

THE THEOSOPHICAL PATH

KATHERINE TINGLEY, EDITOR

VOL. XXXI, NO. 6

DECEMBER 1926

“No man can rise superior to his individual failings without lifting, be it ever so little, the whole body of humanity, of which he is an integral part. In the same way no one can sin, nor suffer the effects of sin, alone. In reality there is no such thing as ‘Separateness’; the nearest approach to that selfish state which the laws of life permit is in the intent or motive.”—H. P. BLAVATSKY

PERSONALITY A DELUSION

PERSONALITY A DELUSION

H. T. EDGE, M. A.

“No man can rise superior to his individual failings without lifting, be it ever so little, the whole body of humanity, of which he is an integral part. In the same way no one can sin, nor suffer the effects of sin, alone. In reality there is no such things as ‘Separateness’; the nearest approach to that selfish state which the laws of life permit is in the intent or motive.”—H. P. BLAVATSKY

IT is a great help, when battling with our weaknesses, if we can feel that by not indulging them we are not dragging down other people. Our arms are strengthened by the might of a new and better motive for resistance. Not otherwise must a parent feel, when fighting on behalf of offspring; or a warrior, who has lost the idea of self in the feeling of solidarity with his companions. Perhaps our imagination is too feeble to comprise ‘the whole body of humanity,’ but we can take our family or social circle instead. In the case of a group of Theosophists working together under the direction of their Leader, the principle holds good in a notable degree; for then a real union is brought about by the closeness of contact and the unity of ideals and work. When a number of people are carrying a load, it is of more than mere personal consequence to each whether or not he shall step out from under or continue to hold up his corner.

The opposite side of the matter is equally true: no success of ours can be won without bringing a blessing to the others, individually and collectively. By conquering our own burden we ease the burdens of others. The motive of winning advantage for oneself may often prove inadequate to inspire a sufficient effort; then this nobler motive steps in and adds the necessary power to our arms.

So separateness is a mental state, we are told: it is just a notion, a theory. In that case, by changing the theory and bringing on a different mental state, we can make the separateness vanish. People often talk

THE THEOSOPHICAL PATH

as if the desirable goal to be aimed at were to produce a factitious union between a number of separate personalities; but we see that what is needed is to realize that such a union already exists and needs but to be recognised.

The idea that our thoughts and feelings are altogether private must be given up. They may be private in the sense that we cannot read each other's minds, but they are not private in their effects. We have now the full warrant of eminent men of science for the belief that space is teeming with radiations or vibrations, of countless kinds and grades; so that there is no ground for the idea that minds are separated. And, apart from such subtler modes of intercommunications, the visible effects of our actions, which actions are inspired by our thoughts, must always be potent wherever people meet together.

These ideas may serve to convince us that we may accomplish much in the way of good influence without going lecturing or writing or agitating. Each human unit who accomplishes his duty becomes a center of healthful radiations; just as, on the other hand, he may act as a germ spreading unhealthy influence around.

Not nearly enough is made of this. If we could only get rid of that habit of dividing up our interests into esoteric and exoteric, or (say) into the philosophical and the practical, we might have more philosophy in our practice and more practicality in our philosophy. There have been times — are now for some peoples — when religion was not a separate affair but was a part of life. Everything was done in the spirit of religion. Since those times, we have put religion away in a compartment by itself and invented another compartment, called 'secular' and including every-day business.

It has been the same with our philosophies. Tell a man something about the personality being a delusion, or about the higher and lower self, and he will say himself, "Oh that is something very solemn and sacred and lofty; someday we will all be like that." But he will not think of looking at it as something very real and ordinary, or of applying it in his daily conduct. And so, when we say that the personality is a delusion, and that this delusion can be dispelled, leading to an enlightenment, we are not speaking of some exalted state which only the few can reach, and we shall perhaps attain in some future birth; but we are speaking of a thing that can be realized by the humblest and simplest people in their daily life, if only they can induce themselves to take seriously what is said.

The mere fact of having this teaching in your mind will act as

PERSONALITY A DELUSION

though you carried about an electric lamp: a new light will be shed on every circumstance that comes up. You can take your daily life as a laboratory course of instruction; and be on the watch for verifications of the laws which you claim to believe in: watch out for an illustration of the fact that personality is a delusion. We need to avoid the notion that progress in knowledge or in attainment implies going into extraordinary states or employing extraordinary means. The real teachings of Occultism that matter are concerned with the most intimate affairs of daily life. It is in these that we meet the real difficulties and win the real victories.

We cannot perhaps define the word 'personality' too strictly: its meaning is variable and indefinite. But we can understand what is meant by developing the personality too much, or by overcoming it. It simply means being more or less wrapt up in oneself. It is easy to see that some teachings and methods which are wrongly called 'Occultism' are but new ways of cultivating the personality. If we gain powers for our personal gratification, we are making the personality, the selfish part of us, stronger than ever, and erecting a higher barrier between ourselves and the common lot. This is precisely what we do not want to do, if we are to tread the right path. The kind of powers we want are such as do not inflate the vanity, or render us conspicuous, or place us on a pedestal. For instance, the power to understand the real needs of other people, so as to be able to help them effectually, is a power very much needed everywhere and all the time. The possession of such a power (we use the word 'possession' with reluctance) would introduce us to a brighter world than that of self-love.

It is often a great help, when striving with our infirmities, if we can call them by other names. It may serve to unmask them. For instance, nervousness is often only a form of selfishness. Some (but not all) ailments are forms of selfishness: there is some part of our make-up which acts like a sort of old-man-of-the-sea mounted on our shoulders and insisting that we shall carry him about and feed him. He claims a large share of our vitality and resists vigorously when we attempt to use too much vitality in other matters. And so we say, 'I can't,' or 'I am too tired'; when perhaps, if the truth were known, we should rather have said, 'I won't.' This of course does not apply to all cases; yet there are probably few who can claim to be entirely free from *some* obsession of fear or nerves or antipathy, which, if frankly examined, might prove to be a form of self-engrossment. But the important practical point here is that the understanding of the nature of a disease takes us a long step towards its cure; and it is sometimes enough to recognise

THE THEOSOPHICAL PATH

the real nature of some such obstruction in order to see it vanish like a mist in the sun.

It is very important that people should cease making the teachings of Theosophy into something exotic and apart from daily life, and that it should be realized they are *meant to be used*. Is the personality a precious possession which we are loath to give up, or a prison into which we are shut and which we should rejoice to escape from? We are told it is a delusion, a false notion. We cannot cut ourselves off from the common lot, try as we may. Eternal justice will not allow us for long to reap the benefits of common life while refusing the duties. Retribution comes in the shape of an unadaptive personality, which we have built up by past selfishness, and which now prevents us from making the contacts for which we long.

Many ardent wishes are expressed that humanity should be more fraternal, instead of being divided into self-seeking individuals or warring classes; but we cannot wage successful war against an evil as long as we are nourishing it in our own hearts. He who hates cruelty should eliminate it from his own nature, in whatever form it may appear; for many people who would not harm a fly are unmerciful with their tongues and think nothing of lacerating hearts; and a philanthropist who is a selfish tyrant at home is not likely to accomplish much abroad. As selfishness is a delusion, let us dispel it where we meet it — in our own lives.

BALLADE OF PELARGONIUM-TIME

KENNETH MORRIS

IF He that left his golden place
Among the Immortals long ago,
To hear, along the hills of Thrace,
The herds of King Admetus low,
Were to revisit Earth, I trow
He would elect, of time and clime
For his new exile here below,
Point Loma at Pelargonium-time.

Earth, he should deem, in will to efface
Whatever scars she wears of woe,
Had called on all the faery race
Her bosom with such bloom to strow

MORE HASTE, LESS SPEED

As ere sin was: an overflow
Of loveliness: a paeon-chime
Of joy her Lord the Sun should know
Point Loma at Pelargonium-time.

In their great wealth of bloom he'd trace,
With all its creaming, foaming glow,
An opulent and timeless grace
As pagan as Olympus snow;
Proper to him as lyre and bow;—
Mute lyrics, rose-rich rime on rime
Sung on the winds that over-blow
Point Loma at Pelargonium-time.

L'Envoi:

Prince! as if touch of rake and hoe
Had brought back Earth her lovely prime,
She hath her fairest dreams to show
Thee here at Pelargonium-time!

*International Theosophical Headquarters,
Point Loma, California*

MORE HASTE, LESS SPEED

RALF LANESDALE



HIS is one of the proverbs of caution, of which we have so many, dear to the heart of the well-balanced, careful, and efficient mechanic, who carries a foot-rule in his pocket, and never takes chances on a measurement. It is a cry of warning to the bold adventurer to beware of the results of rashness, as well as a caution to the confiding public to beware of the dishonest and pretentious hustler, who makes a great display of haste while actually achieving nothing but slovenly hit or miss, there-or-thereabout, kind of work. To the careful and cautious mind, such a hustler is a mere pretender, who creates nothing but 'bluff,' who makes a great display of wonderful activity while never 'getting anywhere.'

And yet we must not hastily condemn the hustler, for, after all, he has his uses, and may serve a not unworthy purpose. He may be likened to a rotary fan-ventilator, which revolves at a great rate, but

THE THEOSOPHICAL PATH

never 'gets anywhere.' He also seems to spend his time threshing the air only in order to create a draft. But then, that *is* the mission of a ventilator. It is not asked to 'get anywhere' but just to stay where it belongs, and to make as much draft as possible. It may well happen that the health, and consequent capacity for work, of a large number of workers depends upon the hustling of that ventilating fan. The mission of a ventilator is to stir the air, to make an atmosphere, to be in fact a hustler. There are mines in which the lives of many workmen are at the mercy of such hustling.

Obviously, the old adage needs reconsidering. It is true and quite apparent that haste may be no guarantee of speed, nor a satisfactory substitute for efficiency, but it does not follow therefore that it is pernicious, or in any way a hindrance to good work. Indeed, one may say that as a rotary fan that relaxes its haste is useless for purposes of ventilation, so too a hustler whose activity runs down may thereby cease to serve the needs of the community. For just as the ventilator helps to vitalize the air we breathe, so too the hustler's activity creates an atmosphere of haste, which makes speed possible for others in their work; and if that is his job, to speed up the mental atmosphere for the benefit of thinkers, then, by all means, let him hustle!

This job of making an atmosphere, or of vitalizing that in which we live and do our thinking, is in reality a most important one if rightly undertaken; and we are all more or less actively engaged upon it, mostly unwitting, or even unwillingly; although for conscious work of this kind the will is an essential factor.

The creation of a right atmosphere is said indeed to be the first necessity in right education. Katherine Tingley, the creator of the Râja-Yoga system of education, lays great stress upon the creation of a proper atmosphere, in which the budding soul can expand its wings, if I may use such a figure.

There is so much done to create a soul-destroying atmosphere by an attitude of mental negativity, that it is hard to rise above the fog of pessimism thus created. Indeed, such negativity is moral crime, for just as a stagnant swamp breeds pestilential emanations fatal to bodily health, so negativity breeds pessimism, in which the soul cannot breathe. Better to be a hustler and a nuisance to sleeping souls, than to lie rotting in such a mental swamp, poisoning the air for all who pass that way.

"More haste less speed." And why not so? May it not be that there is in haste a virtue raising it above the practical achievement of mere speed? The haste of the hustler is positive; it is in some sort creative,

THEOSOPHY AND RELIGION

for it helps the making of an atmosphere, a thing elusive and invisible, but a thing of value to mankind. It is no matter what the hustler thinks of his own activity. He may be all unconscious of the great service he is actually conferring on the world, or with his mind set on some triviality, such as more speed in the performance of some quite unnecessary task, or the accomplishment of some unworthy object. His mission is to hustle; what comes of it is no concern of his.

Only to those who know the Self, is it given to know the purposes of life.

Haste is dynamic; offspring of will; and will is the radiation of life itself acting in the human heart. It is universal consciousness seeking expression on this plane of activity in Universal Brotherhood.

THEOSOPHY AND RELIGION

H. T. EDGE, M. A.



RELIGION is our loyalty to a power and a wisdom that transcends our ordinary understanding. It is a necessity of man's nature; for man possesses a self-contemplative mind; he does not live in his senses and emotions, but is able to contemplate them, to analyse them, to reason about them. He sees that the universe in general, and his own life in particular, are ordered by a power and a wisdom that transcend his own. He feels that he himself is endowed with a faculty that can enable him to draw near to this power and wisdom, to understand it to some degree, and to reverence its attributes.

Religion includes man's attempts to understand the life that is his and the world wherein he finds himself. Thus religion embraces the notion of *knowledge*. But it also includes other things. It is the intellectual man who views religion under the aspect of knowledge. There are artistic and poetical natures to whom the supreme appears as the perfection of beauty and sublimity and harmony. There are devotional natures, for whom religion is the highest ideal of loyalty to duty. There are those to whom religion seems as the sublimation of perfect love. Thus religion is easier to understand than to define. But in every case it may be said that religion is our intense conviction that the life we know, and the world we know, spring from a greater something that we do not know.

The message of Theosophy is that we *can* know; not all at a

THE THEOSOPHICAL PATH

single leap, but by infinite degrees of approach. For Theosophy teaches that man has within him, not merely the seed of physical and animal life, but a divine seed, which is capable of indefinite growth.

The essential difference between man and the animals is that, while the divine is present in both, yet in the animals there is very feeble contact between the divine and the natural; whereas in man there is a special faculty which forms a bond of union between the two. This faculty is *Manas*, the 'human soul,' a faculty not derived by evolution from the animals, but imparted to man at an early stage in his history, by beings of a higher order (the *Mânasaputras* or 'Sons of Mind').

Hence it is the lot of man to be dissatisfied. He seeks an ideal, a satisfaction, that can never be fully realized within the limits of his ordinary worldly experience. He must always have religion. He may become disgusted with conventional forms of religion and declare himself an atheist or an agnostic; but he at once makes himself some other religion, though he does not call it religion. He still has his faith in the possibility of higher attainment, in the possibility of happiness, in the potency of good, in the efficacy of right conduct, in the necessity for the fulfilment of duty. Without this faith, he would perish; and whenever it wanes, he woos despair.

Religion is thus independent of creeds: these are, as it were, fashions in religion; they have grown up among particular peoples at particular times. They have been started by some great Teacher — a Buddha or a Christ — that is to say, by a Man in advance of his race, who has given up certain higher privileges due to him as the result of his progress, in order that he might come among men as a Helper and show them — the Way, the Path. The religions, thus started, afterwards undergo modifications, becoming formalized, growing more worldly and less spiritual, splitting into sects according to the special needs or characters of particular groups of people. The spirit of partisanship enters into religion, causing the votaries of one creed to go forth with hostile intent against those of another creed; believing their own creed to be final, and calling the others heathen.

The abandonment of a particular creed does not mean a loss of religion; it may indeed be quite otherwise: it may be merely rejecting the shell to find the nut.

People often reject a religion because they say it involves superstition, and they claim to be above superstition. And yet they cling to other superstitions, which they perhaps call scientific. Perhaps there was never such a great variety of extraordinary and feeble superstitions,

THEOSOPHY AND RELIGION

gathered together in one place and at one time, as at the present day in the United States.

Sometimes the adherents of a particular religion hope that they will be able to convince the whole world that their religion is the final and supreme one. This is a vain hope: they cannot give up their limitations and keep them too.

The ability to imagine high ideals, and to yearn after them, is innate and imperishable in all men. Those ideals may be of various sorts: a desire for genuineness and sincerity; for beauty and harmony; for brotherly love; for knowledge and wisdom; all included in a general longing for perfection. The Theosophical Society was founded for the express purpose of gathering such people together from all parts, so that they might have a common home, an anchorage, and a means of uniting their efforts; instead of being lost in the overwhelming mass. The Founders of that Society also showed that we do not have to start our search for truth all over again from the beginning, *de novo*; but that a vast heritage from the past is ours. For in all ages man has devoted his energies to the search for truth, and the records of his attainments are still available.

The Theosophical teachings represent the work of H. P. Blavatsky and her helpers in this direction. But these teachings are not dogmas, whose implicit acceptance is required; they are helps, such as a qualified teacher may give his pupil. The pupil is expected to verify them for himself.

Surely the world is as much in need of Religion at this time as it ever was! And surely all truly religious people, whatever may be their profession of faith, can unite in heart to promote the cause of true religion. It is the essentials that count, and it is precisely the essentials upon which people of different creeds can agree.

Religions in general teach that man can invoke the divine spirit: they all have this teaching, though it may be expressed in different ways. Likewise, all are agreed as to what are the fruits of that spirit. Always there remains the great truth regarding human conduct, that man has to choose between his selfish desires and his better aspirations. This is no new message brought by Theosophy; but Theosophy has presented it in a new way and made it more real.

In many religions the great truth as to the eternity of the human soul has been suffered to grow obscure. There is no sufficient promise, held out before man, of the continuity of his soul-life; and he is left to the dreary prospect that all his efforts after self-knowledge in this life

THE THEOSOPHICAL PATH

may come to an untimely end. The doctrines of a future life do not seem to meet the requirements of the soul. It is here that Theosophy has done such incalculable service by restoring the ancient teaching of Reincarnation, thus enabling man to realize that he has other lives wherein to complete the great purposes which he has had to leave unfinished.

The brotherhood of man is certainly a religious teaching. Theosophy has thrown a new light on this by its teachings as to the constitution of man. The feeling of personal separateness is a peculiarity of the lower half of man's nature, and does not pertain to the higher. Man is actually unselfish in his higher nature; and by living more and more in that higher nature, he becomes unselfish by natural growth and not by any forced unnatural effort.

Conscience is upheld by Theosophy as the supreme guide for conduct; and nothing is countenanced that is not based upon conscience. The pursuit of knowledge, apart from conscience, can bring naught but tribulation sooner or later, both to oneself and to others; and knowledge has to be regarded as a means of drawing near the light.

H. P. Blavatsky said that Theosophy is not *a* religion, but is RELIGION Itself. It bears the same relation to religions as Humanity does to races and nations. As it is the essence of religion, its object must be to promote the true interests of mankind — to help man to realize his divine nature. Theosophy is rightly termed a masterkey to all systems, whether religious, philosophical, or scientific.


The Universal Brotherhood and Theosophical Society, which is the working organism of Theosophy, relies upon demonstration more than on preaching. The world is full of doctrines and words, and it is looking for visible and tangible results. In Lomaland there is a body of people living together a life wherein Theosophical principles are applied in a common-sense and natural way. People can thus witness how education, industries, and pursuits of all kinds, can be carried on upon Theosophical lines.

Religion is, or should be, an intimate concern of our life here and now; and people should not have two kinds of life, the one worldly and the other religious. Hence the truly religious spirit should enter the home-life and the business-life; not as a gloomy sanctimoniousness, but as a right and healthy attitude of mind towards everything. This is the view Theosophy takes of religion; and it has succeeded in satisfying a very urgent need which many people feel in their hearts today.

THE WEB OF DESTINY

MARJORIE M. TYBERG

I

HE Past and the Future! At every moment of our lives we stand between these two, linked to the one by what we are, by all the conditions surrounding us, for in the Past we were building these; linked to the future by every breath, for with every breath, by thought and deed, we sow the seeds of the character and outward circumstance of future lives.

Only too often the sole work that is being done by men and women in building the future, is in weaving nets for their feet, in which they shall stumble and grope and fear and fall, until at last a light breaks upon them. Then they learn that the web of destiny is of their own weaving; that none can extricate them but themselves; and that in courageously facing all the causes sown in the past, causes sown in ignorance and also in defiance, and untying the knots of destiny, liberating themselves from the coils woven around them by selfish living, they may at last realize the high destiny of a human being and win the consciousness and beneficent power of the godlike nature which waits and is 'crucified,' until this great awakening of the Soul takes place in the human being. Man is conqueror of the Past, master of the Future, when he knows his own essential divinity, as Theosophy can teach it to him.

The human race has lived long on earth, for many millions of years. Is it not time that humanity faced its problem? The unrolling of the screen of time, the evolution, has taken place. It is man's destiny, man's opportunity, to take up the threads of life and transmute every one into the pure and gleaming filament that can bridge the gap between his ordinary waking consciousness, and the god-like knowledge within which is his heritage. Every hour, or every life, in which this duty is avoided and deferred, does but hold him back from the great day when he will know himself, the day when he will cease to be a victim of the Past and begin to be a conscious builder, working with universal Law, gaining strength with every struggle, mighty and joyous in the exercise of the powers and faculties of the higher nature, instead of being a slave to the desires of the lower.

All mature men and women, all, in fact, who can look back over twenty-five or thirty years, must, if they reflect at all, realize that there is in human lives a peculiar significance, a mysterious relation between

THE THEOSOPHICAL PATH

individuals and the events of their lives. Sometimes, it is true, the element of the unexpected is so strikingly introduced that at first consideration there seems to be no connexion between the person and the event in his life which gives to it all a sudden turn; but when we note the way in which he reveals himself in relation to new and, to us and to him often, most unexpected conditions, we are obliged to conclude that there was a fitness there, either to yield or to endure; a strange harmony, as if the inevitable, guided by powerful, unseen hands had brought home an effect to the source whence emanated the cause.

Have you ever known people to recognise this? to exclaim when sudden disgrace or misfortune, ruining their hopes and their homes, comes upon them — “At last it has come; my hidden dread was not a fancy. Now for strength to bear what all along I have known was coming to me!” These are moments when men and women find either their weakness, which makes them whine and rebel; or their strength. The dreaded suffering may open the door to the higher realizations of the meaning of life, and of the divine nature within.

Any event, any anguish, which awakens a human being to the real business of life, which is to win from experience the knowledge of the essential inner divinity and the use of the powers of that divine nature in serving humanity, is really the signal which all should welcome, and so they would, did they but know the truth. Humanity cannot dodge the effect of what it has sown in a long past, but in reaping tuition instead of merely sorrow and despair, it can find its divinity and build a future of heavenly harmony. The wise Teachers say: Teach to eschew all selfish causes; the ripple of effect must run its course.

For long the Western world has had inadequate teaching regarding man's place and duty and possibilities. Human beings have been under fear of a hell where none might atone for an evil deed. Those whose destiny permitted them to avoid evil courses in any one life have been corrupted and encouraged to fall into the “heresy of separateness,” by being promised a heaven from which some were excluded forever. Of course, we all know that there are selfish persons whose enjoyment of any pleasure is enhanced by the knowledge that others are excluded from the enjoyment of it. This, when we were children, puzzled some of us who were brought up in the orthodox beliefs; but now we have learned that compassion had no home in the hearts of those persons.

Theosophy sheds the light of truth upon all these matters. It teaches us that the whole evolution of the outward world and all the conditions to be found in it, have been for the sake of the Soul's experience and that rather than dream of any heaven where humanity

THE WEB OF DESTINY

may escape these conditions, the human race must find within their own hearts the power — lying there awaiting the moment of awakening — to change and harmonize them all with the working of the higher.

The whole problem is — evolution, through race after race, on continent after continent, of human forms and faculties, involution through mighty ages during which man shall find his inner, essential, god-like faculties. Oh, for something to reveal to humanity the wholeness and grandeur of the true conceptions of life! Not only sowing and reaping, sinning and suffering, false enjoyment and bitter repentance; not resignation, weak-kneed and specious; but realization, consciousness of essential divinity, a Great Beginning where so long there has been but an unsatisfactory ending. What shall reveal to humanity the whole course of the drama of its life? Religion in decadence has never done it. Theosophy, the mother of all religions, in many times and places, to many an ancient people, and now to you, unfolds this great drama of destiny and calls on you to rise in your essential divinity and act your part.

And one of the times when this true teaching was given to mankind, not, it is true, so fully as it is now given to you, was in ancient Greece. The conditions in Athens were for a time such that even the great body of the people could be instructed in some of the mysteries of life. There was an openness, an alertness, and unity in the public mind that gave to the Helpers of the race, always ready and waiting for fortunate seasons of this kind, an opportunity to lift the consciousness of the people to true conceptions of life and to hold before the minds of many, the highest possibilities of the human being.

Aeschylus, the divinely-inspired tragedian of ancient Greece, was one who seized the golden moment and made it serve humanity's enlightenment. Aeschylus was prepared to do this. He had been initiated into the Mysteries; he knew much more than he was free to reveal to the public, as do all Teachers of humanity. He showed his fitness to be a Teacher by the marvelous way in which he made use of the material that was at hand, and by choosing a form which appealed, as no other could appeal, to the people of his day. There had long been Tragedy in Greece, of a kind, but it remained for Aeschylus to set upon this form of literary art the divine seal of the Teacher of humanity, to consecrate it to a use and service to which in all golden days of national upliftment, the drama must be restored.

Aeschylus took, too, the legends with which all the Greeks who thronged the theater at the two yearly festivals in Athens, were thoroughly familiar. With sublime art he wove some of these old stories into a trilogy — a group of three dramas — dealing with the fortunes of one

THE THEOSOPHICAL PATH

family. It is said that in the Greek colonies the performances of the dramas of this Oresteian trilogy were ordered by the magistrates, so beneficent, so inspiring, so uplifting, had their influence been found to be; and so intensely representative of the genius of the fatherland. Seventy-seven dramas were the output of this Teacher-tragedian. Only seven remain to us, and the three composing the above-mentioned trilogy offer the best material for the study of the method and teaching of Aeschylus.

With the legendary history of the Heroic Age all Greeks were familiar; so that when Aeschylus chose for the theme of this trilogy the House of Atreus, his hearers well knew that from the days of Tantalus, grandfather of Atreus, the scions of this house had steeped themselves in such hideous crimes that their names had become a byword to the Greek race.

It must be remembered that in his dramas Aeschylus, making that interpretation of everything which he thought would instruct and uplift the people, regards the gods as members of those Hierarchies of divine beings who are concerned in the working out of the Higher Law. He shows them responding to the appeal of those who aspire sincerely and unselfishly, and allying their force to that of human beings who wish to act in harmony with that Law; and he shows them acting just as forcefully in interposing in human affairs when Karma — Nemesis — permitted, to bring about conditions, no matter how painful for the time, which will lead human beings to the point of awakening, of realization. Surely it is a godlike thing to be a conscious instrument of the Law which will save humanity from its lower self.

Tantalus, then, with the insolence generated in some persons by the possession of enormous wealth, and ungrateful for the friendship shown to him by the gods, thought with his human intellect to outwit them, to prove by a cruel and unnatural trick that the gods were no greater than men, falling into the error of believing that his limitations bound even these divine Companions. The gods were gods, however, so Tantalus was detected. His punishment you are familiar with. It has given us our word *tantalize*, for in the After-world Tantalus suffered thirst, though water to slake it with, and fresh, delicious fruits, were ever at hand, though receding at his effort to grasp them.

Atreus and Thyestes, his grandsons, were partners in one cruel deed, and Thyestes treacherously destroyed the home of his brother by dishonoring Atreus' wife. He was banished, and daring to return, meets at the hands of Atreus the most exquisitely cruel revenge one human being ever took upon another. Bitter indeed was the feud between these

THE WEB OF DESTINY

brothers, and a heavy curse rested upon the House of Atreus, descending to his son Agamemnon. Agamemnon was a great warrior, and had shown, under severe test, his willingness to abide by the decisions of the gods in regard to the great undertaking then in progress, viz., the Expedition against Troy; but his home and family, notwithstanding this sacrifice, were still surrounded by the lurking demons of crime generated by his wicked forefathers.

Strangely enough it is through his wife, Clytaemnestra, that the curse strikes Agamemnon. In the first play of this trilogy of Aeschylus, the return of Agamemnon from Troy is awaited by his household. An undercurrent of dread is felt, for though Clytaemnestra has carried everything with a high hand and seemingly has the whole palace subject to her wishes, it is known that she has not been a true wife, and the return of her husband must lead to shameful revelations. The man who has been her undoing, is Aegisthus, son of Thyestes, the hated brother of Agamemnon's father, so, though dead long ago, the brothers have left their feud alive; another home is about to be wrecked; and strengthened by this new wrong, the curse will descend to Agamemnon's children. Clytaemnestra had kept them out of the way, determined to brook no disturbance of any of her selfish, murderous designs, Aegisthus, glorying in his opportunity for revenging his father's wrongs, abetting her in every one of them.

We can but trace the story. Nowhere else in literature is a woman shown so powerful in evil as the Clytaemnestra of Aeschylus. The combination in her of resentment at a wrong done her by Agamemnon, and some yet unconquered passional tendencies of her own, make of her fall something appalling. One cannot but see that here, in this woman, with a great nature gone wrong, was the power that could have turned all the dark spirits of her husband's house to light — but it was not to be. She kills her husband, and the curse falls upon their children. To Orestes then descends the necessity of being great and unselfish enough to perform the sacrifice that will disarm all these hateful furies generated by so many crimes.

The burden of Orestes was terrible. His one protection was his determination to serve the Higher Law, to do only that which that Law demanded. He asked no martial glory; no selfish thought was his. He made a complete renunciation of his lower self. Even so, he had to face the avenging Furies of the unrighteousness his race had wrought (thrilling indeed are the scenes in which his suffering is shown); but these avenging Furies were really angels in disguise, and when it was plain to the gods that in Orestes remained no shadow of guile or self-seeking,

THE THEOSOPHICAL PATH

not even the shade of Clytaemnestra had power to hound him longer. Pallas Athene herself appeared and rescued him, a sign that divine justice is able to restore lost harmony, when the lesson of renunciation has been learned.

The crowning event in the third drama of the trilogy, *The Eumenides*, revealed the power of the divine helper to appease the Furies, and to transform them into peaceful spirits. This was possible only because of the absolute renunciation of Orestes. The Furies had descended to him; with him lay the power to nourish their life as Furies, but he renounced everything in his nature upon which their life as Furies depended, and a touch of the goddess, at hand to help a human being who could thus renounce, transformed them. The knots of dreadful destiny were loosened. The feet of Orestes were free from the old web of selfishness and crime.

Renunciation, trust in the Higher Law, absolute obedience to its mandates, these, taught Aeschylus, free mankind from the avenging Furies lying in wait for every one, dogging the steps at every return with power given them by failures in the past. The last scene of *The Eumenides* in which the transformed Furies are led in grand procession to their homes, was a message of hope to humanity. It meant, what Aeschylus knew to be the truth, that the evil passions must be conquered here, on earth, by renunciation of the lower and knowledge of the Law, and that back and back again to earth, we and they come, until the conquest has been effected.

It was humanity's problem and its solution which Aeschylus placed before the people in this trilogy; and, in setting before them the great truths even in a veiled way, he was sounding a challenging note to the Soul. Knowledge of the redeeming force in the divine nature of man; of Karma-Nemesis and the web of destiny woven by human act and thought; of the Hierarchies of beings who are impersonal servants of the Higher Law; and of the conquest, in the flesh, and on earth, of all demons of evil — these truths were taught the Greeks who assembled at the festivals where dramatic performances were given.

The link between the national religion and the drama, which had grown out of the religious rites, the superb intelligence of the throng of listeners, the beauty and dignity of all that was connected with such performances, enhanced the effect produced upon the Greek audiences.

Imagine a theater on the hillside, capable of seating 17,000 persons, who had assembled with a kind of religious fervor, expecting to be uplifted and purified by the drama presented. None of the commercial aspects of the modern drama were present there. All citizens of Athens

THE WEB OF DESTINY

were admitted without any entrance-fee. The chorus-leaders were citizens of high standing, and sometimes the choruses they trained would be drawn from as many as one hundred and fifty families of the city, all proud to participate in the dramatic exhibition.

And it must be remembered that much more than they saw, much more than has been indicated by this interpretation of the trilogy, was conveyed to the Soul of these Greeks, for symbols appeal to the Soul; and Aeschylus, an initiate into the Eleusinian Mysteries, was conscious of the power of the great truths underlying the actions of his dramatic personae to awaken and nourish the soul-life.

Would that this drama today could touch a chord in the hosts of human beings whose lives are no less haunted than those of Atreus and Agamemnon, by demons of past crimes, and whose despair and defiance of the Higher Law and ignorance of that Law and of themselves, leave them fast bound in the webs and coils of their own weaving, helpless, hopeless. When they have suffered the pang that awakens, and have found the Law as Theosophy teaches it, we shall see many liberators like Orestes who choose renunciation of self, and disarm the avenging Furies of the group of Souls to which they are related karmically; loosening forever the cruelest knots of destiny and freeing the beneficent power now chained by the lower will.

It was a very significant thing that the Theosophical Leader, Katherine Tingley, did in 1898 when she revived the ancient Greek drama by performances given in New York and other cities, and at Point Loma many times in later years, of the last play of this trilogy of Aeschylus, *The Eumenides*, in which the wonderful transformation of the Furies occurs. The students who attended these performances are not likely to forget the effect of this revival. It seemed to link us anew to the Teachers of old, to bring home to us the fact that the Wisdom-Teaching, now brought to the world again by the Theosophical leaders, had been given to the people in this wonderful way which appeals to every noble instinct and every aspiration towards the Beautiful and the True. Katherine Tingley's remarkable revival of Aeschylus, and this particular drama especially, was a promise to the twentieth century of new-old methods of instruction in the truths and mysteries of Life.

But if you scan her work you will find that she has done even more significant things; for, in the work which she has established, she has opened up the way for large numbers of men, women, and children to accomplish their own liberation, by unselfish service to humanity and obedience to the Higher Law, from the snares and evils that beset all who are not learning their essential divinity and the power that lies

THE THEOSOPHICAL PATH

in the divine nature. Too long have men in ignorance and the slavery to selfish desire woven fetters for themselves. Little by little, enlightened by Theosophy, and guided by its Teachers, even as of old, shall they now learn to be Builders of a glorious future in which the Soul, with all the passions its transformed and devoted servitors, shall be free to express in human life all the beauty and harmony that can never be lived until the Law is known and obeyed.

II

HUMANITY, the heir of the ages, has inherited — *itself*. Men and women today have only to study history in order to know what they have been and what they still are, unless they have begun the transformation which is at once their duty and their opportunity.

But the whole of humanity's heritage is never known until the fact, that the present is the fruit of causes sown in the past by individuals and races, is faced. When the whole drama of human life is at last conceived by the mind, when the inadequate one-life theory has given place to the true conception, *viz.*, the Soul taking on the garb of flesh in many successive lives, gleaned from each, or from every one from which it can, the experience which makes it possible to express more fully the Soul's nature in a new incarnation, man begins to realize a new responsibility. When he accepts this responsibility, he begins to discover what was long a hidden treasure, a part of his heritage of which he did not know the existence. He begins to know himself as the creator of the present, he begins to see the terrible flaws in his building, he learns that in the essentially divine nature of his abides the power to transform all the conditions of life, he realizes that all these outward and inward conditions in the world of human beings and all the other kingdoms of nature, are waiting for his touch, given as one conscious of essential divinity.

At last he knows his heritage. At last he knows that in freeing himself, by means of knowledge and self-conquest, from the webs of destiny which in the past he has woven about him by ignorance and indulgence of the desires of the lower nature, he can now make himself master of what has so long enslaved him, and can free a god within himself.

When this true conception of humanity and its life is reached, how differently we view everything! How absurd seems what was once so easy, *viz.*, the being so absorbed in the doings of the present life as to be utterly unaware of the Soul's purpose which extends over many lives. How short-sighted it seems to so thoroughly identify one's entire con-

THE WEB OF DESTINY

sciousness with what is purely transitory! How is it that human beings can be fooled into doing this? It is certainly a very tragic result of the acceptance of inadequate teachings regarding the drama of human destiny, and it is difficult to decide which portion of unawakened humanity is in the more cruelly self-deceived condition — those who suffer the pangs of adversity without the conviction that perfect justice rules, without any explanation of their state; or those who, because of temporary exemption from adversity, plume themselves in baseless optimism; both of these parties being unaware that at any moment Karma, the law of cause and effect, may bring a change to which they will find that they must and can adapt themselves, because they themselves sowed also the causes now coming to fruition in a different scene of the drama.

And what a humiliating thought that because of our foolish blindness to the purpose of life on earth, we may pass a whole life, or even several incarnations, without ever realizing that we are groping about with feet tangled in webs of our own weaving, and that such an intensely limited, personal existence may not permit one thread of Karma to be unraveled from the tangle into which, on coming back to earth, we fall again.

What a frightful descent into ignorance is incarnation in these cases! For Theosophy teaches that at the moment of rebirth, awaking from the state of rest that bridges lives on earth, the Ego, the Soul which persists through all, looks forward over the life that it is entering on, realizes all the causes which in it shall find fruition; realizes them, sees futurity; is, in fact, for a brief moment, the god he shall one day be in full consciousness in waking life. When we think upon this teaching we exclaim: "Oh, if the purpose of the Soul as seen in that glorious moment might be the inspiration of the opening life! If throughout that life the guiding thread of destiny as known to the Soul, might be held by us and release us from the labyrinths into which sense-gratification and personal ambition precipitate us. Why must we always forget the glorious moment of omniscience that could give us the key to all?" It need not be.

To know our essential divinity, to remember it when the garb of flesh has been again assumed, would be to know our strength and to have the knowledge that we can overcome every obstacle; but to know our strength we have first to face our weakness. Who has the courage to do this?

We hear often enough, wherever the teaching of rebirth is mentioned, that persons here and there are very desirous of knowing full details of their past lives on earth. Have they any idea of what this would involve? Imagine, some of you who torture yourselves in self-

THE THEOSOPHICAL PATH

abasement and despair over the failures of one life, or who have not, perhaps, the fortitude to endure the sorrows of one life, what it would be to face all the wrong you ever did. This is one of the severest tests of those who would be initiated into the mysteries of life. A wonderful poem, a relic of the Mysteries of Antiquity given to students by a Teacher of humanity, makes a vivid picture of this test:

“Oh! those terrible bruised hearts are only those upon whom thou hast trodden.

“Blench not, those maimed bodies are thy handiwork.

“Oh! pale face, take brave hold. Thou hast glowed over these deeds — why shudder now?

“Was it so very terrible? Did the water burn thy very life? Ah! so burnedst thou the life of others!”

The path the great body of humanity must tread is that of gradual realization, preparing by conscientious self-study and self-conquest for the greater opportunities for learning of the divine nature. Who can say that he has made the best of any one life in learning to know the depths of his nature, in having courage to face them and by purifying them, to win the consciousness of the essential divinity within?

To the second of the great tragedians of ancient Greece, Sophocles, we owe two dramas which represent a human being experiencing the awakening brought about by the revelation of the terrible mistakes into which, in one life, a man may fall; a man, strong, sincere, active, helpful — a man who, one would think, was a benefactor of his race, and yet who, though the knowledge of the Soul concerning the tests his present life held for him was unveiled to him in his youth by those whom he recognised as his Teachers, so stumbled in the web of destiny that his past deeds had woven about his feet, that he found himself an outcast, the cause of ruin to all he loved. But, because of his sincerity, his strength, and courage, he won even in the terrible conditions into which his destiny led him, a consciousness of divinity that marks him as one who henceforward would be a Master of destiny.

The transformation wrought in him, not on his death-bed, but during years of disgrace and homelessness, is so clearly revealed to us in these superb tragedies of Sophocles, that they enrich our conceptions of the power of the divinity in human nature to transmute the lower, and to recognise the harmony of the working of its own redemptive forces with that of the great, unseen, mysterious agencies of the Higher Law.

We can form some idea of the privileges enjoyed by the Greeks at their great dramatic festivals when we recall that Sophocles, the second great tragedian of ancient Greece, was the author of at least one hundred and thirteen dramas. Many of those which are lost to us, are said to have been as great as the seven that remain. Sophocles was born thirty

THE WEB OF DESTINY

years after Aeschylus, and his art was contemporary with the culture of the age of Pericles.

The Athenians had passed from one stage of development into another, and the dramas of Sophocles, in which the divine agencies guiding the destiny of humanity are less clearly shown than in the works of Aeschylus, still teach the inevitable Law that underlies human life. They are masterly studies of human motive, and of the great crises in the awakening of men and women to the deeper side of their nature.

In the two tragedies I have referred to, Sophocles, also an initiate into the Eleusinian Mysteries, like Aeschylus made use of the legendary history of the heroic age of Greece, with which the people were all familiar, in order to instruct them and to delight them; for if Sophocles was,—perhaps because the golden moment of possibility had passed,—less of a Teacher than Aeschylus, he was a very great poet, being called indeed the ‘Homier of Tragedians.’

The traditions to which Sophocles gave his transcendent touch in the dramas, *Oedipus the King*, and *Oedipus at Colonus*, were those concerning the fate of the house of Labdacus. Laius, King of Thebes and son of Labdacus, was married to Jocasta, and having no child, appealed to the gods through the oracle at Delphi, praying that he might have a son. And the answer of the gods was that Laius should cease to desire a son because if he ever had a son who grew to man’s estate, that son would be his murderer. But not very long after a son was born to Laius and Jocasta. Then fear seized them because of the answer of the gods, and they thought to avoid the fulfilment of the prophecy by ridding themselves of the child. So they gave the little one to a shepherd, telling him to dispose of it. The shepherd pierced the child’s feet, intending to leave him to perish on the hillside. Long afterwards, Laius of Thebes went on a journey and met his death on the way.

Thebes was then suffering from the ravages of a terrible monster called the Sphinx, and the people did not inquire into the king’s death, as they were absorbed in searching for some one to deliver them, the only way to do it being by giving the right answer to the riddle propounded by the Sphinx. And a stranger appeared, Oedipus of Corinth, who unhesitatingly gave the right answer and killed the monster, delivering Thebes. The people were so rejoiced that they made Oedipus their king and he became the husband of Jocasta the Queen. For many years peace and prosperity reigned. Then, suddenly, there was a change. Plague visited the city and as was the custom in those days, the people appealed to the gods.

The drama, *Oedipus the King*, opens with the King, the priest,

THE THEOSOPHICAL PATH

and the suppliants, awaiting the return of Creon, the Queen's brother, with the answer of the gods given by the oracle. It is that if they would be free from the plague they must inquire into the death of their king, Laius, which they had passed over, in their eagerness to be rid of the Sphinx. Oedipus declares that this indeed shall be done, no step shall be omitted that might bring to justice the slayer of King Laius. He, Oedipus, will be the avenger of the dead king; he pronounces a curse upon all those who refuse to aid in the search; vows that he himself will seek as earnestly for the guilty one as if Laius had been his own father — all this to help the land and the people he has learned to love.

It is proposed that old Tiresias, the soothsayer, be sent for, to advise them. Oedipus begs him to use all his hidden art of prophecy to reveal the name of the guilty man. Tiresias implores Oedipus to give up the search, but only angers him, so eager is he to deliver the suffering city a second time. Only when provoked to anger does the old blind prophet burst out with these words to the King: "*Thou* art the cause of plague and suffering to the land."

Oedipus can explain these words to himself only by concluding that Creon, the queen's brother, has plotted with the prophet to dethrone him and get the crown for himself, and he thus accuses Tiresias; but the old prophet enjoins him to look to himself and declares that a dread fate is his upon that very day. Creon, when likewise accused, asserts his innocence of any plot, but acknowledges he sent the prophet and knew his message; and, defying Oedipus, has to face banishment or death as a conspirator.

The Queen, entering and demanding the cause of so much anger, is told that Creon and Tiresias say that Oedipus the King is the guilty man they seek. Jocasta, the Queen, does not play a heroic part in the tragedy. Having acted the part of a weakling and a coward long ago, she has lost her womanly insight and now scoffs at all prophecies that state the warnings of the gods. "Laius," she says, "would be slain by his son, said the gods, but he perished at the hands of robbers at a place where three great roads meet. So much for the warning given long ago, and the one given you now!"

"Slain by his son — at a place where three great roads meet." These words stir a strain of memory long silent in Oedipus. The travail of the soul begins.

The following scenes of the drama reveal in quickly moving incident and dialog the dread fate the day has brought to Oedipus. His own sincerity, determination, and thoroughness in searching out every link, in following up every thread of the terrible web in which he is now

THE WEB OF DESTINY

caught fast, leave nothing but ruin to his happiness, his helpfulness, his hopes. The whole bitter truth is made clear to him. The helpless child whom the parents had sent away to die, hoping to avoid the doom of the father, had been succored by a herdsman, carried to the King of Corinth who reared the foundling as his son, calling him Oedipus, which means 'Swollen-foot.'

When Oedipus grew up, hearing strange stories of his birth, he appealed to the gods for the truth, and received the warning: "Beware, lest thou slay thy father, wed thy mother, and become an outcast from among men." Oedipus hastens to leave Corinth, thinking to avoid a tragedy; and on the journey he falls into a quarrel with a man at a place where three great roads met, slays him, passes on to the city near by which was in sore affliction from the ravages of the Sphinx, answers the riddle, delivers the city, becomes its king, and marries the queen!

Now, when once more Thebes is suffering, he stands, the curse of the city he had once delivered, the man guilty of all he had denounced and sought so zealously to uncover, the father who dare not look his children in the face, with the doom of an utter outcast the only future he himself would pray any power to grant him. Here was a man who had woven nets for his feet, who had fallen into snares he had set for himself, in spite of warning, and who now stood face to face with the result of many of his own mistakes in former lives.

I know of no other story which so well illustrates the futility of merely personal arrangements made by human beings with the purpose of avoiding what the Law will surely bring them, because they have woven in the past the webs of these predicaments, and have not risen to the realization of the Law which would enable them to recognise the danger when it first showed itself and learn a lesson that might save them from falling farther. Both Laius and his son, in attempting to escape results, hasten the destiny they would avoid. Both are warned, but fail to stand on guard over that in their natures which was to betray them. At that place where three great roads met, where father and son encountered each other, there were several ways to turn but — they met. Though warned by the gods whom they trusted and believed, they both did the very things that involved them in the difficulties they seemed sincere enough in wishing to avoid.

The voice of the gods was unquestionably the voice of the Soul reminding the incarnated ego of the knowledge it had before birth. This voice is never utterly silent. It speaks to all as the 'still small voice of conscience,' and men and women today who face themselves and recognise what has brought them into the conditions in which they suffer and

THE THEOSOPHICAL PATH

repent, know that the still, small voice often gave warning just as did the oracle to Laius and Oedipus, at the great turning-points of life, but was often disregarded or silenced. It was as useless to appeal to the gods and then forget the words of the oracle as it is for us to long for the memory of the Soul while we silence the voice of conscience.

Oedipus, then, was in the terrible situation of having unexpectedly to face what we should call an accumulation of karmic results. He had the opportunity of knowing the weakness hidden or suspected, in his own nature. The wonderful power of the dramas of Sophocles lies in the way in which this dramatic situation is revealed as well as in the way in which Oedipus the outcast is shown to find his strength. He is not mastered by his misfortunes. At first, after the blow fell, he would gladly have exiled himself and hid from the eyes of men, but the word of the gods was that Oedipus should remain in the city, and it is not until he has seen his children grow up and has with pain-opened eyes learned to await calmly what further destiny shall bring, that he is cast forth, deserted by all but one daughter, Antigone, who from all this suffering and disgrace emerges as the most unselfish and enlightened woman of Greek legendary history.

The sorrows of Oedipus and Antigone were like those of many people we know, who seem to have been pursued by an evil fate which would be unjust and inexplicable were it not that the heredity of a long past of many lives is sometimes heaped upon those who have gained strength to bear it and learn from it and rise from the lesson with an awakened consciousness of the working of the Higher Law

In the tragedy *Oedipus at Colonus*, Sophocles shows us a man who, in life, and pursued to the very day of his death by the hounds of a dreadful destiny, accomplishes in himself, by the magic of his divine nature, the transformation which released him from the power of the past evils to enslave him and brought him into harmony with the purposes of the Soul.

It was a significant thing that Oedipus found his last refuge on earth in the grove sacred to the Eumenides — the avenging Furies which had pursued Orestes and had been transformed into peaceful spirits by Pallas Athene, when the renunciation of Orestes was complete. The death of Oedipus was a triumph; but even before his death it was evident that from his brave acceptance of the fruit of his past deeds, there had sprung a beneficent power *which made his very presence a protection to his fellows.*

From these great tragedies of ancient Greece, many Theosophical

PRACTICAL THEOSOPHY

lessons can be learned. What these initiate-tragedians show Orestes and Oedipus achieving, Theosophy would teach all humanity to do. The truths of Theosophy, the divinity of the higher nature, the perfectibility of man, the rebirth of the Soul giving many opportunities for winning from experience the knowledge of the divine nature, and its power to transform the lower; all these inspire men and women to persevere, to meet the results of a long past fearlessly, to accept them as bravely, to liberate themselves from the web of destiny by renunciation and unselfishness, and in freeing themselves from the power of the lower to enslave them, find the God-nature that suffering humanity needs in order to save it from itself. It was the future in which humanity should attain this of which Jesus said, "Greater things than these shall ye do."

PRACTICAL THEOSOPHY

WILLIAM Q. JUDGE

[Reprinted from *The Path*, Vol. V, No. 4, July, 1890]



THE ethics of life propounded by Jesus are not different from those found in Theosophy, but the latter holds in its doctrines a compelling power which is absent from Christianity and from those systems which require a man to be good for virtue's sake alone. It is not easy to practise virtue for the simple reason that we ought to do so, since the desire for reward is inherent in humanity, and is a reflexion of the evolutionary law which draws the universe ever upward to higher points of development. A man reads the command of Jesus to turn the other cheek to the smiter, to resist not evil, to forgive without stint, and to take no thought for the morrow, and then — pauses. His next thought is that such a canon is wholly utopian, and would if followed subvert society. In this he is sustained by eminent authority as well as by example, for a great Bishop has declared that no state can exist under such a system.

Theosophic doctrine, however, on either the selfish or spiritual line of life, convinces that the moral law must be obeyed. If we regard only the selfish side, we find when people are convinced that evil done in this life will be met with sure punishment in another reincarnation, they hesitate to continue the old careless life when they lived for themselves alone.

Hence practical Theosophy must enter into every detail of life in

THE THEOSOPHICAL PATH

our dealings with others and our discipline of ourselves. It reminds us that we should be more critical of ourselves than of others, that we must help all men if we are to be helped ourselves. And herein the Theosophist may escape the accusation of selfishness, for if in desiring to lay up for a future incarnation a store of help from others by giving assistance now himself, he does so in order that he may then be in a still better position to help humanity, there is no selfishness. It is the same as if a man were to desire to acquire this world's goods in order to help those dependent on him, and surely this is not selfish.

The practical Theosophist adds to his charitable deeds upon the material plane the still greater charity of giving to his fellow-men a system of thought and life which explains their doubts while it furnishes a logical reason for the practice of virtue. He extinguishes a hell that never could burn, and the terrors of which soon faded from the mind of the sinners; but he lights the lamp of truth and throws its beams upon the mortal's path so that not only the real danger, the real punishment, can be seen, but also the reward and compensation.

The civilized man cannot be guided by fear or superstition, but reason may take hold of him. Theosophy being not only practicable but also reasonable as well as just, its doctrines are destined to be those of the civilized man. They will gradually drive out the time-worn shibboleths of the theologian and the scientist, giving the people of coming centuries a Wisdom Religion deeply based and all-embracing.

. . . Nor would men save their lives, as now they often do, at another's expense, since in succeeding incarnations that person might be the means of depriving them of life twice over. The rich man who now hoards his wealth or spends it on himself alone would not be thus guilty, seeing that, as compensation in another life, his friends would forsake him and nature seem to withdraw subsistence.

The practical Theosophist will do well if he follows the advice of the Masters now many years in print, to spread, explain and illustrate the laws of Karma and Reincarnation so that they may enter into the lives of the people. Technical occultism and all the allurements of the Astral Light may be left for other times. Men's thoughts must be affected, and this can only be done now by giving them these two great laws. They not only explain many things, but they have also an inherent power due to their truth and their intimate connexion with man, to compel attention.

Once heard they are seldom forgotten, and even if rebelled against they have a mysterious power of keeping in the man's mind, until at

FINDING THE SELF

last, even against his first determination, he is forced to accept them. The appreciation of justice is common to all, and the exact justice of Karma appeals even to the person who is unfortunate enough to be undergoing heavy punishment: even if, ignoring justice, he does good in order to make good Karma, it is well, for he will be reborn under conditions that may favor the coming out of unselfish motive.

“Teach, preach, and practise this good law for the benefit of the world, even as all the Buddhas do.”

FINDING THE SELF

H. TRAVERS, M. A.

FINDING the Self” is one of the expressions by which the path to knowledge is named: it means that we seek to discover the real ‘I’ beneath all the veils by which it is hid. Selfhood is a quality which can combine itself with all sorts of ideas and moods, thus giving rise to fictitious selves; these are temporary and variable, so that we often have to ask ourselves, “Which of all these is the real I?” None of them is real; all are artificial. It is as though the light of the sun were casting images on a screen, and we mistook these images for the light itself. So what we have to do is to discover the real light, the real sun, so that we may no longer be misled by all these images and reflexions.

Man has one ‘I’ which persists through all life, so that, however many changes he may pass through, he feels that he is the same person throughout. But he cannot isolate this enduring person from the numerous moods through which it manifests itself; he cannot arrive at a conception of the pure I without any alloy of ideas or emotions. If he could do this, he might get some answer to the question, ‘Who am I?’

Yet this problem is the one which we must sooner or later solve; for there is something in our nature which impels us along the road of self-knowledge; and we have to test all kinds of experience in search of that which alone is satisfying and permanent. One single earth-life is not enough for the accomplishment of such a work; as we can easily see by comparing different people, who are in such different stages of knowledge. The idea of Reincarnation leads to the conclusion that the real I must be greater than the I which belongs to only one earth-life.

THE THEOSOPHICAL PATH

The existence of a real Self beyond the unsatisfying and ever-shifting false selves, has been the conviction of deep thinkers in all ages. We find H. P. Blavatsky saying:

“From the days of the primitive man . . . down to our modern age, there has not been a philosopher worthy of that name, who did not carry in the silent sanctuary of his heart the grand and mysterious truth. If initiated, he learnt it as a sacred science; if otherwise, then, like Socrates repeating to himself, as well as to his fellow-men, the noble injunction, ‘O man, know thyself,’ he succeeded in recognising the God within himself . . . the emanation of the ONE Supreme God.”

And V. E. Southworth says the following:

“Man has that within him out of which the cosmos was builded and by whose command order prevails. Man is fundamentally one with, and indeed is, the spirit of the universe.”

And many more such quotations might be collected. The finest experience and meditation always conduct man to a knowledge of this great secret — that the *real* Self of man is divine, is of one essence with the cosmic Deity. So finding the Self means arriving at a consciousness of the truth of this great fact.

And is not this truth the essence of religion? Religion always means the setting aside of selfish personal interests in favor of something which we believe to be of higher import. Whatever we may call it — God, the divine law, good, right — it is the same thing: we recognise that man is subject to a law greater than his own wishes; that he owes allegiance to a Self mightier than his insignificant personal self. Shall we envisage this power as an external deity or as that universal spirit of light and truth which has a center in every human heart? By the latter view we come closer to Deity; we gain in self-respect; we set before ourselves a possible goal of attainment. And religions, in their original pure form, do teach that man, “made in the [spiritual] image of God,” can so transform his own nature as to enable that divine likeness to manifest itself in him.

The possession of this divine spark endows man with a limitless power of *becoming*: there can be no limits set to his possibilities. Did not Jesus extol the power of faith? But we must always remember that personal desire has to be sacrificed to Love; for if we use the powers of will and imagination to increase our personal stature, we but rivet the chains more firmly upon ourselves, thus hindering all healthy growth.



“LET us make our every act the expression of all that is divinest in our hearts.”— *Katherine Tingley*

THE DEAD IN LIFE

R. MACHELL



HE dead in life. There is a weird fascination about that expression, that is not at first hearing suggestive of the deep truth it carries. Truly the world is full of the dead. But they are dead only in the sense in which a sleeper may be said to be dead to all that is going on around. Look at the number of people who rarely lift their eyes from the ground; wrapped they are in dreams of self, dead to the beauties of heaven and earth.

Of those who believe themselves to be very wide-awake, the proportion that really sees any considerable part of the great pageant continually being displayed to their unseeing eyes, is very small. They may resent the assertion that their eyes are unseeing; but it is easy to test the extent of their grasp of the whole field of possible observation. It is incredibly small. People will readily admit that they do not pay much attention to what they see except in so far as it may interest them personally; but they cannot believe that they really only see a very small part of what passes around them, because they have never tried to cultivate the faculty of seeing, nor have they at all systematically tested the accuracy of their observation, as artists and students of nature are forced to do to some limited extent.

When a student begins to use this mysterious power of sight for real observation, he soon becomes aware of his limitations in that direction; and when he has spent a lifetime in watching certain phases and aspects of nature he knows how blind he really is, though perhaps able to see at a glance more than the average man sees in a lifetime. The student learns slowly the necessity of developing each faculty, of training it and testing it. Yet the general public takes it for granted that a person, whose sight is not defective, can see without training by merely looking. This is the first fallacy a student has to be rid of.

Another fallacy is the belief that people of normal sight all see alike. Any student knows how widely, wildly different are the versions that the different members of an art-class will give in their attempts to reproduce the exact appearance of the model. They generally suppose that these divergencies are due to their various degrees of skill or lack of skill in drawing, painting, modeling, and so forth, because they assume that the model is the same for all. And if each student in such a class were really trying to represent that which he or she actually saw, in the way they saw it, the differences would be almost incredible. As a matter of fact, all are trying to see in the same way, and to express what they

THE THEOSOPHICAL PATH

think they ought to see in a similar manner. Yet even so the differences in results are extraordinary.

A clue to these vagaries is furnished in another peculiarity observable in the work of a class of art-students. This is the evident tendency of each to get some trace of likeness to himself or herself into the representation of the model: in extreme cases this is so marked as to make the student a hopeless case. Yet the reason is not merely the different points of view furnished by the different personalities, but also is due to differences in the way their vision operates. They see differently, though they are all trying to see alike.

It is a pure assumption to suppose that all people see alike. Even if a number of students are trained to express their experiences in the same style and fashion, there is in that deplorable uniformity no proof of any real identity of vision. Occasionally a chance word will startle one into a sudden recognition of the fact, that things really appear quite different to some person, whom we have hitherto regarded as normal. Now by normal we usually mean simply *like ourselves*: for we all believe we have normal faculties, with a few variations, such as short or long sight, and certain well-known defects or peculiarities.

I think that if it were possible to see through another man's eyes for a moment, the seer's brain would reel with amazement at the incomprehensible pictures of familiar scenes, that would reveal themselves. To look through colored glass and distorting lenses, inverted, or twisted out of the usual focus, would give but a slight hint of the infinite variation possible in the development of our visual faculties. Of course to do this would be impossible, because the power of sight is not a mechanical process confined to the eye, but includes the mental process of translation or interpretation of vibrations into mind-pictures, as well as the power of correlating such experiences and further translating them into esthetic, or practical, philosophic, or scientific, concepts. A man's vision is a part of his personality, not merely one function of his body.

The more alive and awake a man is the more he sees. He not only sees more objects, but he sees combinations and contrasts, he sees causes and effects, purposes and incidents, forces, vibrations, and the countless mysteries of life, that ceaselessly unfold themselves to his awakening soul.

Now here is an apparent paradox of philosophy, for we are taught plainly that the visible world is an illusion, and that the only reality is within. But the illusion is the appearance of something that is not illusive, while the delusion of the senses lies in mistaking the appearance for the reality that is within it. For what is vision but a faculty of visualizing the interior emotions aroused by the sensuous perception of external

THE DEAD IN LIFE

objects? It is the mind that sees, or that makes a mind-picture from the light-vibrations received on the retina of the eye; and the mind makes the picture to suit its own taste, or rather in accordance with its own limitations.

When the mind is wholly concerned with self-worship, or egoism, the picture is a self-picture; the soul is asleep, and the personal brain-mind is master of the situation. Such a person is said to be unobservant, or unsympathetic, or unresponsive to external impressions, or, philosophically, dead in life; for in such a case the soul is like a dead man in a tomb. All the pictures that such a person sees of the external world are but reproductions of home-made substitutes for truth fabricated by the deluding egoism of the mind. It is for this reason that the 'hopeless cases' alluded to above make studies of a model that are more like the student than the sitter. It is for this reason that we cannot understand one another's views of life, unless we are to some extent awake and alive, or free from the blinding delusion of egoism.

The process of waking up from this dream of self is accomplished in many ways. It is to be achieved partly by observation of external objects, and partly by observation of internal emotions. It is necessary to awake the power of sympathy, and to live in the emotions and experiences of others, as well as to withdraw into the depths of the real self, to seek in the heart the chamber where the soul is shut up, and to set the prisoner free. The going out assists the going in.

Sympathy with all that lives breaks down great barriers of egoism and opens the doorways of the inner self. The power to see is the power to pierce the veil of illusion raised by the personal brain-mind for its own protection. The man, who takes all his knowledge at second-hand from books, seldom wakes from his long sleep of mental activity, in which he lives his living death in a long nightmare of illusion. It is said that the universe exists for the purposes of soul. But the brain-mind never said that. The brain-mind objects to the interference of the soul in its despotic control of man's heart.


The whole science of Theosophy is the science of the awakening of the Soul; but the science of the scholiasts is the perpetuation of the long sleep of Death by the ceaseless repetition of mind-made phantasies, that wrap the soul in endless dreams, growing up like the enchanted forest that surrounds the haunted palace of the Sleeping Beauty.

But the awakening must come, and then the eyes will see. The battle between the living and the dead is eternal, and each human heart is the battlefield. When the battle is won there will be peace: and then the Soul will see through the illusions of the mind to the truth that is universal.

THE CLASSICS IN EDUCATION

T. HENRY, M. A.

[Written in 1921]

 AMONG committees appointed by the British government to inquire into education, was one assigned to the classics; and it has issued a "Report of the Committee appointed to inquire into the position of Classics in the Educational System of the United Kingdom." We avail ourselves of a leading article on this Report, in the *Times* literary supplement. The Committee consisted of a number of prominent men representing not only classics but English, Science, Business, etc. Its collected statistics were too voluminous for the *Times* to reproduce, but the general conclusions are summed up.

The Committee found that classical education is in a somewhat parlous state. In the past it was overdone; but now the reaction has been overdone. Science and other matters have been liberally endowed; a false conception of the meaning of the word 'practical' has given too much prominence to other subjects. There is real danger of the disappearance of Greek and the reduction of Latin to insignificant proportions. In Scotland they are allowed to make mathematics, science, and drawing, all compulsory subjects for the Intermediate Examination, a regulation which in practice excludes Greek and to a large extent Latin. All the witnesses from the Scottish schools and universities expressed their disapproval of this system. While perhaps most of the material factors in the problem are against the classics, the moral factors are more and more in their favor.

"Bismarck tried in vain to undo his own teaching and persuade German statesmen that 'imponderabilia' were often the things that proved decisive in the end. In this case the imponderabilia seem on the whole to be decisively on the side of the classics. While ignorant people still repeat the parrot denunciations of fifty years ago, instructed opinion and even the newest forces of uninstructed opinion are realizing more and more what English education would be if it lost the classics; what, as it is, is lost by the vast majority who cannot or do not touch them."

No one, says the Committee, wishes to restore classics to their ancient exclusive predominance; but almost everyone feels that the reaction has gone too far. A sub-committee of the Board of Scientific Subjects has recently defined the first object of education as "the training of human beings in mind and character as citizens of a free country," and declared that "any technical preparation of boys and girls for a particular profession or occupation must be consistent with this principle."

THE CLASSICS IN EDUCATION

The evidence of the business-men who appeared before the Committee may surprise some. They found that technical knowledge carries a young man a very short way in business; and they gave strong testimony to the value of the classical element in education, even preferring the ancient to the modern humanities. Says the *Times*:

“The writer of this review happens to know of a curious case in which a man of business puts these views into practice in a very striking fashion. He is the managing director of very large engineering works. He himself left school at the age of sixteen and learnt no classics. But when he is looking out for young men to be trained for the highest administrative posts under him he insists that they should have had a university education, and prefers that it should have been in classics.”

Members of the Labor Party insisted that the working-man needs a wider outlook, and that this will best be given him by the classics. Evidence was given of the eagerness with which certain pupils from the elementary schools afterwards take up Greek or Latin. In one case there are thirty crofters' children in Lewis who are studying Greek.

The opinion is emphasized that the classics may with advantage be begun at an older age, students then being better able to appreciate their advantage. But it is essential to devote an adequate amount of time to the study, as otherwise the labor is wasted.

Thus far the Report. It is noteworthy that those who object to classics on the ground that they have no immediate practical application, really supply an argument in favor of classics; for education must include things that are not practical in this narrow sense — include them *because* they are not thus practical. If a large part of the function of education is to give depth and background to the mind, such subjects must necessarily be included. If they are not included in the curriculum, we shall find people studying them for themselves, outside the curriculum, impelled by the desire for knowledge and the love of study.

But he who limits himself to the external and visible, not only loses the richer depths beyond but even cripples himself in his dealings with the external and visible. For the spirit vitalizes the form. Businessmen, like the one mentioned above, prefer the educated man because he is better qualified in business. His nature has been deepened, enlarged, enriched.

The argument that any study or pursuit, ardently engaged in at one time of life, and afterwards dropped altogether, is thereby wasted — this argument will not hold water, except upon the very narrowest view of what life is. Supposing a man was born for the sole and express purpose of spending forty years of his life as a grocer, he might think it advisable to study only such matters as would conduce directly to that

THE THEOSOPHICAL PATH

object; and therefore he might deny himself the luxury of violin-lessons and shun all knowledge of such bypaths as history and the fine arts. Or supposing that a parent, instead of giving birth to a man-child, were to procreate an electrician, then it might be deemed fitting that the creature should be taught electricity and nothing else. But if the object of life is to realize the possibilities of manhood, and not merely those of human machines, it may be deemed well to provide for the wants and needs of human beings.

A person who studies always with some future end before his eyes is like one who is always accumulating money but dies before he spends it. The enjoyment of a walk would be spoilt if I loaded my mind with the idea that I was merely strengthening my constitution for future use. And so with intellectual pursuits: I look to the pleasure they give at the time; and, though I may lay them aside altogether, I count it well to have exercised them. But more: these things *are not lost* when I lay them aside. For the life of the Soul is eternal, and every seed sown is laid up for a future harvest. In our life of successive days, the doings of one day connect up with those of the next; and so, in the series of reincarnations, what is taken up and laid aside can be gone on with when the appropriate cycle comes round.

The separateness of personality is an illusion. (“In reality there is no such thing as personal separateness”—H. P. Blavatsky.)

The situation as to the study of the Greek and Latin classics may be summed up as calling for an avoidance of extreme and unbalanced views on either side. While it may not be desirable to force this study upon those whose natural qualities adapt them for the pursuit of science or mathematics, yet the ancient classics would appear to constitute the best vehicle for the instruction of those studying the other branches of education -- the *litterae humaniores*. But it seems to be agreed that adequate time must be devoted to them; and that, to insure this, the curriculum of these particular students must be so abridged as not to diffuse the time and energy over a multiplicity of subjects and to limit the science to mere snippets.

Another point made by the writers on this subject has been to the necessity of competent teachers; and experiences are cited of boys learning nothing at all for several terms while under one teacher, but making rapid progress when promotion had assigned them to another teacher.



“ACT so that you may tell every man: ‘Do as I do.’”—*Kant*

ETHICAL AND ECONOMIC IDEALISM

LYDIA ROSS, M. D.

“THE true realism is not to reproduce material things; . . . it is to reproduce the realities of inner life.”— DAVID BELASCO

“It is a law of occult dynamics that ‘a given amount of energy expended on the spiritual or astral plane is productive of far greater results than the same amount expended on the physical objective plane of existence.’— H. P. BLAVATSKY: *The Secret Doctrine*, I, p. 644



HE misleading half-truths which some teachings of theology have ingrained into the human mind for centuries have variously crippled and diseased the imagination. The vital truths of Karma and Reincarnation, of man's essential divinity and perfectibility, and of brotherhood as a fact in nature, were the life-blood of the Nazarene's teachings,—as of all true Teachers. But centuries of stunting psychology from beliefs in man being born a miserable sinner, limited to one little life, and at the mercy of a vengeful god, have blinded natural intuitive insight and devitalized the innate power to 'work out salvation.' Hence the sense of helplessness which even trained, brilliant minds show in facing many practical problems. What nation or League of Nations can claim to solve the problem of the world's post-war conditions?

War is an unnatural human condition — a diseased social relationship. Human duality offers every man the legitimate battlefield between his higher and lower nature, where the best interests of all are concerned in a common cause. So that actual Brotherhood is the foundation of practical idealism. This provides a safe basis upon which to up-build and operate all institutions,— economic, industrial, scientific, social, and religious.

The innate impulse to act together, in savage tribes as in our civilized organizations of all kinds, points to the basic unity of interests. That the common instinct to establish 'brotherhoods' of various kinds so often fails, is due to efforts artificially to produce a local or limited relationship, instead of recognising the universal existence of a natural fact. The brothers of a family naturally act for their mutual welfare. The members of the human family would reap the larger ratio of benefit by giving the wider scope to natural brotherhood. Impractical? Why forecast failure of what has never been tried yet? The lesser schemes of selfishness and competition all leave the problems unsolved.

THE THEOSOPHICAL PATH

Public Opinion (England), of July 23, 1926, reviews with favorable comment, the first Beckly Lecture, by Sir Josiah Stamp, on 'The Christian Ethic as an Economic Factor.' The lecturer says, in part:

"I have noticed that the fervent and convinced statement on the platform that if only a spirit of universal brotherhood prevailed the problems of men would all be solved, never fails to raise audible and enthusiastic assent. But such a statement is not merely woefully wrong in its emphasis; it is also mischievous, because it dopes men's minds till they cannot see what action is really necessary, still less rise to action.

"I confess to a feeling of irritation when I hear the glib statement, made from the platform or pulpit, which I know from personal experience to be so wide of the mark; and it deepens to despair when I see the easy acquiescence and approval with which it is received. When I reflect upon the nature of the problems that bring misery and suffering in the world, and the silent, hard-working, self-denying souls who are trying to solve them, I think such talk is ungrateful to the point of unchristian heedlessness.

"The ravages and ills of cancer and consumption, the problems of ability and skill set at naught by the derangements of a distant market, the vagaries of the foreign exchanges and depreciation of currency, with its impoverishment of many worthy people, and all its other attendant ills, the population-problem, with the standard of life — these, and a hundred others, look up and cry, not so much for warm hearts as for cool heads.

"I often wonder what would happen if the preacher suddenly got his desires — a community of perfectly changed hearts, ready with all the Christian virtues of self-denial and altruism, face to face with these problems, and with his promised millennium to achieve forthwith. . . .

"Exaggeration of the power of the moral element to overcome social evils is not a mere careless exercise which does no good and leaves no harm. It is positively vicious in at least three ways.

"First, it encourages the average man in mental indolence to which he is only too prone already, . . . it drags him into the belief that

'Just the art of being kind
Is all this sad world needs.'

"Most people think when they have found someone to blame for a situation, that they have as good as explained it or solved it, and this passion for 'fixing the blame' universally takes the place of intelligent inquiry. . . .

"Second: Exaggeration of this kind leads to a deadly discouragement of all who are engaged in working hard to solve problems with all their mental resources. A patient and life-long worker in some social and industrial problem hears the oracular statement that belittles all his work and virtually snubs it by making a facile claim to this moral short cut. . . .

"On analysis, you will find that the central feature of nearly every indictment on ethical grounds is the conception that redistribution of wealth — a correction of the appalling contrast between extreme riches and poverty side by side — would provide a world of conspicuously fuller and more satisfactory life for the masses. . . .

"Material progress remains as a heritage of the race, each succeeding generation having the full advantage of the past and its sages. In moral progress, on the other hand, each individual in each era has to fight the age-long battle with himself, and the human drama repeats its act incessantly. But as human institutions and social standards are slowly raised in moral content, the fight takes on a new hopefulness and a new sustaining power. The rules are fairer and the elements kinder. On the other hand, the march of economic progress brings in new perils and makes the fight sterner and finer. The moral perils of progress have

ETHICAL AND ECONOMIC IDEALISM

to be strenuously matched by a growing ethical quality in social judgments and opportunities, if man is to win out at last."

Man must 'win out at last,' since that is the destiny of the eternal, unconquerable soul-self that evolves through the material, changing conditions of earth, life after life. And as man *is* a soul, with a divine birth-right, the common origin of all is the cosmic basis of brotherhood. So that, in the divine economy, everything and every phase of human evolution is provided for, naturally. Therefore, if there is conflict between civilization's ethics and economics, there is something unnatural and unbalanced in the growth.

If the soul instinct, the intuition, is developed by exercise, equally with the mental and material side of the complex nature, it will furnish the higher mathematics to bear on problems that baffle the mere brain. It is the function of the soul-self to give the new hope and sustaining power to meet the progressive perils of a sterner and finer fight in evolutionary progress. The mind has its limitations,—not so, the soul-self. No one can deny a high degree of mental and material efficiency in this era, which for lack of brotherliness, culminated in a civilized world's war.

'Material progress remains as a heritage of the race,' but sometimes only potentially. Note the history of great empires that, rising and falling, show how the racial heritage is forfeited, from time to time. Moreover, mark how the decline of brilliant civilizations kept pace with their moral degeneracy. Morality is no mere cosmetic addition to evolution, but a vital function in human growth and endurance. It is the distinctive mark of the human creature. The egos taking part in the rising and falling stages of empires, were each timed by his individual, national, and racial karma, which ever brings us and our old ties back to reap what we have sown together in former lives. Only the eternal adjustments of inequalities by Karma could locate each one so he would receive the *quality* of what was due him. Only this unfailing adjustment can explain the apparent injustices which are really alternations of previous relations between oppressor and oppressed, *between helpers and those helped in other lives*.

The fact that we are reaping what we have sown in the past and are now creating our future conditions, forever does away with the vicarious scapegoat. Honestly and fearlessly to 'fix the blame' upon ourselves, would lead inquiry to illuminating views of self-knowledge; and he who understands his own dual nature has the clue to all life. Moreover, the disconcerting truth of his failures is more than compensated by knowledge of the *power of his higher nature to make success even out of failure!* Realization of one's duality would inspire to action, rather

THE THEOSOPHICAL PATH

than to 'mental indolence' or spiritual inertia. The fact is, we have been pitifully drugged with the theology which belittled man, who really is the creator who is to *make* the 'kingdom come on earth,' instead of inertly waiting to be saved for some vague post-mortem heaven.

The unerring action of the karmic law gives the common motive for a balanced ethical and economical idealism. Its effects show the egoistic and altruistic logic of operating life's millioned conditions with *equality of opportunity* for all to work out the karmic debt of past errors and acquire the karmic merit of more perfect growth. The mere redistribution of wealth would be but a foolish and futile play with externals, which would not touch the hidden mainsprings of self-created causes. Even a sudden change in the whole economic situation would leave untouched the injustice and selfishness which current human nature, as individual men and women, is expressing in all its institutions. The vast, complex mechanism of life, as a whole, is an inert mass but for the living motive power of human mind and heart.

There is no chance for the preacher suddenly to have his prayers answered for a perfected human nature,— for *genuine growth is gradual* and *progress is made step by step*. When men have gradually evolved their potential millennial impulses, all human institutions will give them typical expression, as naturally and inevitably as our present status of brilliant materialism is everywhere in evidence.

Why should the 'patient and life-long workers' feel disturbed by suggestions of trying moral power for solving problems which all their 'mental resources' fail to solve? If they were working out the illuminating truth, would it not give their work so secure and satisfying a basis that no snubbing could affect them? William Q. Judge once said of the doubts that depress earnest workers at times:

"To fail would be nothing, but to stop working for Humanity and Brotherhood would be awful."

He was confident that the Theosophic truth would prevail, though personally he was belied, persecuted, and betrayed. He knew the power of the ancient philosophy of life which operates in harmony with the whole trend of evolutionary forces, in nature and in human nature.

The working creed of any successful business-house or corporation, anticipates, meets, and provides for 'derangements' of its markets, near and far. Surely the motive of brotherhood could widen the scope of the same principles, so that altruistic supply and demand would provide for the common welfare. Selfish strife finally defeats its own ends and leaves the better nature impoverished in the higher humanities. For

ETHICAL AND ECONOMIC IDEALISM

the brain-mind alone can neither gage nor supply the higher needs of the inner nature.

If a real League of Nations were actually minded to make a business of universal brotherhood, the resulting benefits would flow through every avenue of life,—even the physical body. As it is, current strife and restless self-seeking are duplicated by certain body-tissues running riot, breaking down, or degenerating under the wear and tear of restless, unsatisfying pursuit of mental and material gains. Harmonious, up-building co-operation in the body politic would naturally work out with the individual more at peace with himself than now prevails, with the inner conflicts between the ideal and material impulses. Thus the changed vibration of sensitive human tissues would make them less favorable soil for the ‘ravages of cancer and consumption.’

Extensive research and experimental laboratories fail to find the ultimate causes of increasing degeneracy and malignancy. Meantime, the radio hints at the surrounding world of thought and feeling, filled with all kinds of selfish, sordid, and disintegrating wave-lengths, broadcasted and unwittingly picked up by sensitized modern nerves that react upon every cell in the body. The field of consciousness is yet to be reckoned with in analysing disease and disorders. Katherine Tingley says in *Theosophy: the Path of the Mystic*:

“There is self-destruction, even on physical lines, in carrying an atmosphere of wrong thought. We have it in our power not only to build our bodies into health, but to retain that health very much longer than the allotted ‘three-score years and ten.’ This I *know*; and I hold it a Theosophical duty to work towards this end, by right thinking and abstemious and thoughtful living. Moreover, in such an effort, if it is made unselfishly, we can positively temper our bodies, much as metal can be tempered, so that they are unaffected by things that would put a strain upon them ordinarily.”

It may be noted that Katherine Tingley’s idea of Theosophical duty is a matter of self-discipline rather than bizarre adventures in phenomena-hunting and in gaining ‘astral powers.’ Her practical occultism is the quintessence of common sense. She has succeeded in applying the ancient philosophy to every department of life at the International Headquarters, Point Loma, California. Here her body of resident student-members are being trained in ‘self-directed evolution’ by co-operating in the duty of making an art of life. And the system of rounding out the whole nature in cultivating Character, becomes applied idealism in the usual matters of education, industry, ethics, art, and social life.

Moreover, the constant output of Katherine Tingley’s teachings by voice and pen, for some thirty years, has been mental leaven in the mass of materialistic thought. So that ideas of hers that years ago were

THE THEOSOPHICAL PATH

denied or ignored, are now picked out of the social air, so to say, by leading minds that intuitively feel the limitations of over-specialized authorities. As an instance of her way of reasoning by analogy, note what the *Public Opinion*, of July 25, 1924, quotes from the *Edinburgh Review*:

“The student of cancer finds himself, before his studies have advanced very far, contemplating a state of matters which bears at least a superficial resemblance to some of the political and economic developments of the present day.

“He is confronted on the one hand by a vast and complicated organization more or less perfectly adapted to certain very large purposes; on the other, by groups of individuals who have forsaken the larger purposes and are concerned only with themselves.

“*The cancer-cell is the supreme example of an anarchist.* Like most anarchists, it lives in a complicated society, every member of which depends for its existence on all the other members. Though it was born to citizenship and the duties as well as the privileges of citizenship, it has become a law to itself and so an enemy to its neighbors. Theft, assault, and murder are among its crimes. The analogy is in no danger of being pushed too far. It is so complete that it is actually impossible to say anything of human society and the various ways in which human society can be disrupted which is not also true of cancer. Man has built his civilizations after the pattern of his own frame; the greatest evil which threatens them is likewise the greatest evil by which that is assailed.

“For the human body is a kind of coral island. It is made up not of ‘bricks,’ which are inanimate material, but of living and most active individuals. We speak of ‘a man’ as we speak of ‘an egg,’ but whereas the egg is a single living thing, a man is many things — a whole empire of living creatures, a vast agglomeration of millions and millions of separate ‘specks of life,’ each with its own existence, its own sensitiveness, its own dim qualities of body, and even of spirit. The cell is the microcosm of the man. So much so, indeed, that without stretching the parallel too far we may speak of the ‘mind of the cell’ and even of its ethic. Indeed, we must so speak, for just as a state possesses in some curious way an individuality which is without, yet not entirely distinct from, that of any of its citizens, so the man possesses a vision which the cell cannot possess, yet which belongs in a measure to the cell also.

“If the meaning of cancer as a fact of life is to be grasped this truth must needs be apprehended. The ethic of the cell is both the origin of the law of the body and its consequence.”

THE STORM

A Colloquy

KENNETH MORRIS

ALONG the shore-line, ocean creaming;—
Whitecaps gleaming out on the sea;—
Like navies routed and wrecked and driven,
O'er the face of heaven the rain-clouds flee.

THE STORM

— *Nowise Earth forgets the age,
Hid in her red heyday and prime,
When the Atlantic Princes' rage
Shook the axle-trees of Time.*

— Over the gray sea's sinister trembling,
Rattling, rumbling, screaming, comes,
Lashing the bluegums eastward leaning,
The wind's fife-keening and plunge of drums.

— *These be echoes of the roar
Of contentions huge and grim
Waged 'twixt earth and heaven of yore
By Emperors of the Anakim.*

— There's no quiet at all in the world;
Thought, wing-furled, lies by in the mind,
Shaken and cowed by the mad, gigantic,
Incessant, frantic drums of the wind.

— *By the wrath and battle-lust
Of vaunting and gigantic kings
Whose exorbitant dust is dust
These ten hundred thousand Springs.*

— As if some sorcerous light were a gleam
Where the wind-fifes scream and the wind-drums roll;
As if there were beating of ill-starred pinions
'Twixt the mind's dominions and light of the Soul.

— *Vast ambitions, sorceries, prides,
Born ere historied time began,
Still are blown along the tides
Of the troubled life of Man.*

*International Theosophical Headquarters,
Point Loma, California*

CREATIVE EVOLUTION; OR — SPECIAL CREATION?

C. J. RYAN

II

PASSING on from the central feature of Professor Price's argument --- the origin of species in the Root-types — and neglecting much that is not relevant to our purpose or is, as we think, insufficiently evidenced, one or two matters should be referred to as illustrating the weakness of some of the materialistic theories or the singular differences of opinion among leading scientists on the factors of evolution.

Though it is impossible here to discuss every criticism of modern scientific Evolution advanced by Professor G. MacReady Price in his *Phantom of Organic Evolution*, we cannot overlook his remarks on embryology and the so-called 'useless' organs in man, such as the ear muscles, the appendix, the 'gill-slits,' some of which are only found in the embryo while others persist.¹

The Darwinians triumphantly claimed these rudimentary organs as conclusive proof of man's pure identity with and direct descent from the lower animal kingdom, in which they are found active and well developed:— "Man is nothing but a Primate with a rather more complicated brain." Haeckel, especially, tried to draw a complete parallelism between the order of the appearance of the changing forms through which the embryo passes and the order of physical evolution from the sea-slime through the fishes, reptiles, mammals and man. In fact, it was charged that he was so carried away with this theory that he slightly improved on nature in the illustrative diagrams in his books in order to prove it!

The chronological arrangement of the rocks as fixed by their contained fossils has been largely made from the results of the study of embryology, a proceeding which Professor Price considers unsatisfactory because of the doubtful nature of the embryological evidences.

Many difficulties in the way of unreservedly accepting the embryological argument for materialistic evolution have arisen of late, and the author quotes extensively from modern scientific authorities to show that the stages in the development of the embryo have nothing *necessarily*

1. Some of these 'useless' organs, such as the thyroid gland, have lately been found to be of great utility, and in fact indispensable for good health, normal growth, etc.

CREATIVE EVOLUTION, OR SPECIAL CREATION?

to do with the 'recapitulation' of an alleged line of physical heredity, but can better be explained by the theory of a natural and simple growth from the cell to the highly complex organism, and he claims that the "final stages could not be produced without going through the preparatory stages." He quotes Professor Oscar Hertwig:

"We must drop the expression 'repetition of the forms of extinct forefathers' and put in its place the repetition of forms which are necessary for organic development and lead from the simple to the complex."

In regard to the rudimentary organs, Professor Price believes they give no encouragement to the doctrine of the evolution of all animal species from a single protozoic ancestor, but should rather be classed with the traces of horns on hornless cattle, stumps of tails on certain cats and dogs. He says:

"That is, they are only visible, surface manifestations of latent characters which can always be brought out into functional activity by appropriate methods of breeding . . . under other environments in the long ago they may have been useful, or they may again become of use when the real proper environment of these animals or plants is again restored."

— page 163

We cannot do better here than quote H. P. Blavatsky's own words on the matter from *The Secret Doctrine*:

"Similarly with the important question of the 'rudimentary' organs discovered by anatomists in the human organism. . . . Anthropologists, who ventured to dispute the derivation of man from an animal ancestry, were sorely puzzled how to deal with the presence of gill-clefts, with the 'tail' problem, and so on. Here again Occultism comes to our assistance with the necessary data.

"The fact is that, as previously stated, the human type is the repertory of all potential organic forms, and the central point from which all these latter radiate. In this postulate we find a true 'Evolution' or 'unfolding' — a sense which cannot be said to belong to the mechanical theory of natural selection. . . .

"The process of human foetal growth epitomizes not only the general characteristics of the Fourth, but of the Third Round terrestrial life. The diapason² of type is run through in brief. . . . The potentiality of every organ useful to animal life is locked up in Man — the microcosm of the Macrocosm — and abnormal conditions may not unfrequently result in the strange phenomena which Darwinists regard as 'reversion to ancestral features.' Reversion, indeed, but scarcely in the sense contemplated by our present-day empiricists!"

— Vol. II, pp. 683-5

Also:

"The point most insisted upon by the Evolutionists is that, 'the history of the embryo is an epitome of that of the race.' That 'every organism, in its development from the

2. Note the careful use of the word 'diapason,' which means unity or great harmony, not necessarily succession or scale in time-relationship, as has sometimes erroneously been thought. She speaks of the diapason of type, as signifying far more than mere reversion to past and now useless organs.

THE THEOSOPHICAL PATH

egg, runs through a series of forms, through which, in like succession, its ancestors have passed in the long course of Earth's history' " ('The Proofs of Evolution,' a lecture by Haeckel.)
— *The Secret Doctrine*, II, 187

And:

"It is scarcely possible not to recognise in the embryonic evolution a rapid sketch, a faithful summary, of the entire organic series."—Lefèvre, *Philosophy*, page 484

Commenting on the above, H. P. Blavatsky says:

"The summary alluded to is, however, only that of the *store of types* hoarded up in man, the microcosm. This simple explanation meets all such objections, as the presence of the rudimentary tail. . . ."—*The Secret Doctrine*, II, p. 187

The Eastern Wisdom does not, however, repudiate the general principle that the growth of the embryo epitomizes, to a degree, the enormous past of man, but it includes stages of existence and conditions of being of which our western science with its purely physical outlook, is not aware, but which it must ultimately recognise in order to make real progress. This subject cannot be considered now, but the student will find in *The Secret Doctrine*, volume II, page 257, and elsewhere, most suggestive hints on the 'recapitulation'-principle.

When H. P. Blavatsky speaks of 'man' she, of course, means far more than the commonplace, limited personality we so mistakenly believe ourselves to be. The real man is the immortal, spiritual being of which the personality is only a mask. On page 188, volume II, of *The Secret Doctrine*, she shows how the transformations of the embryo are explained by the principle of Reincarnation. The reincarnating Ego not only possesses the potential ties of the 'rudimentary organs' but has passed through stages of being resembling those of the embryo, *not all of them having been experienced in the material state of existence, however.*

This subject is profoundly interesting but is too intricate to be followed up here. The student will find statements in *The Secret Doctrine* which, when related to certain phenomenal facts of an obscure nature disregarded except by a very limited number of serious thinkers, place the subject of human evolution on a basis quite unsuspected by science but clearly hinted at in the Oriental scriptures. (See Volume II, pages 174, 737, 149.) In connexion with this a reference is made to "the Pythagorean esoteric doctrine of metempsychosis so erroneously interpreted by critics," "a stone becomes a plant; a plant an animal; an animal a man; a man a god," not as a mere epitome of physical heredity but *in relation to the pilgrimage of the soul.*

Professor Price apologizes for dwelling on the old Natural Selection argument — Darwin's central feature — as it is no longer regarded

CREATIVE EVOLUTION, OR SPECIAL CREATION?

as the leading principle in evolution, but he gives some valuable criticisms which refute the blind-force and chance-variation theory and show the necessity of admitting Intelligent Purpose. The supporters of Natural Selection and the Survival of the Fittest, in trying to account for variations in species, are compelled to recognise that transformations (such as the appearance of a flying apparatus on a mammal or a reptile) were reached by slow degrees through many generations, during which their imperfect beginnings were useless, and sometimes injurious:

“It would seem that natural selection ought to have eliminated these useless structures almost as soon as they appeared, thus allowing them no chance to become functional or useful. But the problem only becomes greater when we are driven to say that very similar useless structures have originated time and time again, and have also persisted through the rudimentary or useless stage until they became useful to the organism.”— p. 34

He illustrates this unanswerable point by the electric eel of South America, the electric catfish of Africa, certain rays, and other fishes of diverse kinds, which have independently developed electric organs, and by unrelated kinds of flying-fish. Such complex organs as eyes with lens, retina, etc., have been developed by cuttlefishes and other creatures on absolutely independent lines. The same argument applies to the wings of insects, bats (mammals), pterodactyls (reptiles), and birds. Certain almost identical breathing organs developed at least four times independently among the invertebrates.

It is inconceivable that all these and many others could have been produced by small, useless, and often obstructive variations accidentally becoming, in the course of innumerable generations, gradually nearer to the perfect and final functioning form — eye or wing, etc., — *in so many independent directions*, without a Plan of some kind, and Constructive Intelligences guiding, and preserving. Especially, as useless variations should be, according to the Darwinian hypotheses, eliminated by natural selection, and only useful ones allowed to persist. Many variations, in their incipient stages, would actually handicap their unfortunate possessor, and even prove fatal until fully able to function, unless there was some consciously-directing Force behind. The Ancient Wisdom, of course, covers this point by the ‘Designers’ referred to above.

Another subject treated by Professor Price is the alleged descent of the higher plants from the lowest and simplest: he speaks of “the despair among modern botanists regarding the tracing out of the lines of evolution among the great groups of plants,” and quotes many authorities to that effect. For instance, Dr. D. H. Scott, in *Extinct Plants and Problems of Evolution*:

“The evolution of plants, so far as the record shows, does not present a uniform

THE THEOSOPHICAL PATH

progression, but rather a series of diverse periods, each with a character of its own. . . . The record (geological series) shows no time-limit between Monocotyledons and Dicotyledons,³ and throws no light on the possible derivation of the one class from the other. Both extend back far into the Cretaceous, and throughout the whole time the Dicotyledons appear more numerous than the Monocotyledons, as they are at the present day. . . . On the whole, one is impressed with the independence of the various phyla (great divisions of the animal or vegetable kingdoms) of vascular plants all through the geological record.”

These difficulties vanish when the principle of the appearance of Root-types from the inner world is applied to the vegetable as well as the animal kingdom. As time passed these new types, limited in numbers at first but afterwards increased, were brought into physical manifestation, ‘created’ as it is mistakenly called, a word used by H. P. Blavatsky with great caution and reservations.

A serious botanical problem lately sprung upon the scientific world, which shows how difficult it is to be sure that we can see the records of the Stone-Book of Life — the rocky strata with their fossils — in their true proportions, is referred to by Professor Price. According to the fossil record, *as known three years ago*, the great division called Angiosperms (Palms and Dicotyledons, with seeds contained in seed-vessels) did not exist before the Cretaceous, or Chalk-period, at the end of the Secondary or Mesozoic Age. The ancestors of the Angiosperms were supposed to have been a peculiar kind of ferns tentatively called Pro-Angiosperms (Le Conte, etc.), whose leaves have been found in the early Cretaceous. No other descent seemed available.

But in 1923 an Angiosperm was found in a coal-ball of the *Carboniferous* at Harrisburg, Illinois (See Dr. C. A. Noe, ‘A Palaeolithic Angiosperm,’ *Journal of Geology*, May-June, 1923). The Carboniferous is, of course, several ‘Periods’ and many millions of years older than the Cretaceous, and its plants quite different and supposedly more ‘primitive.’ How did it happen, then, that a highly advanced flowering plant, an Angiosperm, undeniably existed at such an early period as the Coal Age, among an utterly unrelated vegetation? This established fact shows that the Angiosperm Root-type had already been precipitated into material form as the progenitor of the great development of the later ages, and that the Angiosperms were not developed by ‘natural selection’ etc., from the far later ‘Pro-Angiosperm’ ferns! It does not prove, though, that the Cretaceous and Carboniferous periods were contemporary!

In view of certain important teachings in *The Secret Doctrine*, one or two significant points discussed by Professor Price show where

3. Or endogens and exogens, the two principal groups of plants, with one seed-leaf or two seed-leaves (cotyledons) respectively.

CREATIVE EVOLUTION, OR SPECIAL CREATION?

he has (occasionally) come very near the teachings of the Ancient Wisdom. Speaking of the decline in size, etc., of modern species, he says:

“How do modern forms compare with those of the antediluvian world? Has there been development or degeneration?”

“There can be but one answer by anyone acquainted with those superb, those giant forms among the larger mammals which were man’s brute companions before the world disaster, and which are still found living in various parts of the modern world. Whether we consider the huge Pleistocene elephants, or the lion, the bear, the hippopotamus, the rhinoceros or the elk, found as fossils in these deposits, or whether we descend the scale of life and study the fishes, the insects, the crustaceans, the mollusks, the reptiles, we are constantly met with evidences that the fossil forms are larger and better shaped than their corresponding living representatives, if any allied families or genera are still alive in our modern world.”— p. 108

In further argument for a former ideal state of existence for men and animals, he points out that the Old Stone-Age Cro-Magnon race, said to be, according to Sir Arthur Keith and other high authorities, “the finest the world has ever seen,” illustrates the same tendency to large size and splendid physical development so noticeable in the pre-historic mammals, reptiles, etc.⁴

In connexion with the decline in size, etc., he treads very nearly in the footsteps of the Ancient Wisdom in saying:

“If there is any relationship between man and the anthropoid apes, it is the latter which have degenerated from the former, instead of the former having developed from the latter. I do not say this is the true solution of this enigma; but I do say that *there is far more scientific evidence in favor of this hypothesis than there ever has been in favor of the long popular theory that man is a developed animal.*”— p. 211

We may fully agree with this author in his criticisms of certain aspects of biological science, especially its materialistic tone and general lack of vision into the spiritual causes behind the phenomenal appearances,⁵ but not at all with his sweeping denunciations of Evolution. It is, assuredly, of great importance to realize that the world is not a mere

4. The Cro-Magnons or Aurignacians of Western and perhaps Central Europe are the most remote of the possible ancestors of modern man. Beyond them, in time, we have hitherto found only the Neanderthal and other brutal races, which science declares are not ancestral; they have all died out long ago. Where the Cro-Magnons came from, and their forebears, is one of the great problems of anthropology, and it will be difficult to solve it without calling upon the Atlantean explanation.

5. An example of the severe limitations of many scientists is found in the *naïve* discussions on the problem of the ‘running down’ of the universe to eternal stagnation. Many still think a ‘rewinding’ of it up into physical activity quite improbable. In a smaller matter, many doubt whether there are more than a few planets in the universe physically able to produce intelligences such as man, implying that ‘organic evolution’ leading to the human level is quite a fortuitous and chance affair, and no part of the great cosmic scheme. Eastern science more sanely and reverently says: “Nature energizes for the soul’s experience.”

THE THEOSOPHICAL PATH

physical machine, and so forth, but the spiritual view of existence does not exclude the principle of Evolution, quite the contrary, though necessarily far more must be implied by the word than the mere physical process of generation after generation becoming a little more complex, or varying, by nothing more than 'blind natural forces.' According to Theosophy, Evolution implies Involution, or the return of that which descended through many stages into the most material conditions back to the spiritual source from which it came, glorified and enriched by its conquests and experiences. This means a soul which is not destroyed when its material vehicles — even the more subtle ones — perish. This means *Reincarnation* as a fundamental method of Evolution.

Those who feel that modern 'Organic Evolution' is more or less a 'phantom' and yet feel strongly that some kind of Evolution is real, will find what they need as direction for research in the luminous suggestions in *The Secret Doctrine*. To the student of Theosophy, Professor Price's book is not so much a protest against popular biology, as an appeal, however unconsciously to himself, for the Ancient Wisdom of the East.

The Theosophical Leaders, H. P. Blavatsky, William Q. Judge, and Katherine Tingley, have never tired of pointing out the one essential basis on which Nature's mysteries can be approached with any hope of gaining real knowledge — the pure, impersonal desire to benefit the race. This is not merely an intellectual urge; it comes from the heart or it is sterile and profitless. In *The Voice of the Silence*, H. P. Blavatsky writes:

"To live to benefit mankind is the first step. . . .

"Help Nature and work on with her; and Nature will regard thee as one of her creators and make obeisance.

"And she will open wide before thee the portals of her secret chambers, lay bare before thy gaze the treasures hidden in the very depths of her pure virgin bosom."

Dazzled by the mechanical inventions and brilliant discoveries of the last hundred years, people are easily induced to look upon modern science as a beneficial thing *in itself*, ignoring the fact that such intellectual progress can and does advance without regard to moral or true social advancement; it may even temporarily impede the higher standards of life. True Science — co-ordinated knowledge — is ennobling. It is hopeful to see that some leaders in science are awakening to the fact that the intellect without the heart is threatening to drag us into hazardous places. We read in the Eastern Wisdom:

"O Teacher, what shall I do to reach to Wisdom? . . .

"Learn above all to separate Head-learning from Soul-wisdom, the 'Eye' from the

CREATIVE EVOLUTION, OR SPECIAL CREATION?

'Heart' doctrine. . . . Even ignorance is better than Head-learning with no Soul-wisdom to illuminate and guide it."

In perfect harmony with this the following remarks by Professor R. D. Carmichael of the University of Illinois in the *Scientific Monthly* for September, 1926, are highly significant of the trend of thought towards the Theosophical position — and they do not stand alone:

"Science has not done the work of developing a spirit of kindness in the requisite degree. . . . Without more kindness a trend in the direction of rivalry and suppression, as indicated by (Bertrand) Russell in 'Icarus,' in a terrible picture, seems inevitable. We are headed in that direction now, probably on account of the philosophy of life that we hold; and the philosophy which this generation holds is that which science has taught it. . . . Science can contribute but little directly to the establishment of the profounder virtues. It has great power and control with regard to material things, but it is still essentially without direct force in enhancing moral standards and enlarging moral values. . . .

"No amount of psychobiology or biochemistry — good as these are as aids — can carry us to the goal. I shall be so radical as to insist that we are in need of the old-fashioned practice of meditating upon the nature of human character and of considering what sort of individuals we must be if life is to be worth living. . . .

"There is no reason to think that all men or even a majority of men will realize the need of kindness so fully as to turn to its cultivation. . . . Another prolonged world war would carry off a much larger proportion of the whole population without discrimination of age or sex or condition. . . . The only salvation from it is the cultivation of a widespread spirit of kindness and co-operation. And neither science nor ethics has found a way to foster it.⁶ Are we destined to perish . . . and leave the heritage of the earth to another race more kindly or less powerful than ourselves? Or perhaps sadder yet, shall we allow our present civilization to perish and leave the earth to a degenerate race of men, still without kindness, but also without the ability to produce the destructive tools of the scientists? Unless the will to kindness springs up amongst us in new power, we are in danger of one of these alternatives."

More than forty years ago an Eastern philosopher, one of H. P. Blavatsky's Teachers, made a very similar statement which attracted much attention from its unusual daring at a time when science was looked upon by so many hungry seekers for enlightenment as containing "the promise and potency" of the future:

". . . The realistic science of fact on the other hand is utterly prosaic. Now, for us, poor unknown philanthropists, no fact of either of these sciences is interesting, except in the degree of its potentiality of moral results, and in the relation of its usefulness to mankind. And what, in its proud isolation, can be more utterly indifferent to everything and everyone, or more bound to nothing but the selfish requisites for its advancement, than this materialistic science of fact? May I ask them . . . what have the laws of Faraday, Tyndall, or others to do with philanthropy in their abstract relations with humanity, viewed as an intelligent whole? What care they for *Man* as an isolated atom of this great and harmonious whole, even though they may be sometimes of practical use to him? . . .

6. Nothing but the realization of the great central teaching of Theosophy — the actual divinity of man in essence, and therefore the unavoidable corollary that "Brotherhood is a fact in Nature," can foster the spirit of kindness, harmony, and peace.

THE THEOSOPHICAL PATH

“Exact experimental science has nothing to do with morality, virtue, philanthropy — therefore can make no claim upon our help until it blends itself with metaphysics. Being but a cold classification of facts outside man, and existing before and after him, her domain of usefulness ceases for us at the outer boundary of these facts; and whatever the inferences and results for humanity from the materials acquired by her method, she little cares. Therefore, as our sphere lies entirely outside hers — as far as the path of *Uranus* is outside the Earth’s — we distinctly refuse to be broken on any wheel of her construction. . . . Were the sun, the great nourishing father of our planetary system, to hatch granite chickens out of a boulder ‘under test conditions’ tomorrow, they [the men of science] would accept it as a scientific fact without wasting a regret that the fowls were not alive so as to feed the hungry and the starving.” — *The Occult World*, p. 133

Above all, mechanistic Evolution, with its insistence upon the purely physical, the struggle for existence, the survival of the fittest, *i. e.*, the strongest and most selfish — the spiritual factors being entirely ignored — is not only isolated from moral advancement but inevitably gives excuse for the worst qualities in man. Evolution, according to the teaching of the Eastern Wisdom, is precisely the contrary; it is founded on the principle of spiritual development, first of all through inherent processes and afterwards by self-directed efforts leading to heights as far above us now as we are above the beetle. And, most important of all, there is something that strives and learns and develops through life after life, and which does not perish with its temporary vehicle.

So we come back to the simple teaching of the Ages — Theosophy — Brotherhood, Compassion, Self-control, as the basis of all true progress. The world may command still greater potencies, more electric wonders, more death-dealing chemicals, more playthings, but such things are superficial in comparison with the spiritual results which come when man begins to realize his true inner divine nature, and that the Kingdom of Heaven is within in reality and not as a conventional phrase.



“THE possibilities of human nature are not limited, and it is not difficult to discover truth if we only look for it unbiasedly. But we must be without preconceived notions: we must have no belief in a personal god, or that we live but one life on earth; for such ideas as these cripple the mind and are bound to generate fear and unrest. To find that Infinity within us, we must start upon the quest aright; having freed our minds of all such remembrances as would forever prevent our realizing the goal.”

— KATHERINE TINGLEY

“THE KEY TO THEOSOPHY”

Some Notes on Chapter Six

HERBERT CROOKE

THE writings of H. P. Blavatsky are distinguished from those of many other writers by the direct and fearless way in which she attacks the shibboleths and inconsistencies of modern thought. One feels when reading her, that here we have someone who knows the solutions of the deeper problems of life which are discussed. She does not write as a mere student who has read up all the authorities on the subject and who proceeds to retail their deductions in some modified form for less learned minds. She writes rather as the skilful medical practitioner who has not only ‘walked the hospitals,’ as it were, but is wholly familiar with every phase of every case to be diagnosed by having had direct contact with it. Thus in chapter vi, we find certain Theosophical teachings marshaled before us with all the compelling assurance of a great Teacher, who knows the mind of his pupils and anticipates their questions. Starting with universals she comes gradually to particulars and finally supplements her teachings by the appeal to history to demonstrate the world-wide and age-long character of the doctrines she enunciates.

In the preceding chapter there is an exposé of the weak and illogical position taken by the theological advocates of dead-letter creeds and formularies. There is a complete brushing aside of the charges of heresy, pride, and blasphemy so carelessly leveled against Theosophists. And there is a noteworthy comparison of the methods and teachings of the Buddha and Jesus which shows that both have drawn their doctrines from one central fount of truth, and that they were both animated by the one common spirit of helpfulness and charity for suffering and ignorant humanity.

In this chapter the positive side of Theosophical teachings is submitted. The fundamental idea of one absolute Unity throughout the universe is emphasized. The universe is not a creation, but rather an evolution, its manifestations being objective and material in alternate succession to a condition of subjectivity during regular intervals of time which last for periods of immense duration. Such periods constitute a ‘Cycle of Life’ followed by a ‘Universal Night.’ These alternations are called by the Hindûs the ‘Days and Nights of Brahmâ.’ The material universe is spoken of as an illusion — a temporary illusion because of

THE THEOSOPHICAL PATH

its ever-changing character, a periodic reflexion of “the only universal and eternal reality” cast on “the infinite spatial depths.”

To the question, how the conscious *to be* proceeds to manifest itself from the unconsciousness that *is*, we are told that “It is *unconsciousness* only to our finite consciousness,” which implies that upon its own plane there is full consciousness. To understand this would probably be to understand the meaning of that mysterious goal of being which is called Nirvâna.

From the consideration of the universal the reader is brought to the examination of the particular and individual as it is to be observed on our planet and in man. This planet, Earth, with its six companion-globes, constituting a chain of seven, is related to man with his seven principles. But the six companion-globes are not on the same plane of objectivity as our Earth is. In this there is a correction to some of the mistaken ideas put out by a certain school of so-called theosophists, that the planets indicated are those of the objective solar system, such as Venus, Mars, etc. On the contrary, we are told that —

“It is not only that their material density, weight, and fabric are entirely different from those of our Earth and the other known planets; but they are (to us) in an entirely different *layer* of space, so to speak — a layer not to be perceived or felt by our physical senses.”

As an evidence of such different layers or states of being, reference is made to the two states of our ordinary consciousness — the waking and the dreaming — which are experienced by all classes of mankind, the learned and the ignorant.

In this connexion man, as the Microcosm of that which, as the vast universe, is the Macrocosm, is regarded as a dual being, “the spiritual and the physical, the man who thinks and the man who records as much of these thoughts as he is able to assimilate.” In the New Testament we find similar teachings, as also in the writings of Plato and others among the ancient Greeks. In Theosophy a more precise definition of the composite nature of man is given, and this is known as the sevenfold nature of man, of which four aspects constitute the physical man, called the Lower Quaternary, and three the spiritual called the Upper Imperishable Triad. It is those four aspects — the Lower Quaternary — which fade away and cease to exist “either at or soon after corporeal death,” from which condition it is declared there is no return, no *resurrection in the flesh* — a dogma of the Churches borrowed by Christian Theology “from the Egyptian and Greek exoteric systems of the Gnostics.”

The Upper Triad with so much of the personal consciousness as can be merged with it is the immortal imperishable Ego, and being freed

MODERN PROBLEMS IN THE LIGHT OF THEOSOPHY

from the limitations and hindrances of the Lower Quaternary, it “returns to the source whence it proceeded,” and in due time is again emanated and reincarnates in another ‘garment of flesh’ until the full purpose of that intimate association with material life is accomplished.

The Teacher at this point warns the reader that

“more than one important detail [of this doctrine] is withheld, which those who study the Esoteric Philosophy and are pledged to silence, *are alone entitled to know.*”

The concluding section of this chapter identifies this teaching with that of the ancient Greeks and their Sacred Mysteries, and quotes extensively from Plutarch to show that the Theosophical Kâma-loka and Devachan were portrayed in those Mysteries, and that the conditions of man in the after-death states were well understood by the ancients.

MODERN PROBLEMS IN THE LIGHT OF THEOSOPHY

Man a Spiritual Being: The Law of Harmony

H. A. HENTSCH



WOULD it not be true to say that it is lack of knowledge of our own nature, and ignorance of our true relation to the universe in which we live, which lies at the root of all so-called Modern Problems? That, certainly, is the teaching of Theosophy. Hence, we shall do well seriously to consider *what we are*. As the wise Socrates taught: “Man, know thyself!”

First, as to the Universe, of which we are a part; according to the teachings of Theosophy, the Universe is the (illusionary) manifested aspect of the Deity. Whilst we do not, and cannot, know what the *Unmanifested* Deity is, in Itself, we are yet able to gain some understanding of the manifested aspect of the Divine Life; for the world in which we find ourselves is such an illusionary manifestation of the Deity.

Studying it, we learn that we live in a Spiritual Universe; governed, always and everywhere, by spiritual laws. That these laws — the laws of nature, as we loosely call them — are the expression of Divine Wisdom; and, moreover, of Divine Compassion. Further, that being divine, and the expression of ultimate wisdom and compassion, these laws are immutable; the same yesterday, today, and forever. Also, we learn that it is foolish to speak of physical laws, as distinguished from spiritual laws, for all are but aspects of the one Divine Law. So, too, we learn that what we ordinarily speak of as the physical world is merely that

THE THEOSOPHICAL PATH

aspect of the universal whole which is perceptible to us through the organs of sense.

Coming, now, to Man. According to the teachings of Theosophy, Man is a self-conscious spark of the Divine Flame; *essentially*, an integral part of the Deity Itself. Hence, being, in his essential nature, part of that which IS, the Reality, Man is both eternal and immortal.

It is written:

“Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?”

But, *do* we know it? Is not our forgetfulness of our divine essential nature the source of all so-called modern problems?

Is the fact too far-reaching to find belief? Let us consider. Did not Jesus teach: “Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect”? Is such transcendent perfection possible to any one except an *essentially* divine being?

Again, did not Jesus teach: “The Kingdom of heaven is within you”? Where should heaven be found except where the Divine abides — the Divine, whose temples we are? And yet again, did not Paul teach that we “are everyone members one of another”? Where is this unity to be found, if we overlook the fact that we are all partakers of the Divine Life; part of that “Light which lighteth every man that cometh into the world”?

Man is *not* — as we are often told in these days — something insignificant and ignoble, rising — slowly, foolishly, and blindly — to some measure of knowledge and wisdom. No; as already said, man is *in his essence* a spiritual being; dwelling, we may now add, in an animal body. The real Man has always existed and will always exist. He has incarnated on this earth in order that he may gain experience in the lower states of matter and consciousness. Also, that he may help forward, to higher states of being, the inferior lives which collectively make up that which we call nature.

Man’s body is built up of these inferior lives; and the passion, desire, sensuality, and selfishness which find expression in human life belong, in reality, to these inferior lives, and not to essential man himself.

Man has to learn to control and master the forces of life within and around himself. In order to do this, he must first learn to control and master his mind; for man is, pre-eminently, a Thinker. The mind, again, has two fundamental aspects; the lower aspect bringing us into conscious relation with the brain and the organs of sense; and the higher aspect into conscious relation with the spiritual states of being.

MODERN PROBLEMS IN THE LIGHT OF THEOSOPHY

The so-called modern problems are an expression of the fact that we have come to identify ourselves with the lower aspect of our minds; and hence with the appetites and desires of the bodies in which we live.

As Paul writes:

“The god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not. . . .”
— 2 Cor., iv, 4

What, then, is the remedy? It is, in a word, Theosophy. What we all need is Divine Wisdom — knowledge of the laws of life; knowledge of ourselves as spiritual beings.

For the most part, we human beings are earnest, kindly, well-meaning people. Yet, we have failed — our good intentions notwithstanding; and the outcome of our efforts is the world as we find it today. For, do not let us deceive ourselves; we are but reaping what we have sown. The divine laws have never failed, and never will; but Man stands so high in the scale of being that he has free Will. We have chosen our own path, shaped our own destiny, and the condition in which we now find ourselves is the outcome of our own thoughts and acts.

What then? The reaping-time is followed by a new sowing-time. We have sown to the flesh; let us now turn to the Spirit.

But it may be asked, does ‘sowing to the Spirit’ mean a life of joyless seriousness and acrid austerity? Not at all. In reality, life is a great and joyful adventure. Within us and about us are wonderful territories to be traveled; new worlds to be explored; spiritual Mount Everests to be climbed. Everywhere transcendent beauty and splendor; everywhere (if we will) the companionship of our fellow-men. Everywhere, if we do but seek it, the compassionate help of the Divine Teachers — Leaders of humanity.

“Listen to the Salutation of the Dawn! Look to this Day, for it is Life, the very Life of Life! In its brief course lie all the possibilities and realities of your existence — the Bliss of Growth, the Glory of Action, the Splendor of Beauty. For yesterday is already a dream and tomorrow is only a vision; but today well-lived makes every yesterday a dream of happiness and every tomorrow a vision of hope. Look well therefore to this day! Such is the Salutation of the Dawn.”



“One has but to evoke one’s own Higher Nature, perceiving and recognising the resources of the God within one’s own being: and the response will come as surely as the rising of tomorrow’s sun. Was it not said that the Kingdom of Heaven should be found within ourselves?”

— KATHERINE TINGLEY

THE TEACHINGS AS TO NATURE AND MAN

Notes on "The Key to Theosophy," Chapter Six

S. W. STANLEY



O the sincere student of life this is the subject above all others to be studied. When realization begins, and dim perception struggles through blind inertia, the vistas reveal themselves, extend and extend, gather height and breadth and depth, beauty and rightness, until the prospect becomes lost in splendor too dazzling for the mind to contemplate. This is not rhapsodizing, but sober truth, as the writer understands it.

Surely here, then, for us, is the most worthy science and study. For we do not as yet know what or why we are. The eye that sees with the true sight is closed for most of us, and we go about our daily concerns guided by the earthly vision only. Therefore the study of man, of the Self, of the origin and destiny of self, must be the most vital thing we can turn our attention to. "*Man, know thyself!*" That is all.

But the process of becoming the knower covers, according to the teachings of the Ancient Wisdom, or Theosophy, a period of enormous duration, during which man, the ego, must pass through endless phases of material experience, in states of matter of varying degrees of substantiality, on this and other globes. Not only in the physical form that we know, but in other forms, as varied maybe as the forms of life on the earth, until the man-state is reached.

This is the eternal law as the student of Theosophy accepts it. It is not a nebulous happening of fortuitous origin, but an absolutely definite science; to be approached with the mind stripped of glamor and sentiment, and to be studied with ever-awaking consciousness, with every whit as much earnestness, and anticipation of final realization, as one would study a work on some scientific hypotheses of the day.

The simile, however, is poor, for the scientist of today deals with matter only, and of that only its baser forms; while the scientist of life treats of matter in all its infinite degrees of density, and seeks ever towards a knowledge of the Unmanifested, an awakening to the purpose of it all.

For Man — what is he? The teachings of Theosophy hold that the essential man is eternal, a Ray of the Divine; a spark from the all-pervading Fire; a drop from the Sea of Light.

For us, with our present undeveloped minds, he must remain a

THE TEACHINGS AS TO NATURE AND MAN

mystery; but a 'Ray of the Divine' is as near as the mind can approach to the reality. Bald words convey little, for the mind in its limitations cannot possibly take in anything but finite concepts, form anything but finite pictures, the action of the mind being often to modify and becloud the thinker. Therefore conception of Spirit and all that pertains thereto comes not until the eye of the inner sight opens, and the soul begins to perceive things in their true relationship.

That the universe exists for no other purpose than for experience, for the hosts of beings composing it, is a fundamental teaching of Theosophy. If this is so, and we believe it to be so, what a tremendous weight of responsibility it throws on to our individual shoulders! We, instead of being a mere accident in the scheme of things, "a discreditable episode on one of the meanest of the planets," become the central figure, a part of the reason of it all. And consciousness watches us as we go through our daily travail. Every action, every thought, or word, surely, then, takes on a significance quite new; there is no longer room for chance; everything we do or think matters, and the day, as it passes moment by moment, is fraught with endless possibilities, each moment presenting its opportunity of choice.

How can this be otherwise if the universe and all therein exists for education, and without man would not be?

What a transcendent future thus opens out before the pilgrim-soul; what possibilities must lie latent in man's make-up for him to need as his field of schooling the whole created universe! No mere evolution from Tertiary slime, no mere development of the bestial ape, but an emanation from the One Eternal First Cause, seeking, through aeons of time, in myriad states, in countless bodies, Self-knowledge; and upon finding it, returning to the One Spirit. "The drop slips into the shining Sea."

The teachings indicate that we are now passing through the lowest or densest states of materiality. The Divine Ray, now hidden beneath the crust of matter, moves steadily forward in its quest for experience; the soul energized by the Ray, marches on, forcing its way through denser and denser matter, blindness and misconception; immersed in it, yet in direct contact with it only by means of the vacillating mind, learning only by that poor means, conscious only of its mighty destiny and its path thereto: the path of Brotherhood and Compassion.



"HYPOCRISY can have no place where one is trying to lead the Theosophic life."— *Katherine Tingley*

NEWS FROM THE ARCHAEOLOGICAL FIELD

OBSERVER



VARIOUS more or less materialistic explanations have been given by the learned to account for the almost universal practice in ancient times, and to a degree today, of rendering honor to the serpent-symbol. In Egypt it rests on the forehead of royalty, and it occurs (with and without human legs) in the 'Book of the Dead'* and other significant places. In China, though more frequently the dragon-form is preferred, it is widely used in connexion with wisdom and spiritual knowledge. The cobra of India, seven-headed or otherwise, is carved on innumerable temples. Even in the Hebrew scriptures the serpent is a prominent symbol, as we find for instance in the uplifted Brazen Serpent of Moses which healed those who 'looked upon it'; and above all in the remarkable saying of Jesus: "Be ye wise as serpents and harmless as doves." In Greece the serpent invariably accompanies Aesculapius, the god of healing; and Hermes, the god of wisdom, carries the mystic caduceus with two serpents twined round a rod. Even in Ireland, though snakes are not indigenous, the serpent-motif was frequent in old times; and the Druids called themselves 'serpents.'

In ancient symbolism, when the serpent was associated with an egg — a very frequent arrangement — it related to Cosmic creation. H. P. Blavatsky says:

"The 'Mundane Egg' . . . is found in every world-theogony, where it is largely associated with the serpent symbol; the latter being everywhere, in philosophy as in religious symbolism, an emblem of eternity, infinitude, regeneration, and rejuvenation, as well as of wisdom." — *The Secret Doctrine*, I, 65

"That the Serpents were ever the emblems of wisdom and prudence is again shown by the caduceus of Mercury, one with Thoth, the god of wisdom, with Hermes, and so on. . . . The serpent has ever been the symbol of the adept, and of his powers of immortality and divine knowledge. Mercury . . . conducting and guiding with the caduceus the souls of the dead to Hades and even raising the dead to life with it, is simply a very transparent allegory. It shows the dual power of the Secret Wisdom. . . . It shows this personified Wisdom guiding the Soul after death, and its power to call to life that which is dead — a very deep metaphor if one thinks over its meaning." — *The Secret Doctrine*, II, 364

The serpent-symbol is not wanting in the New World; in fact,

*"In the 'Book of the Dead' it is commanded [verse 13] that chapter clxiii should be read 'in the presence of a serpent on two legs,' which means a high Initiate, a Hierophant, for the discus and ram's horns that adorn his 'serpent's' head in the hieroglyphics of the title of the said chapter denote this." — *The Secret Doctrine*, II, 213

NEWS FROM THE ARCHAEOLOGICAL FIELD

it is one of the most frequently found, and again in connexion with wise men and divine knowledge. Quetzal-coatl, the great ruler and hero, whose fame, under different names, extended over an enormous territory from Central America to British Columbia, was the Plumed Serpent.

The great Serpent-Mound in Scotland is well known, also the much larger and better preserved ones in Ohio, and now we learn that the University of Chicago anthropological expedition has discovered another in Illinois — the third American one found. Very little has been known about the Illinois-mounds, but a thorough investigation is now to be made, and the discovery of this new serpent-mound may help to show a connexion with the Ohio civilization.

Near the serpent-mound was a bear-mound 77 feet long. The serpent-mound is about 225 feet long and is coiled in the form of a snake. Nothing is said in the report as to whether it is represented as swallowing an egg, as in the Ohio and Scottish serpent-mounds. This is a very ancient and wide-spread symbol with a profoundly philosophic meaning. It is becoming more and more necessary to abandon the attitude of superiority in relation to ancient peoples in view of the many new discoveries of their mental power and practical abilities, and a study of *The Secret Doctrine* by H. P. Blavatsky, makes it very clear that the serpent-symbol included a very wide reach of scientific and philosophic knowledge.



Professor Byron Cummings of Arizona University — a bold investigator of prehistoric remains who dares to step outside conventional lines when necessary, as has been previously shown in these pages, — has just published a most interesting description of the remarkable monument Cuiculco, recently cleared from débris and partly excavated. It stands near San Fernando in the Federal District of Mexico, not far from Mexico City, and appears to be the oldest structure so far found in North or Central America. It was entirely covered with sand and clay and appeared to be nothing but a natural low hill, but after the excavations made under the auspices of the National Geographical Society, the University of Arizona, and the Mexican Government, were concluded, it was found to be a solidly built temple in the form of a truncated cone 387 feet wide at the base and 291 feet in diameter across the highest platform. This platform is 74 feet above the surrounding plain and a cone of rock stands upon it about 16 feet in height.

There is no mortar between the stones of the temple, but the outer walls are solidly built of pieces of lava, and are inclined at an angle of

THE THEOSOPHICAL PATH

about forty-five degrees, and are covered by hard clay well packed down. Two great inclined causeways lead from the plain, but there are no regular staircases. Subsequent to the original erection several enlargements were made and new altars built above the earliest one. Above the curious cone of lava stones resting on the highest platform, there must have been some kind of wooden structure, for a number of holes for posts were found.

The chief interest in this new discovery is the evidence it presents of great antiquity. The six platforms superimposed through a depth of eighteen feet prove that it must have been in use for long centuries before it was abandoned in prehistoric times. During the period of its use, fifteen to nineteen feet of clay and sand accumulated above its base, the result of occasional floods, and there are also quantities of stones that fell from the upper walls.

No ornament or carving was found in the temple, but many interesting artifacts and some human bones were excavated from the surrounding accumulations which show three distinct periods of prehistoric culture in the stratification at different levels. They all contain pottery, stone implements and small figures of men. The lowest culture and the second higher show superior workmanship in the pottery and figurines; but the third, the more recent, is very crude. It is curious that the two upper strata contain figures represented in the 'Buddha-position' cross-legged, though those from the upper stratum are very badly modeled.

The temple is completely surrounded by lava which flowed down from a neighboring volcano. The lava is from five to twenty feet deep, but fortunately the temple is so well protected by its covering of clay and rock that the lava has not touched the walls. This eruption must have taken place a very long while ago, and it has completely covered the numerous strata of clay deposits brought down by the great floods of earlier times and which have buried the base of the temple up to a considerable height as mentioned above. By a careful study of the clay deposits a reasonable approximation of the age of the temple has been made, and it reveals the astonishing fact that a conservative estimate places its erection at not less than eight thousand years ago; some would add several millenniums to that. According to Professor Byron Cummings, in the *Scientific Monthly*:

"If the lava flow occurred at least two thousand years ago as attested by three most eminent geologists, Tempest Anderson of England, Karl Vittich of Germany, and N. M. Darton of the U. S. Geological Survey, then the geological and cultural stratification of the deposits lying between the base of Cuicuilco and the lava, indicate the lapse of a much longer period of time between the building of the temple, Cuicuilco, and the eruption of Xitli and the formation of the Pedregal [the sheet of lava]. Eight thousand years is a very conservative

NEWS FROM THE ARCHAEOLOGICAL FIELD

estimate of the time that has elapsed since the primitive people toiled up the slopes of Cuicuilco and reared a mighty temple to the gods."

This would put an interval of about six thousand years between the building of Cuicuilco and the earliest known *dated* monument of the Mayas. Who were the people who erected it? No one can say. Possibly the Toltecs, who may have existed as a race in Mexico far earlier than the guesses of archaeology have yet allowed. Anyway, it is obvious the builders were a very long way removed from any fanciful 'ape-man!'



Dr. S. Morley, Dr. T. Gann, and other leading Maya authorities have lately returned from Copán in Honduras, one of the great cities of the Mayas, perhaps the metropolis of the Old Empire, and an important center of activity of one of the most skilled groups of astronomers the ancient world possessed, with a most interesting report of their observations of what may be called the largest sundial ever built.

It consists of two tall red-stone monoliths, covered with hieroglyphics, and set four and a half miles apart in such a position that the sun as viewed from the eastern monument or *stela*, set exactly behind the western *stela* on April 5 and September 6 (392 A. D. according to Dr. Spinden). The first date is the beginning of the Mayan agricultural year, and both dates were considered so important that they are recorded on monoliths and stairways in various parts of the city of Copán, which is situated about halfway between the two monoliths on their respective hill-tops. Throughout western Honduras the month of April is dedicated to burning the brush off the fields before the planting season at the beginning of the rainy season in May, and it was very necessary to know the exact time when the long dry season was near its close.

Mr. J. Lindsay, of the Carnegie Institution, who made the exact astronomical measurements necessary to establish the days indicated by the *stelae*, made the remarkable discovery that the bases of the two monoliths are *exactly on the same level*, which indicates great skill in measurement, and the use of some truly scientific instrument. He believes the Mayas must have been acquainted with some form of water-level. Commenting upon this Dr. Gann remarks:

"The more we investigate the relics left by this remarkable people, the more we realize that we have as yet merely scratched the surface of their knowledge in astronomy, physics, arithmetic, and art."

The problem stands out still more conspicuously from this: where did they come from; and how could they possibly have evolved such

THE THEOSOPHICAL PATH

a high culture out of absolute barbarism in the few years that have been hitherto allowed for this purpose? The Asiatic origin of their civilization is an explanation charged with difficulties; we cannot trace any stages of its evolution in America; and the Atlantean hypothesis seems best, and increasingly so as we learn more of their wisdom.

A MEETING WITH GOETHE

STUDENT

THE *Manchester Guardian Weekly* (England) is publishing a series of extracts from the century-old, and hitherto unpublished, diaries of Rudolf von Beyer. The following account, in the issue of July 23, of von Beyer's meeting with Goethe in his old age — von Beyer being then seventeen,— is of unusual interest, and to readers of THE THEOSOPHICAL PATH particularly so in Goethe's words on music and the harmony of the inner life as the expression of "the divine in man":

Von Beyer's wish to see Goethe in person was soon to be fulfilled. It was on that eventful Wednesday, April 5, 1820. Von Beyer was only seventeen. "Since the early morning," he writes, "I had been romping in the woods and fields." He returned to Berka a little before noon:

The quaint old house was very quiet. Somewhere a cuckoo-clock struck the twelfth hour. Something drew me toward the music-room. Perhaps I would never see it again.

I put my hand on the latch. Someone was playing within. I hesitated, and then I opened the door.

Schütz was playing one of Bach's fugues. Next to him by the piano sat a big, stately man, leaning forward a little, entirely absorbed in the music.

I stood in the doorway, not daring to enter the room. But I could not withdraw, either, for the music held me spellbound.

The fugue came to an end. Schütz perceived me. But the old gentleman by the piano continued to sit absorbed and motionless.

Schütz introduced me to him: "One of Zelter's pupils from Berlin."

The strange gentleman seemed to awaken from a musical dream. The mention of Zelter's name seemed to arouse his lively interest. He looked at me with penetrating and yet infinitely benevolent eyes — eyes like those of 'Boöpis Athene.'* His long brown coat, which touched the floor when he sat, augmented his venerable appearance.

*Von Beyer was no doubt thinking of the Homeric epithet 'Boöpis Hera' — 'large-eyed' (originally 'cow-faced') Hera, who was the wife and sister of Zeus.

A MEETING WITH GOETHE

Von Beyer was asked to sing. He sang the chorus 'The thunder rolls' from Händel's *Samson*.

The old gentleman rested his left arm on the piano. His feet were crossed. He kept time with a gentle tapping of the index finger of his left hand. Then he stopped and sat motionless. The depths of Händel's music seemed to overwhelm him.

Von Beyer's next song was the aria 'My soul is shaken' from the oratorio *Christ on the Mount of Olives*.

"I had been studying Beethoven only a short while," he writes, "and I hesitated before I began to sing.

"When I had finished the old gentleman said: 'Very good! Beethoven will always give us peculiar delight!'"

Thereupon von Beyer sang Graun's aria 'Sing the Divine Prophet.'

"Only when I was singing the last line, 'Soul, be God thy song!' did I know who was sitting before me." It was Goethe.

GOETHE ON "THE DIVINE IN MAN"

The sunshine lit up his face. A full, sonorous voice repeated the words slowly and significantly: "Soul, be God thy song!"

For a time there was silence in the room.

Then Goethe began to talk:

"There is something in us," he said, "that strives upwards. Music touches the universally human in our natures. . . . The resurrection of the spirit will be understood more easily if we master fundamentals. . . . To step out of the husk that surrounds us and to commune with greater minds is the most desirable of all things, and in music it can be achieved. The 'divine in man' (*das Gottmenschliche*) is the ultimate reason for it all, and the divine is expressed in every higher manifestation of art. The finite is an attribute of the divine. God is the *causa immanens*, and the things of the body and of the soul are identical, only from different points of view. Thus the divine is made manifest again and again, and perhaps 'tis no wonder that it can be so near to us. Yes, I realize it ever more: the eternal, fundamental harmony of our inner life is the Godhead in person."

Schütz seemed to be a little embarrassed by these words. At least, von Beyer writes that "his face reflected a certain surprise, if not perplexity." Goethe was influenced by the ideas of Spinoza, and von Beyer surmised that Schütz was not familiar with them.

Not so von Beyer himself. He understood it all and "blessed the memory" of his old head-master, "the worthy Snethlade," who had given him "a grounding in philosophy" before he left school, and of "the excellent theologian Killmer," who had introduced him to Spinoza: "How much I owe the glorious teachers of my youth!"

ON THE MUSIC OF THE GREEKS

Goethe then passed from music to classical antiquity:

"The Greeks," he said, "have shown us the true path. Not only by their classic disposition but also by their delight in the things of the people (*im Volkstum*), by their joyful

THE THEOSOPHICAL PATH

attitude towards life, an attitude that expressed itself in gay forms and shapes and in the musical rapture that pervades all their golden Hellenism. Beneath a sunny sky the flute calls the dancers, pleasantry and temperament are awakened and embroider life's profounder meaning. We must go deep down into the history of the Greeks to understand the germs from which Greek perfection, with all its great joys in harmony and its enthusiasm in musical form and sense, evolved. The soul-structure of the Greek nation is attuned to music. Amongst this people of poets, music had a creative influence. Music, indeed, is the air poets of all ages have breathed. . . . Again and again do I wish to emphasize the fact that we must never allow ourselves to be robbed of our joy in life, of the sun that is around us. In the musical gaiety of ancient Greece this principle is most richly developed.

"And yet it is in the transcendental that our ultimate task is to be found. Music gives an intimation of a more perfect world. . . . Through the temple of music we merge into the Godhead and experience our true 'resurrection.'"

Von Beyer was impressed. "I felt I had been touched," he writes, "by a breath of immortality."

Goethe rose from his chair.

He put his hand on my shoulder and said: "Continue as you have begun. There is no lack of good teachers in Berlin. Never forget that no other art or activity can replace music, for it comes from within and touches what is most sensitive in man. It is the universal art that enables us to understand all others."

"A look from the mighty one," writes von Beyer, "rested upon me. Never shall I forget it! A gift had been bestowed upon me for a lifetime, and I have cherished it ever since."

SOME INTERESTING EXPERIENCES IN MY LIFE

VREDENBURGH MINOT

[A Paper read before the William Quan Judge Theosophical Club]



I HAVE long been interested in Theosophy as an intellectual study, notwithstanding the fact that to be a real Theosophist one must act out in the spirit of compassion and brotherly love all the precepts which one may glean from perusing Theosophical literature. Thus I am going to narrate some intellectual experiences I had in Massachusetts prior to taking up life at Lomaland.

As well known to students of philosophy and history, there was a great influx of so-called transcendentalism into New England in the first half of the nineteenth century, coming largely from the transcendental philosophers of Germany,— Kant, Schopenhauer, Fichte, and many others — as also from study of Oriental and Platonic thought. R. W. Emerson was the leading exponent of transcendentalism in Massachusetts, and so

SOME INTERESTING EXPERIENCES IN MY LIFE

lasting was his influence on New Englanders that in the university I attended, the hall there for philosophical courses was called Emerson Hall. It was in this hall, largely, that I had my first intellectual stimulus to a study of philosophy, which led through transcendentalism to the latter's source — Oriental and Platonic thought.

Plato, it is known spent several years in the Orient, and his philosophy, though adapted to his Greek environment, is essentially identical with the most spiritual philosophy of India and adjacent oriental countries.

Emerson not only was a great reader in the works of European literature and German transcendentalism, but also was very fond of perusing the Hindû *Bhagavad-Gîtâ*, one of the favorite devotional books of the members of the Universal Brotherhood and Theosophical Society.

Thus in my studies at Emerson Hall I was steering ever closer and closer towards Theosophy. The two particular courses in philosophy I attended at this Emerson Hall were — one on ancient Greek and Roman, and the other on European from the time of Bacon. The professor who gave the courses on Plato and Aristotle and the rest of the Greeks was a tremendous enthusiast. He showed us what profundity Plato had, how he derived all material things from a spiritual cause or Over-soul, which overshadowed the physical world; and moreover the professor demonstrated to us that the high tide marks of culture and progress in Europe occurred at times when Platonism was most studied and had the most influence. This professor also brought to our attention the great moral force of Zeno and the Stoics, of whom Katherine Tingley makes so much in one of her recent books.

The professor who gave us the course in modern philosophy was named Santayana, a Spaniard by origin, but nevertheless he gave great credit to all the mighty thinkers who have guided Western philosophy towards the Ancient Wisdom-Religion.

Any one who cares to look in the indexes of H. P. Blavatsky's books, *Isis Unveiled* and *The Secret Doctrine*, will find many references by her to Spinoza, Leibniz, Kant, Schopenhauer, Descartes, Berkeley, Hume, Locke, and others; by picking out of the words of each one of such great thinkers those sentiments which are most spiritual and most true, she demonstrates to her Western readers that a compilation of the best thoughts of each one of them will make up a Theosophy which is in the main a complete whole. Walker's book *Reincarnation*, also shows how many western thinkers and writers have uttered a belief in Reincarnation, and as a corollary in the law of Karma.

On the university grounds, near Emerson Hall, and in many

THE THEOSOPHICAL PATH

respects urged on to the same zeal for knowledge that animated the professors of philosophy with their transcendental backing, were other Chairs of learning given over to chemistry, physics, literature, the languages, history, music and the fine arts, and so forth. Though I was limited by time to taking only a few out of the many hundreds of courses offered, my mind was greatly stimulated towards taking a more international point of view on all problems before me. The courses I took taught me to admire the great men of all nations, and to see that each nation was an essential part of the whole.

One of the professors under whom I took fine arts (the art of designing rugs, book-covers, grilled gateways, etc.), Dr. Denman Ross, had traveled much in the Orient, and most of the ideas he presented to us were a summary of many, many observations he had made of art work in China, Japan, India, and Asia Minor. The large collections of Chinese and Japanese art work which he and Mr. Fenollosa were instrumental in placing before the public at the new Boston Art Museum are hardly to be excelled in any other part of the Western world. The paintings of Arhats, or masters of wisdom, in that museum (which I studied some years ago), are among the most inspiring and spiritual paintings conceivable.

In the study of German at the university above-mentioned I took two courses under professors who had been born and educated in Germany, and these courses were given mostly in the German language. In this way I became much steeped in the poetry, literature, philosophy, and general atmosphere of German culture. The bearing of this experience upon my present years at Lomaland when the problem of Germany's recuperation is so much to the fore, is obvious. Goethe, Schiller, and Lessing were the trio who dominated my German courses there; Goethe belonged to a quasi-Theosophical society, Schiller uses the word Theosophy in his writings, and Lessing argued with much clarity for the doctrine of Reincarnation. Hence they had a great influence on my mind, in those days just beginning to look towards Lomaland.

About the time I began to attend the university in Massachusetts, I started a correspondence with Dr. van Pelt, my aunt, who was then at Lomaland. During my spare college-hours I took up the reading of *The Key to Theosophy* and *Isis Unveiled*, and having met the Leader at Geneva, in the course of travels, I finally came to live at Lomaland.



“WORDS are expressions of thought and may serve to unite people or to separate them; therefore they must be handled cautiously.”— *Selected*

THE TURN OF THE WHEEL

A Little Tale of Karma

BRYAN KINNAVAN (WILLIAM Q. JUDGE)

[Reprinted from *The Path*, Vol. V, No. 7, October, 1890.]

I

HE was the son of a small ruler in Râjputana. His father, of the warrior caste, governed a district including several villages as well as his own small town with justness and wisdom, so that all were prosperous and happy. The ruler was called a Râjâ; he lived in a building made of stone, built on a hill that commanded the town. The son, of whom this tale tells, was born after the Râjâ had been many years childless, and was the only child to whom the father's honors and power could descend. He was named Râma after the great Avatâra. From the time he was born and until he could speak, a strange look was always to be seen in his baby eyes; a look that gazed at you without flinching, bold, calculating, as if he had some design on you; and yet at times it seemed to show that he was laughing at himself, sorry too, melancholy at times.

Râma grew up and delighted his father with his goodness and strength of mind. The strange glance of his eye as a baby remained with him, so that while everyone loved him, they all felt also a singular respect that was sometimes awe. His studies were completed, a first short pilgrimage to a celebrated shrine had been made very early by his own request, and he began to take part in the administration of the affairs of the old and now feeble râjâ. Each day he retired to his room alone; no one was permitted to come within three rooms of his; and on the fourteenth of the month he spent the entire day in retirement. Let us go with him in fancy to one of these monthly retreats and listen with his consent.

II

THE room is an ordinary Hindû room. Hard *chunam* floor, the bed rolled up in the corner, on the walls one or two flat metal plaques inlaid with enamel and representing different gods and heroes. He enters and goes up to the wall in front of one of these plaques — Krishna. The strange look in his eyes grows deeper, stronger, and a stream of light seems to rush from them to the object on the wall. His lips move.

“*Âtmânam âtmanâ* —” he seems to say; the rest is murmured

THE THEOSOPHICAL PATH

so low we cannot hear it. The words are in his own dialect, but in the mind of the hearer they translate themselves. He says:

“This weight upon my heart is not from this life. I have known no sorrow, have lost no object that I loved. My ambitions are fulfilled; the present is bright, the future shows no shadow. When, O Krishna, shall I know that which I now know not, nor what it is that I long to learn? Yet even now a ray of hope steals into my soul.”

Just as he uttered the last words a ringing sound came from the metal plaque and Râma gazed steadily at it. The plaque vibrated, and a subtile scent spread from it over the whole room. The air seemed to vibrate slowly, undulatingly, and then a dazzling shape of a young man seemed to form itself upon the floor, while the vibration centered in the form and the scent turned into light. Râma looked steadily at this being who stood there erect and terrifying, yet calm and strong with peace all about it. It was the calmness and power of it that terrified. As Râma looked, it spoke:

“Do you forget the Upanishad, ‘Two birds sit in one tree; the one eats the fruit and the other looks on?’”

“No,” said Râma, “I forget not. They are the personal and universal. The one who looks on is my higher self — Âtman.”

“I am thy higher self. I come to tell thee of three words. Forget them not, forget not me. They are: Action, Law, The fruit of action.”

“These,” said Râma, “I have heard. Action and Law I know, but the fruit of action, is it that which eats within?”

The form of beauty replied: “It is the ignorance of it that hurts thee. Thou art bound in thy future. This present birth of thine is to allow thee to make the Karma for thy next birth better in the end, but which will be ever dark and painful if not now ameliorated. In this present is thy future. Potential now lies the effect in what cause you make.”

Then with one straight arrow-like glance into the face of Râma, the form faded, and the plaque rang a note of farewell. Across the wall there seemed to pass a picture of poverty and riches, of huts and buildings of stone.

Râma left the room the next day, and never after seemed to sorrow or to be annoyed. His old father died, and he carried on the government for many years, scattering blessings in every direction, until a rival râtâ came and demanded all his possessions, showing a claim to them through a forgotten branch of the family. Instead of rejecting the claim,

THE TURN OF THE WHEEL

which was just, instead of slaying the rival as he could have done, Râma resigned all, retired to the forest, and died after a few years of austerity.

III

THE wheel of time rolled on and Râma was reborn in a town governed by the Râjâ who had once in a former life demanded Râma's possessions. But now Râma was poor, unknown, an outcaste, a chandalah who swept up garbage and hoped that Karma might help him. He knew not that he was Râma; he only swept the garbage near the Râjâ's palace.

A solemn audience was held by the Râjâ with all the priests and the soothsayers present. Troubled by a dream of the night before, the superstitious ruler called them in to interpret, to state causes learnedly, to prescribe scriptural palliative measures. He had dreamed that while walking in his garden, hearing from his treasurer an account of his increasing wealth, a huge stone building seemed suddenly to grow up before him. As he stopped amazed, it toppled over and seemed to bury him and his wealth. Three times repeated, this filled him with fear.

The astrologers retired and consulted their books. The remedy was plain, one suggested. "Let the King give a vast sum of money tomorrow to the first person he sees after waking up." This decision was accepted, and the proposer of it intended to be on hand early so as to claim the money. The Râjâ agreed to the direction of the stars, and retired for the night, full of his resolution to give immense gifts next day. No horrid dreams disturbed his sleep. The winking stars moved over the vault of heaven and of all the hosts the moon seemed to smile upon the city as if being near she heard and knew all.

The cold early morning, dark with promise of the dawn, saw the chandalah — once Râma — sweeping up the garbage near the palace where inside the Râjâ was just awaking. The last star in heaven seemed to halt as if anxious that Râma should come in his sweeping to the side of the palace from which the Râjâ's window opened. Slowly the chandalah crept around in his task, slowly, surely. Slowly the Râjâ's waking senses returned, and as they came a hideous memory of his dream flashed on him. Starting up from the mat on which he lay, he rose and seemed to think.

"What was I to do? Yes, give gifts. But it is not yet day. Still, the oracle said 'immediately on awaking.'"

As he hesitated, the poor garbage-sweeper outside came more nearly in front of his window. The setting star almost seemed to throw a beam through the wall that struck and pushed him to the window. Fling-

THE THEOSOPHICAL PATH

ing open the shutter to get breath, he looked down, and there before him was a poor chandalah with waistcloth and no turban, sweating with exertion, hastening on with the task that when finished would leave the great Râjâ's grounds clean and ready for their lord.

"Thank the gods," said the Râjâ, "it is fate; a just decision; to the poor and the pious should gifts be given."

At an early hour he gathered his ministers and priests together and said:

"I give gifts to the devas through the poor; I redeem my vow. Call the chandalah who early this morn swept the ground."

Râma was called and thought it was for prison or death. But the Râjâ amazed him with a gift of many thousands of rupees, and as the chandalah, now rich, passed out, he thought he smelled a strange familiar odor and saw a dazzling form flash by. "This," thought he, "is a deva."

The money made Râma rich. He established himself and invited learned Brâhmans to teach others; he distributed alms, and one day he caused a huge building of stone to be built with broken stone chains on its sides to represent how fate ruptured his chains. And later on a wise seer, a Brâhman of many austerities, looking into his life, told him briefly,


"Next life thou art free. Thy name is Râma."

THE PRINCE WHO BECAME A BEGGAR TO SAVE THE WORLD

The Story of Siddhârtha-Buddha

P. A. M.

V

HEN the five hermits saw the Buddha coming, they said among themselves, "We will take no notice of him. He gave up starving himself and torturing himself and all the things we do to make ourselves holy, and he is no good. He will never gain perfection." But as he approached they all felt his wonderful power and rose in reverence in spite of themselves. Gently and mildly he taught them, and one of them was the very first to follow him into the Path of Perfection.

Eighty thousand others followed and learned to know the law. And all the heavenly host rejoiced. In their poetical way they said, "The Tathâgata [that is another name they called the Buddha] has this

THE STORY OF SIDDHÂRTHA-BUDDHA

day set revolving that which never yet revolved. Far and wide, for gods and men, he has opened the way to immortality.

“This Wheel of the Law has Pure Conduct for its spokes; calmness of mind and thought are their equal length; firm wisdom is the tire; modesty and thoughtfulness are the sockets where the axle goes; right reflexion is the nave; the wheel is the Law of Perfect Truth. The right truth has now gone forth into the world, never to be extinguished again.”

It is a beautiful way of describing the right way of life as “turning the wheel of the Law.” Everyone who lives an unselfish and pure life does that. But most people have a way of turning all poetry into what they think is something real — they call it materialism. So today there are thousands of people who say that they follow Buddha, and they ‘turn the wheel of the Law’ by writing down his sayings on bits of paper and making windmills of them, like children’s toys. Then when the wind blows them round they say they are ‘turning the wheel of the Law.’ It is like praying by machinery. And some of them think that is better than living an unselfish life with pure thoughts.

It is the same in every country, only some are much more material and silly. In some countries people pretend to be unselfish on one day of the week and make up for it on the other six by being horribly selfish all the time. In other countries they do worse things than that. But that does not stop them all from saying how foolish the Buddhists are because they pray by machinery with their prayer-wheels. It does not matter; what does matter is that where real Buddhism is, there people are immensely better than in any other country. The police reports show it, and the world knows it very well.

Many thousands of disciples joined the Buddha and followed his Path. Among the first was King Bimbisâra who had said he would do so when Buddha returned to the royal city of Râjagriha. Another was a young man who used to wear many jewels and rich clothing. When he saw the simple yellow robe and begging bowl of the Buddha he was very much ashamed of his finery. But Buddha said to him:

“Though ornamented with jewels the heart may yet have conquered the desires of the senses. Looking with undisturbed mind on all that lives, in such a case the outward form does not make any difference to true religion. The body may be dressed like an ascetic with yellow robe and begging bowl and yet the heart may be immersed in worldly thoughts. A man may dwell in the forest like a hermit and yet desire the things of the world. It is not what a man seems that matters, but what he *is* at heart.”

And the young man, whose name was Yasas, suddenly found him-

THE THEOSOPHICAL PATH

self clothed in the yellow hermit's robe, the orange-yellow color of the earth and life.

With these and other there followed thousands and thousands of disciples and all became followers of Buddha and the Good Law. Two of the most famous are Kaśyapa and Ānanda. Ānanda was the disciple whom Buddha loved. Many of the Order of Buddha were sent out to preach the Good Law and the society grew mightily all over India.

Sometimes Buddha showed himself transfigured to special disciples and they saw in that way that he had attained to divinity.

It happened also when he went to Kapilavastu and saw his father. Old King Śuddhodana went to meet him and they sat facing each other, saying nothing for a time. Then the old king reproached his son for making himself a beggar and giving up his kingdom. For long he talked, hoping he might yet persuade Buddha to return to the palace.

Then Buddha answered him. He became transfigured like a god and the old king saw at once that his son had attained his divinity. After that King Śuddhodana became humble and received the teachings of the Buddha. Never were such teachings given by a son to his father, and King Śuddhodana rejoiced in the Good Law.

Once Buddha went to heaven for three months and preached to his mother and to the Devas dwelling there, whom some call 'angels.'

There was a wicked prince called Devadatta, the enemy of Buddha. He was forever trying to stop the spread of the Good Law among men. Once as Buddha was preaching beneath a mountain, Devadatta rolled a great stone down on him, but when it reached the Buddha it split in two and the halves rolled one on each side of Buddha without touching him.

Another time Devadatta got hold of a drunken ill-tempered elephant and set him on the road where the Buddha would pass, hoping the elephant would kill him. The elephant did kill many people of the town of Rājagriha. All the people were in great fear and hid themselves in their houses. Cries and terror filled the city, and men ran for their lives.

Tathâgata, the Buddha, approached the city with five hundred of his disciples. The people leaning out of the windows begged him to go away or he would be killed. But he only thought of the hate of Devadatta and how to stop its mischief. Calmly and quietly he went towards the maddened elephant though all his followers had fled except the faithful Ānanda.

And when the drunken elephant saw him it suddenly came to itself. Bending down, it worshiped at his feet just as a mighty mountain

THE STORY OF SIDDHÂRTHA-BUDDHA

falls to earth. With hand gentle as the petal of a lotus, the Buddha strokes its head and speaks: "The elephant cannot hurt the mighty dragon; it is hard to fight with such a one. The elephant desiring to do so will in the end obtain no happy birth; deceived by desire, anger, and delusion, which are hard to conquer but which Buddha has conquered, thus it will happen. So give up this anger and delusion, and all will be well."

And the elephant escaped from drunkenness and found rest.

All the people were astonished with the sight and they determined themselves to become better. The bad became not-so-bad; the not-very-good became good; the good became very good, and the unbelievers became believers; those who believed had their faith strengthened. This is what happens when people know how to value the wonderful deeds of such a one.

And Devadatta, mad with rage, because he was caught in his own wickedness, now lost the power to fly which he once had, and fallen, dwells in the lowest abode of the wicked.

Prince Siddhârtha had been born in 623 B. C. Through a long life he had worked and preached, and now as the Buddha he was approaching eighty. At least, that was the age of his body. Himself, he had long ago conquered age and had become immortal. It only remained for him to choose the time when he should leave the body behind.

The body was worn out and Buddha said that his work was done; in three months he would leave the body and its sorrows and troubles and woes.

"Completely freed from the three worlds, I go free at last, like a chicken from its egg!" Buddha said.

And there was a great earthquake, because that is one of the signs of the time when a Buddha determines to leave the body; just as when he is born and dies.

Now came the time for Buddha to pass into Nirvâna; because he would then leave his body, people would say "he died." But if the body died, Buddha himself entered into life compared to which this life is death.

The Lord entered into the city of Kuśinâgara, a city of the Mallias who were his friends. Then passing to a quiet spot in the forest he bade Ânanda prepare a place for him to sleep under the trees on the grass.

THE THEOSOPHICAL PATH

The time was near, but he thought ever to the last of others.

“The Mallas will grieve when I am gone. Therefore tell them I am here and bid them come and see me for the last time. Then will their sorrow at my going be less.”

And being bidden, they came. Sadly they took farewell of the great Master and Friend, the Lord of the Spiritual world. But he told them it was joy to leave the prison of the world and enter into Nirvâna.

“I have been in heaven,” he said. “Now I shall go far beyond that, to Nirvâna.”

Of the true religion, the Good Law, he said: “I have told you the truth to be believed. But it is the way of foolish teachers to hold to the letter without discovering the true and hidden meaning. It is contrary to my doctrine and it is a false way of teaching.

“Not separating the true from the false, accepting all literally without discrimination, is like a shop where gold and brass are sold together, justly condemned by all the world.

“Foolish teachers, practising the ways of superficial wisdom, grasp not the meaning of the truth; but to receive the law as it explains itself, this is to accept the highest mode of teaching the true law.

“Ye ought therefore to investigate true principles, to consider well the true law, even as the goldsmith tests and melts and tries and strikes before choosing the true metal.

“Unskilfully to handle words is to grasp a sword without care and to wound the hand with it. The meaning not known, then the Law is neglected, and the mind becomes confused; therefore every wise and prudent master of the Law neglects not to discover the true and faithful meaning.”

The Buddha was so tender towards all living things that he would not even eat an egg because it had life highly developed in it; he would not touch meat. And yet there are people today who say that he died from eating roast pork which gave him indigestion! They have not read the story in its inner meaning.

As his time drew near, Buddha gave many beautiful precepts to his sorrowing disciples. Then he asked if any of them had any questions to ask.

For a while all were silent. Then Anuruddha asked: “Why does Buddha die so quickly?”

And Buddha replied: “All compounded things must separate in the end. Aim to reach the home where separation cannot come. I have

lighted the lamp of wisdom; its rays alone can drive away the gloom that shrouds the world. The world is not forever fixed! Rejoice therefore that I am free! For this you should exult with joy!

“From this time forth my words are done; this is my very last instruction. And now I die.”

So passed the Buddha into Nirvâna. And there was a great earthquake; thunder crashed and shook the heavens and earth, rolling along the mountains and valleys; the sun ceased to shine for a time; all nature sorrowed.

THE END