is much easier to give a pill or use a vaccine than really to instruct a patient in habits of personal and mental cleanliness (and maybe safer, too, for yourself). Innumerable cases of adenoids, impacted teeth and abscesses are responsible for mouth-breathing and facial disfigurement, to say nothing of epilepsy, mania, insomnia, nervous strain, eye, ear, nose, and throat troubles, which have been traced to dental lesions. The oral cavity with its almost infinite power of contamination, its fifty-seven varieties of micro-organic life feeding not alone on the products of fermentation and putrefaction caused by other microbes, which in their turn have produced other and more virulent ones by feeding on the toxic products of emotional states, quickened or deadened by mental conditions, may be the fountain-head of many of our new so-called obscure pathological conditions. Many a physical ill of today may be a direct heritage of past ages, when tears, death, and torture were the portion of him who dared question the omnipotence of the 'Powers that be.'

There is no use in wasting time on medical education if our standard of health diminishes in exactly the same ratio as our science increases. It is like multiplying amusements, when our power to enjoy them has diminished in an equal ratio. Reform! Reform! is the heart-cry of the hour, and vast sums of money are spent by our government and by private munificence to stamp out disease, to benefit and uplift; but something must indeed be rotten if with all these efforts to strengthen virtue, to lessen disease and crime, if with all this preaching of the beauties of temperance and the necessity of obedience to the laws of hygiene, our courts and prisons are becoming more and more crowded with criminals, and there is an ever-increasing demand for more asylums for the insane, more hospitals for the sick.

Our college education comes too largely from men who seek only to inculcate their individual methods instead of broad fundamental prin-

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ciples, with the result that students are brought to a state of helplessness unless they can correlate every case which comes under their care with exactly similar ones that have been seen and treated in their college course. Our present technical education is the result of a long line of clever nobodies who have at their fingers' ends the highly methodized and formulated news of the latest textbook.

The college-bred man of today has few calls on his resourcefulness to meet the emergencies of life. He lives in an appropriate pigeon-hole. He goes to school, says a London review, where everything is marked out for him in its work and play. He goes out into life a specialist, fiddling at a piston or a valve, but if the machine breaks down, he can suggest nothing; he waits and must wait until the higher powers assume their normal function. Beyond falling in love and a desire to best his fellows, he is never in contact with any of the elemental forces of nature his whole life long. Education is the most needed thing in the world, but how much nearer have these didactic lecturers placed us on the road to health? Not one day's journey. Let the great army of lawyers, physicians, dentists, and ministers of the Gospel make answer. Not a day's journey. What we so fondly call education is but hide-bound instruction; the cramming of the memory with a barren erudition, with shot-gun prescriptions, formulae, and receipts. Education should really be the guaranty and stimulus to action, disciplining the will, stimulating the ingenuity, making us clear in invention, fertile in imagination.

We hardly blame a good piece of machinery for the faults committed by an incompetent workman, yet that is just what we do to the body for conditions which proceed from the uses to which it is subjected. Remove, if possible, existing obstructions and institute a régime commensurate with bodily needs and not bodily desires, and nature will respond in a way that will leave no doubt as to the intelligence and design that govern all molecular action. The wornout, diseased body will be rehabilitated, and again become a fitting instrument to carry out the purposes of the incarnating soul in its never-ending progress towards life, light, and happiness.



“It is requisite to choose the most excellent life, for custom will make it pleasant. Wealth is an infirm anchor; glory is still more infirm; and in a similar manner the body, dominion, and honor. For all these are imbecile and powerless. What then are powerful anchors? Prudence, magnanimity, and fortitude. These no tempest can shake. For this is the law of God, that virtue is the only thing that is strong, and that everything else is a trifle.”

— PYTHAGORAS

DID THE AMERICANS COME FROM ASIA?

H. TRAVERS, M. A.

IN a brief paper on 'The Race History and Facial Characteristics of the Aboriginal Americans,' from the Smithsonian Report, 1919, the author, W. H. Holmes, considers the question of the Americans being derived from Asiatics, and gives a number of portraits in illustration. These are mostly by way of contrast to show that, with the exception of the Eskimos, the Americans are a distinct type, unlike any Asiatics. The Eskimos are sharply marked off from the Indians, who form one type from the Eskimo border to Patagonia. Nevertheless the author has to derive the Red Men from Asia somehow; for he holds the theory that the natal place of man was somewhere in southern Asia or the islands of the southern seas. So he suggests that, when man crossed Behring Strait, he did not do so in a wholesale migration, but in driblets extended over a long period. The result was that, instead of a race or nation, an assortment came over, so that no special type was impressed; and the Red Man type grew up by the influence of environment favored by long isolation.

In this case we might perhaps expect to find closer approximations to Asiatic types among the sculptured and molded faces of the Mayas and Toltecs, as they would be nearer in time to the migration. But we cannot call the evidence from this source conclusive of anything. Some of the faces might be Asiatic; others have a bold aquiline profile that does not suggest any Mongolian race. Again, as the author points out, the sculptors and potters were often artists, imitative and imaginative, delighting in characterization and grotesque, and therefore depicting all kinds of types. The objection that there are no elephants in the symbology, when these are so common in Asia, is mentioned; but against this must be set off such emblems as that from the temple of Beau Relief, Palenque, showing a figure seated on a symbolic animal and in the attitude of Krishna.

The following is also adduced in support of the theory of emigration:

"There have been found in America, after prolonged research, no certain traces of occupation extending back beyond a few thousand years; whereas in the Old World there are abundant traces of human occupation whose age must be reckoned, not in thousands, but in tens of thousands of years. The earliest skeletal remains in the New World are of men representing the perfected stage of physical development, the crania corresponding closely with those of civilized man; whereas in the Old World the earliest finds are of forms hardly differentiated from the status of the higher apes."

Thus the evidence, taken altogether, is not overwhelming; and some

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of it is of the kind that can be stretched either way to suit convenience.

The author says:

“Among the many marvels that modern science has brought to light none is more wonderful and none less welcome than that which defines the place of man in the scheme of nature.”

Why “less welcome”? we ask. The only answer we can think of is that the voice of modern science has flouted some other voice that speaks within us and claims respect. We had perhaps hoped that we had a nobler origin than modern science has provided for us. Was this hope a vain delusion, or was it the voice of truth making itself felt above the vagrant and ever-changing speculations of the brain?

We are told that the assortment of races found on earth today represent the culminating stages of a branching series, linked through ever simpler forms with the primary manifestations of life in the far past; and that this differentiation was brought about by the action of environment. Instead of mind directing motions and developing its instruments, the reverse process seems to have taken place:

“The grasping hands, freed from the forest and free to act independently of locomotion, led to the use of improvised implements in meeting foes, in preparing food. . . .”

This system of evolution, in making intelligence the product, leaves nothing to serve as the cause. God has been taken away and no other intelligence has been put in his place. The primal rudiment has to be vested hypothetically with an infinite potentiality. We confess to a total inability to grasp this dream of a universe, and can therefore be excused from wishing to take very seriously the anthropological theories deduced from it. To us it seems inevitable that mind must precede all manifestation; no other hypothesis seems to us possible. In evolution we see the visible unfoldment of plans and ideas, the effects wrought in plastic matter by the operation of invisible intelligent agents. Hence mind must be at least coeval with matter. Further, we insist that that which was First must also be Greatest; and that all minor intelligences are but parts and products of the supreme Intelligence. Again, whatever the height to which evolution may ultimately attain, that height must have pre-existed from all time; and the final achievement can but be the realization of a plan that was in the beginning. Hence we infer that Mind always was, and never was not. The several grades of intelligence which we see in the animated kingdoms of nature are but different stages in the *outward manifestation* of Cosmic Mind; but the modern theory seems to suggest that Cosmic Mind has never yet existed in complete form, but that it is gradually being built up!

If the ideas we have outlined apply to the human race, it would mean that mankind has been slowly and progressively forming himself in

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accordance with a pre-existent type; and this is what we understand by the Kabalistic expression, "The Heavenly Man." And so there seems no reason why the race should not have unfolded itself independently in America or in any number of different places.

But further: why should we permit ourselves to be hypnotized by the idea that evolution, whether of man, animals, or anything else, has taken place in a single upward line, beginning so many years ago and presumably going on in the same straight line indefinitely into the future? Whence did such an idea arise? It seems to us that it is quite a recent fashion in human thought; and, as students of the Secret Doctrine of Antiquity, we do not feel particularly inclined to give it an undue prominence over other temporary and local fads that may from time to time have amused speculation. True, one has national and racial prejudices and affections; but Theosophy expands one's horizon and sympathies not a little, and it becomes possible to step outside of the thought-atmosphere of modern culture sufficiently to be able to view the world of time and space in a larger perspective.

We shall probably have the arguments from palaeontology and similar sources brought up; but it was largely for the purpose of answering these, and of confuting some of the theories of modern theorists by their own facts, that H. P. Blavatsky wrote *The Secret Doctrine*. Space does not permit of going into all those details, but the book is there for the curious to refer to. It is shown conclusively that the *facts* brought to light by science support the ancient teachings rather than the modern theories.

It is 850,000 years ago since the last large fragment of the Fourth or Atlantean Root-Race disappeared; and the present Fifth Root-Race has so far only reached the fifth of its seven sub-races. This shows the scale of time on which the Theosophical teachings as to anthropology and evolution are based; and it is clear that the arguments for and against comparatively recent migrations from Asia to America have very little significance in this view. The world is now peopled by people of the Fifth Root-Race and descendants of the Fourth and Third. The relation between the aboriginal Americans and some of the Asiatics is rather that of remote cousins than of brothers. The period at which they diverged from a common Atlantean ancestry is far remoter than modern anthropological theories as yet contemplate. The resemblances in religious symbolism point to the once universal diffusion of the Wisdom-Religion and to its Adepts.

We have thus merely touched upon some of the great questions treated of in *The Secret Doctrine*, but enough, we hope, to stimulate the earnest inquirer to further study. It must be borne in mind that the theories of modern science are both extremely recent and extremely changeful; and

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that they have progressed greatly in all directions in the few years since Theosophy was promulgated anew. The representative of science whose views we have described would scarcely consent to be bound by the views of even one generation ago, much less two or three generations. How long is it since the modern revival of the ancient doctrine of evolution burst upon a world reared in biblical conceptions of human history and of special creation? And what can be more unstable than that same modern doctrine of evolution, changing as it does from day to day? Madame Blavatsky gives a masterly analysis of its teachings in her book *The Secret Doctrine*, and shows that, before it can be used as standing-ground whence to attack the ancient doctrines, it must be very much less shaky on its own foundations. On the subject of palaeontological evidence we find the following:

“It is argued that the Universal Evolution, otherwise the gradual development of species in all the kingdoms of nature, works by uniform laws. This is admitted, and the law enforced far more strictly in Esoteric than in modern Science. But we are told also, that it is equally a law that ‘development works from the less to the more perfect, and from the simpler to the more complicated, by incessant changes, small in themselves, but constantly accumulating in the required direction.’ It is from the infinitesimally small that the comparatively gigantic species are produced.

“Esoteric Science agrees with it, but adds that this law applies only to what is known to it as the *Primary Creation* — the evolution of worlds from primordial atoms, and the *pre-primordial* ATOM, at the first differentiation of the former; and that during the period of cyclic evolution in space and time, this law is limited and works only in the lower kingdoms. It did so work during the first geological periods, from simple to complex. . . .”— *The Secret Doctrine*, II, 731

Further on we read that esoteric science —

“teaches a cyclic law, a double stream of force (or spirit) and of matter, which, starting from the *neutral center* of Being, develops in its cyclic progress and incessant transformations.”— *Ibid.*

And H. P. Blavatsky points out that the discoveries of palaeontology confirm the doctrine of a twofold cycle; for they show us many instances of forms becoming dwarfed, like the ancient sea-dragons and giant reptiles and their modern representatives the lizards.

“If there were no such cycles as those claimed, then the Mesozoic fauna and flora ought to change places with the latest Neolithic. It is the Plesiosaurs and the Ichthyosaurs that we ought to find developing from the present sea and river reptiles, instead of giving place to their dwarfed modern analogies. It is, again, our old friend, the good-tempered elephant, that would be the fossil antediluvian ancestor, and the mammoth of the Pliocene age who would be in the *menagerie*; the megalonyx and the gigantic megatherium would be found instead of the lazy sloth in the forests of South America, in which the colossal ferns of the Carboniferous periods would take the place of moss and present trees.”— II, 733

In all ages, past and present, refined and coarse types of humanity have lived on earth together; but it is the coarser types that are the more likely to be exhumed — the unburied wanderers and outcasts of ancient and modern times. The attempt to tack man’s history to the end of an evolutionary chain of lower forms is destined to meet with failure.

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Space does not permit of going into the ancient teachings as to the history of man; but they can be gleaned from a study of Theosophical literature. The student soon finds that, great and wonderful as are the discoveries of modern science, they bear but a very small proportion to the whole truth; and that in antiquity very much more of that truth was known than has been suspected. The rediscovery of a fragment of the law of evolution might well arouse enthusiasm in a civilization but recently emerged from medieval darkness; but how much more there is to be known about evolution!

Again, the eyes of modern science have been turned wholly upon the physical world, that plane where unseen forces and agents come into physical objectivity and are manifest to our physical senses under the form of three-dimensional space. And, although it may often be convenient and even necessary, for temporary purposes, to regard the physically objective universe as a plenum, we shall run into serious error if we forget that this is but a temporary expedient. For behind all visible manifestation lie invisible forces, that do not come under the scrutiny of modern science, which discerns only their remotest effects. In the graduated scale of organic life we see the *effects* of evolution; that the process itself takes place elsewhere is only too patent and forms the principal stumbling-block in the way of the modern theory. How does one form change into another? It is the old mistake, common to every branch of physical science, of trying to find in physical matter the forces that move physical matter. The plane of physical objectivity is not the only plane of objectivity, and the physical form of the animal is not the animal himself.



THE HERO

E. J. D.

AS Earth's deep-founded rock had issued on the Ocean's marge,
And sheltering crannies grew in fronting all-devouring waves;
So Silence bore to Life a mighty soul, who, cleft and riven
By karmic blows of human woe, found depths to hold in sweet
Compassion timid hearts which falter under life's distress.

*International Theosophical Headquarters,
Point Loma, California*

THE INHERITANCE

R. MACHELL

(Continued from the April issue)



ONE day about this time Rebecca's curiosity was roused by the arrival of a small package by book-post addressed to Miss Anstruther. She handled it suspiciously, as if it might be dangerous, but finally she let it pass out of her hands reluctantly.

Maggie at first seemed puzzled, but in a moment an explanation occurred to her, and she exclaimed delightedly: "Why, it must be a birthday present," and looked inquiringly at Mark, but evidently he was not the culprit and she remembered that he did not know her birthday, and wondered aloud: "Can it be Tony who has sent it?"

Rebecca wisely suggested opening the parcel to find out, and this suggestion seemed to have much to recommend it. So the string was cut, the wrapping-paper stripped off, and a book discovered, but no indication of the sender's name.

Maggie sat gazing at the title of the book until Rebecca's patience was exhausted and she suggested that there might be something written inside to show who sent it. But there was nothing there. She glanced at the preface and without a word retired to her particular window-seat and soon was utterly absorbed in reading. Seeing which Mark settled down to wait the outcome, and signed to Rebecca not to interfere.

Maggie read on, neglecting her usual domestic duties, and Mark wondered; for the little lady seemed to care little for books in general. At last she rose and put the book into his hands without a word. Then she went back to her window-seat to meditate upon the message sent to them as if in answer to their questioning.

The answer came to her as authoritative, just as the sun shines without asking our permission or displaying a diploma to prove its competence. It was a message from a Teacher to disciples; and she knew that somewhere in some other life she must have heard that teaching of the 'Two Paths' and must have made her choice irrevocably; for now she recognised the path and knew that she must follow the Teacher to the end. As she was reading, the printed words grew luminous upon the page, as if starting into life at her approach; and following the words she felt that she was following the Teacher on the path until the Teacher and the path and the disciple were all one.

For a moment she was bathed in a golden glow and knew the meaning and the purpose of existence. Before her stretched a vista of delight and bliss ineffable, and then from the silence came a voice that said: "Can there be bliss while all that lives must suffer? Wilt thou be saved and hear the whole world cry?"

She knew what the answer to that call must be. It was a challenge. She

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seemed to be hearing the outcry of the suffering world. And then the picture changed and she was back on earth. But now she knew that she had found the Teacher, and felt that she would never be alone upon the path though she might never know her fellow-travelers till they all passed into the light of day.

Mark took the book and looked to see the author's name, then read the preface, and having satisfied himself that it was worth his serious attention, he settled himself down to understand the message of the book.

The time went by unnoticed. Rebecca came and went, she quietly made up the fire, but did not speak a word: and when the dinner-hour arrived she made another visit of inspection but was so awed by the silence that she retired on tiptoe. She had a great respect for books, having read none. Reading was a mystic ceremony in her eyes.

At length Miss Margaret came into the kitchen to say that they were going for a walk along the cliff, and would be back for tea. Rebecca understood that something serious was happening, and when she was alone her curiosity inspired her to examine for herself the book that had produced such a disturbance in the habits of the house. The book was gone. Mark put it in his pocket for reference, meaning to discuss it as they went. But they walked silently: discussion seemed out of place.

To Margaret it was a poem that she had almost memorized at sight, a message and a revelation impossible to forget, and which must necessarily create a revolution in her life; for now she knew that there were Teachers and a path. The purpose of her life must be henceforth to follow the path wherever it might lead. Of this there seemed to be no possible question in her mind; and so convincing seemed the message that she could not doubt that it would have the same significance to all who heard it. For the moment she forgot that even those who tried to follow an accepted path must do so from their own several starting-points; and that there must be countless others whose experience in life had not yet made them able to appreciate the message that to her seemed so imperative. Until that point is reached the message must be unintelligible and the Teacher powerless: for life itself is the great initiator, and slowly brings the unconscious pilgrim to the entrance of the path.

To such a point her life had brought her; and Mark too stood at a parting of the ways where a few steps more would show him the entrance to the path that he imagined undiscoverable. But his mind moved slowly, reasoning, as he went to meet the light; not so much doubting as arguing from force of habit, testing each step and trying to see just where it would lead. He saw the serious consequence of entering upon a path like that presented in this book. There would be no turning back, once that the choice was made; and he was hardly willing to confess as yet that he had made his choice, although he knew it must be so.

They walked in silence, following the lane; the path was rough and served as an excuse for silence, but when they reached the cove there was a tempting ledge of rock well sheltered from the wind inviting them to sit.

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They sat and talked about the weather and the coming spring; and again lapsed into silence. Mark fumbled in his pocket for the book, but let it rest there; and they watched the waves breaking at their feet in silence until Margaret spoke again, saying:

“How gentle the sea seems today; and yet how pitiless it can be when it is angry. Why is there so much cruelty in the world?”

Mark shook his head doubtfully as he replied: “The sea is pitiless, but then it is not cruel — that is to say, not as men are. The sea does not know what pity means, but it is not malicious. It is impersonal. We say the sea is angry when there is a storm, but that is ridiculous: only men are angry. The sea is smooth or rough according to the weather, it has no personal feeling in the matter, whereas men are angry without reason just according to their own personal moods. Why should we credit nature with our weaknesses?”

“Because we are her children, I suppose,” said Margaret.

Mark shook his head again as he tried to see her meaning. “That,” said he sententiously, “might be a reason for us to behave like our mother, but not for her to imitate her children. She is impersonal and we are not.”

“Why not?” asked Margaret as if the thought were beautiful: but Mark was staggered by the mere effort to conceive of impersonality in human life.

To him it seemed like absolute annihilation: whereas to her it merely meant release from a delusion, an escape from the long nightmare of personal existence by an awakening into perfect consciousness.

At times his reason held him down to earth, bound tightly to his personality. Then he might see the sunlight on the clouds in heaven, but he would feel like a man whose feet were held in heavy clay that would not let him fancy himself free to rise. So now he saw the path that led to the world where souls are free from personality, as the drops that form the ocean, but he saw it as a far-off dream, too beautiful to be quite real. And yet he too had seen the path and recognised it as the goal of life, and even now was wondering how to reach it.

Just then a shadow fell upon the rock, and turning, Mark was aware that they were not alone. The shadow was cast by the vicar of Winterby who, it seemed, had been to call upon the inhabitants of Crawley, and finding them out, had thought to walk home along the cliff.

Mark rose apologizing for not being at home to welcome him, but begged his visitor, somewhat perfunctorily, to return with them to the manor-house and to join them in their evening meal. Maggie insisted on his coming, and he was quite willing to be persuaded. He said he had been dreaming of music ever since his last visit, and confessed that he had dared to hope for a repetition of that wonderful experience.

“I hear so little music,” he explained; “so little that can be really called music in the deeper meaning of the word. It means so much to me: perhaps that is why I am cut off from it.”

“But if you feel like that about it why don't you study it seriously for

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yourself?" asked Maggie, as if that was the obvious thing for one to do.

But the vicar was almost shocked at the suggestion, and exclaimed: "What, me? study music? You are making fun of me. How could I? I have no talent. It would be presumptuous to suppose that I could ever be a musician. Music is sacred in my eyes."

"But you are a clergyman," said Margaret naïvely.

"That is different," he answered hurriedly, but did not say what was the difference.

"Forgive me," said Margaret, shocked at her own tactlessness. "That was a foolish thing to say, but you know music is very sacred to me."

"I'm sure it must be," said the vicar earnestly. "Since hearing you I have thought a great deal about it, and I have wanted to ask you very seriously if you can tell me what it is that makes real music sacred. I love all music, even — I must confess it — even the most frivolous, if it is well performed. I cannot call it bad, although it is so different from what is called sacred. Then there is some church-music that is very solemn, but that seems to have no soul in it. I think it must be insincere. I have never said this to anyone before, because it might be misunderstood, but you are a real musician, and when you play, it really seems as if the gates of heaven opened to let the soul of music out into the world. To do that is to perform a miracle that I had thought could only be achieved by prayer. Perhaps I have never put all my soul into my prayers as you have done into your music, and so the gates of heaven have not opened in answer to my supplication. I hope you are not shocked to hear a clergyman speak so."

They were arriving at the house, and Margaret was glad of an excuse for not answering. She was profoundly touched by the evident sincerity of the man in his humility and in his confession of the futility of prayer. She thought of Mark's words when he said the vicar was too good to be a parson, but she thought pitifully that he was not strong enough to be a man.

Rebecca who had seen them in the distance was waiting for them with a table laid for three and the evening meal ready. So without ceremony they sat down, and the vicar did not offer to say grace, fearing that such a formality might appear insincere to his new friends who had given him a glimpse of an inner life entirely dissociated from conventional religion.

The conversation ran on the suffering caused among the local fisherfolk by the winter storms; and the vicar's schemes for helping the widows and orphans to keep out of the dreaded poorhouse. He was eager to do something practical but had little business ability, and was anxious for advice from a man of such wide experience as he imagined Mark to be. The latter was ready to help him in every way, and future discussion of plans was arranged during the meal.

When it was over, Margaret picked up the little book that had stirred her so deeply and which Mark had laid upon the piano, and asked the vicar if he had seen it. He looked at the title, and shook his head; then looked

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at her for explanation, and she said: "Will you read it? I think it may mean something to you as it has to me."

He thanked her and put it in his pocket, but his mind was on music and his eyes were on the piano. So she opened the instrument, saying:

"I see you want me to play for you. What shall it be?"

He beamed with pleasure and humbly begged her to sing for him one of the Handel arias. He had heard all the great oratorios sung in church festivals, but the other songs only by amateurs.

She sang *Where'er you walk*, and he could scarce believe that this divine melody was the one that he had previously heard executed by some young lady who had no serious intention of committing murder, massacre, or mutilation, or even misrepresentation, but who 'got there' all the same.

Mark, watching, saw the vicar's homely features transformed as if illuminated, and he wondered what vision was presented to his inner sight. But the vicar saw no visions; only some window in his heart was opened and his soul, shut up within, awoke and heard the song. He thought that now he knew the meaning of a benediction.

He sat in silence when the song was ended, and Margaret was grateful for this evidence of his appreciation of what he felt was more a mystic rite than a performance to be applauded.

She sang no more, but played old melodies and themes of the great masters, just as they came drifting back to her from out the tangle of her memories, in answer to her call. And when she stopped, the vicar rose to go, hesitating in search of some appropriate form in which to clothe his gratitude.

To spare him this embarrassment she held out her hand in token of goodbye. Trembling at his own temerity he reverently raised it to his lips; and then, turning to thank his host, recovered himself. Taking the book from his pocket he said to Margaret:

"I shall read this tonight. I think it must be beautiful if you enjoyed it. Thank you for trusting it to me."

Mark wondered what it would mean to him: a poem, or a challenge?

When they were alone he wanted to discuss the book but could not find a starting-place: and Margaret had lapsed into silence, occupying herself with the housework. She too experienced a difficulty in attacking the matter. The field was too vast.

To those who think much, the reading of a book is an experience: it offers food for thought, and its message, if it has one, may be rejected or accepted, but cannot be ignored. While Margaret was busy with her household work her mind was thrilled with the echo of a call. And Mark who sat brooding by the fire was following the pictures that his mind presented for his contemplation. He was so long accustomed to visualize his deeper thoughts and to make mental pictures of his own emotions that he could scarcely distinguish these visions of his own creation from those that he imagined were of independent origin.

As he sat trying to bring order into the turmoil of his mind, he saw as usual

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a series of fleeting pictures that escaped his grasp. Gradually he began to distinguish a luminous path that faded away into a golden haze, beyond which was the glory of the setting sun. Near to him there was no pathway visible, only a tangle of dark thickets and rough ground, with swamps, and further on a forest dark and dense that shut the sunlight from the earth. As he looked closer in among the shadows he saw people wandering, who seemed anxious to avoid the little patches of sunlight that betrayed openings in the dense foliage above. Some of them carried lanterns and were followed by others who looked to them for light. But the lantern-bearers knew no more than their followers which way to turn beneath the great trees originally planted by former generations to adorn and mark the great highway, but which had grown so rank and strong that at last they had obliterated the ancient road and made a gloomy forest in which all paths were tangled as in some labyrinth without a clue.

Trying to find a clue he lost his vision of the path and all was dark again. But he had seen that sunlighted path and in his heart he knew that he must find it, and finding, follow it.

His thoughts were interrupted by a sound of voices in the kitchen, and before he could begin to wonder who was talking, the door opened and Margaret came in with that strange hunted expression in her eyes that so distressed Rebecca in the first days of her arrival at the manor-house.

“What is it?” inquired Mark, anxiously.

“Grannie has had a stroke or fit or something. I must go to her at once,” she answered hurriedly.

“Of course, of course,” said Mark, rising. “I’ll drive you there as soon as I can get the mare harnessed.”

And with that he hastened to find Jonas, who was not far off. It was Jane’s little brother Jack who brought the message from the cottage and who was making the most of his opportunities, devouring a huge slice of cake and inventing further details of the old woman’s seizure. The cake was hardly finished when the cart was ready.

When they arrived, Sally was conscious and seemed to recognise Margaret, but mistook her for Molly returned at last in answer to her mother’s call to execute revenge upon the man who was the cause of all her sorrows. Old Sally’s mind was tortured by the fear that Molly’s wrongs might go unpunished if she relaxed her bitter hatred of Dick Cayley. She had brooded on revenge long, nursing her hate and its intended victim in her diseased imagination till it had become a monomania, an obsession.

Surely the passion of revenge is always an insanity, for retaliation, which to a fevered mind may seem so just and so desirable, is merely the perpetuation of a wrong, and not at all the settlement of an account.

Since Maggie came to Crawley a great change had come in the harsh and bitter temper of her grandmother. The past seemed to have lost its grip upon her mind and a new peace had come into her life. But since the stroke

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the past had suddenly resumed its influence, and she would curse the Cayleys root and branch, calling on Molly to avenge her wrongs.

Margaret said nothing, but just kissed and petted the old woman as if she were a sick child. Then she began to sing an old cradle-song that Sally loved, stroking the withered hands and soothing her until the ghosts dissolved and the dark shadows of the past sank back into oblivion. Then sleep came and there was peace.

Jane was of opinion that the doctor should be called, in spite of Sally's absolute refusal to allow a doctor in her house. Mark thought the girl was right and decided to drive on and seek him. In an hour's time he was back with the doctor, who saw that there was little that he could do except to say that he would make up some medicine and send it with instructions as soon as possible. So Mark took him home and waited for the medicine, which in due time he delivered at the cottage. The doctor frankly expressed his doubts of a recovery and was plainly of opinion that the end was not far off.

Margaret announced her intention to sit up with her Granny and sent Mark home, asking him to come in the morning and to bring for her certain things that she had made a note of.

Seeing her determined to have her way, Mark consented to go home, and the mare expressed her satisfaction by making good time to her stable. Jonas was there to attend to her, and Rebecca waiting for news of Miss Margaret. She was inclined to scold her master for allowing the little lady to sit up all night as if she were a strong woman. But Mark mildly replied that the little lady had the will of a very strong woman; besides in this case he felt he had no right to interfere.

After she had heard the full report, Rebecca bethought her that a visitor had called earlier in the evening. It was the London artist, Mr. Forster, who was staying at the 'Boar's Head' and was very sorry not to find Mr. Anstruther at home.

Suddenly it occurred to Mark that Malcolm Forster was perhaps the sender of the book. If it had not been so late Mark would have walked over to have a talk with him, but as it was he sat down by the fire alone to think. His thinking as usual resolved itself into dreaming and watching the pictures that memory and fancy threw upon the screen of his imagination. He saw the strange old woman lying stricken but with her grandchild at her bedside nursing her so gently; and then he saw Dick Cayley lying in the ruined shack with the rain pouring through the roof, dying unloved and unlamented by any human being. And he thought if Sally could have seen that picture she might not think her wrongs had gone unpunished.

He had a vague belief that in some way unknown to most of us all wrongs revenge themselves without our interference. He never could feel himself called upon to execute vengeance on any man. He had no taste for retribution and could not understand the saying that 'revenge is sweet.' It might be called a natural impulse, because like produces like, and wrong breeds

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more wrong. It seemed to him that the only way effectually to wipe out an injury was to forget it.

Perhaps it is just that because man will not forget his wrongs nature intervenes and cuts the chains of memory, releasing the prisoners of hate by death. This thought had often presented itself to Mark, but he could not feel sure that death does effectually destroy all memory in the soul. He noticed that each child starts life with some characteristics of its own not traceable to its parents, some positive sympathies or antipathies which look suspiciously like surviving memories brought over from a former life and only half obliterated by death. And this would be natural enough if life is continuous; if memory is the automatic registration of events, experiences, emotions, thoughts, desires, and so forth, all which we generally and loosely call character or inherent tendencies; and if recollection is the imperfect reproduction of a damaged record.

Hitherto Mark's speculations on such subjects had been like the child's game of building houses with a pack of cards. But since reading that book which had so deeply stirred both him and Margaret he felt that it might well be possible to do more than speculate.

Again he felt that he had seen a path to Wisdom and he knew that he must find it and follow it, not speculatively, but with the faith of absolute conviction. Now he felt sure that it was Malcolm Forster who was the sender of the book, and he resolved to question him as to its author, for the book bore only the initials "H. P. B." He would have sat up studying it if it were in the house, but he consoled himself thinking that it must necessarily produce as deep an effect upon the vicar as upon himself, hardened as he believed himself to be by contact with the world.

At daybreak he took the cart and drove to the cottage again for news of old Sally's condition. He found that there was no change. Jane had come to relieve Miss Margaret, who was sleeping, so Mark left the things that Rebecca had sent and said he would come back again in about two hours to hear what the doctor might have to say. And in the meantime he proposed to call at the 'Boar's Head' to see the artist, who was already up and waiting for breakfast. He welcomed his early visitor as if he had expected him and suggested that the mare be put up in the stable and that Mark should join him at breakfast.

He had made old Sally's acquaintance on his first visit and was sorry to hear of her breakdown, as she had interested him and he had intended to use her as a subject for a sketch.

Mark thought there was a change in the young man, who seemed very anxious to know how Miss Margaret was. As soon as they were alone he asked if she had received a little book that he had taken the liberty of sending her, thinking she might find it as interesting as he had. He spoke almost timidly, as if doubtful as to the effect of his action, and showed relief when Mark said that they both had read it with the greatest interest, and had passed it on to the parson, who had called just when they were discussing it. Mark

THE THEOSOPHICAL PATH

went on to say that he had called on purpose to find out if Forster was the sender of the book, and if so to hear all he could about the author. This seemed to be good news to the artist, who was evidently delighted to see that Mark took it seriously.

Yes, he knew the author, a Russian lady; a remarkable woman, like no one he had met before. She had written other books, some of which he had with him, and she was publishing a new magazine called *Lucifer*, of which he had several numbers which he would lend to Mark. He told of his meeting Madame Blavatsky in London, and of the change that it had brought to his life. He had known her for some time before her real character dawned upon him. He had looked upon her at first as an interesting personality, a brilliant talker, most unconventional, and widely traveled, with a marvelous fund of knowledge of all kinds. But one night when she had come in unexpectedly to an evening party at a house in Bayswater, where several artists and literary people were met at the invitation of a lady who was fond of mysterious sciences, Madame Blavatsky being questioned as to how to lead the higher life had spoken for an hour or two, leaving him utterly unable to recall her words, and hardly conscious of the drift of her remarks, yet convinced of the absolute sincerity of the speaker, who 'spoke as one having authority' on a subject that he had heard preached upon many hundreds of times, without once feeling, as on this occasion, that what was said was absolutely meant, and that the Path revealed by the speaker was an actual reality. He said that when she spoke of what it meant to be a disciple, he knew that she was telling the story of the experience of one who had stood in that relationship to masters, who were no mere fiction, or traditional, legendary heroes of a remote antiquity, but living men whose lives were given to the service of the human race. He said that the conviction that she knew what she was talking about, and was absolutely and uncompromisingly in earnest, was so overwhelming that he became suddenly aware that this was a new experience, that all the preachers he had heard were talking merely of their beliefs, and that at last he had met one who spoke as the messenger of those who know.

He had gone home in a state of wonder, and with the conviction that however far away the goal might be the path was open at his feet.

The first thing to do was to buy the books already published, and to subscribe for others in the press. Then he had made application for membership in the Theosophical Society and found that a new lodge had just been formed which had its headquarters at the house in Lansdowne Road where Madame Blavatsky lived. He had often been there to spend an evening and listen to the strange talk of those who frequented the house; but until that evening he had not troubled himself about Theosophy, looking upon it as a new fad. He had felt a sort of affection for the strange old lady with her great generous laugh, keen sense of humor, and her wide knowledge of the world. But after his awakening she assumed a new aspect, that of Teacher.

He had heard stories of her occult powers, but he noticed that she seemed

THE INHERITANCE

to make light of such talk, and it had no interest for him. It was in his eyes a mere bypath of knowledge. The real things were what were revealed in that little book, and of which she had spoken on that memorable occasion, things that the psychic investigators classed as 'mere ethics.' He had heard Madame Blavatsky herself allude to the famous phenomena as mere astral conjuring, which was mistaken for common physical conjuring only by 'scientists,' whose 'science' was a mere tangle of theories and guesses.

He spoke of the meetings at her house attended by all sorts and conditions of men and women, where the conversation ranged over every conceivable field of human knowledge, but more particularly religion, philosophy, and science, on all of which subjects this strange woman spoke with amazing erudition and with profound insight, interlarding her exposition of the deepest subjects with scathing denunciations of all bigots, dogmatists, and materialists, sometimes making fun of the dignitaries of science or religion, but always ready to recognise honest inquiry and to throw light on dark places.

Suddenly Mark realized that his time was up and he must return to the cottage, but he was unwilling to part with his new friend and easily persuaded him to come for a little drive. So they called for the cart and returned to Sally's cottage. Mark went in and left Forster to take care of the mare.

Margaret received him cheerfully. She said that Sally had recovered clear consciousness and was very glad to have her own grandchild for a nurse, though it went much against the grain for her to have to submit to being nursed like a child, she who had never confessed to a day's sickness in her life. The doctor, she said, was satisfied to find the old woman resting quietly and thought she might live quite a long while, but only as an invalid at best. Maggie announced her intention of remaining at the cottage for the present, and Mark did not attempt to dissuade her. When he told her of his meeting with Malcolm Forster and of his talk, Margaret was intensely interested and made Mark promise to write down all he heard and let her have it to read while Sally slept and she watched. She suggested that Mark might invite Malcolm Forster to the manor-house for company while she was absent, and Mark promised to make the proposal, but feared the artist might prefer his liberty now that there could be no more music. She had prepared instructions for Rebecca and Mark took charge of them, and when he left she went out to the gate to speak to the artist and to thank him for the book and also for his sympathetic feeling in understanding that she would be interested in it.

(To be continued)



“THE longings of no human heart are to be lightly set aside; each one of them is a sub-tone in the great harmony of life; each one is the cry of some brother who has often forgotten his language, but still feels his wants. In his heart burns, however feebly, the spark from the Divine ever seeking the way back to the center from which it came.”-- W. Q. JUDGE