

# THE ARYAN PATH

51, Esplanade Road,  
BOMBAY.

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## CONTENTS FOR AUGUST.

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*By J. W. T. Mason*

LET BUDDHA INSPIRE THE WEST!—*By Kazutomo Takahashi*

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THE ETERNAL MOVEMENT—*By Prajnanda*

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*By G. R. Malkani*

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*The*  
**ARYAN PATH**

No. 10.

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Vol. I.

CONTENTS

	PAGE.
AT THE ROUND TABLE .. .. .	625
WHAT THE WEST CAN LEARN IN AND FROM THE EAST— <i>By Upton Close</i> .. .. .	628
WHAT CAN INDIA CONTRIBUTE— <i>By N. B. Parulekar</i> .. .. .	632
THE SCIENTIFIC METHOD— <i>By Max Plowman</i> .. .. .	637
KARMA, THE GREAT EVOLUTIONARY FORCE— <i>By Gerald Nethercote.</i>	640
SKANDHAS— <i>A Note on the Above</i> .. .. .	643
SELF, THE DISCIPLINARIAN— <i>By B. M.</i> .. .. .	645
THE PURGATION OF SUFFERING— <i>By John Middleton Murry</i> .. .. .	648
PERSONAL AND IMPERSONAL METHODS— <i>By J. D. Beresford</i> .. .. .	652
A NOTE ON THE ABOVE .. .. .	656
SERMONS IN STONES— <i>By Kumar Ganganand Sinha</i> .. .. .	658
THE GREAT SELF IN DAILY LIFE— <i>By W. Stede</i> .. .. .	661
DIMENSIONS IN SPACE AND HUMAN UNDERSTANDING— <i>By Ivor  B. Hart</i> .. .. .	665
A NOTE ON THE ABOVE .. .. .	667
THE PATH OF THEOSOPHY .. .. .	669
IN THE WORLD OF BOOKS— <i>By K. R. R. Sastri and others</i> .. .. .	673
CORRESPONDENCE .. .. .	684
ENDS & SAYINGS .. .. .	685

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- (c) The investigation of the unexplained laws of nature and the psychical powers latent in man.



# A U M

Unveil, O Thou who givest sustenance to the world, that face of the true Sun, which is now hidden by a vase of golden light ! so that we may see the truth and know our whole duty.

## THE ARYAN PATH

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VOL. I.

OCTOBER, 1930.

No. 10

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*The Editors hold themselves responsible for unsigned articles only. They are not necessarily in agreement with the views of their contributors to whom they leave free expression of opinion.*

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### AT THE ROUND TABLE.

Of late a most hopeful sign is visible in our midst. Men of differing views evince a desire to get together to eliminate their differences. Passive tolerance of the opposing view is giving place to an active desire to understand it. Thus, as recorded in our August number (pp. 540-541) men of science court the aid of philosophers, and the latter feel the need of a world-wide organization to combat the "unsatisfactory and dangerous position with respect to religion, philosophy and science." The different churches of Christendom, with perhaps the sole exception of the Roman, seem to be earnestly desirous of finding a common platform. Even among members of the various Theosophical organizations some attempt is being made to produce unity and harmony. In their ranks divisions would never have occurred, if all concerned, regarding themselves as students, as pupil-teachers at best, had remained faithful to the immemorial Teachings of their philosophy learnt from H. P. Blavatsky, and to the programme given them by their Masters through her. Even in political arena this spirit is in evidence: the Round Table Conference of Indians and Britons to discuss the political future of India is an example.

The Round Table is a symbol of a great ideal; it is also a precedent of spiritual significance and historic value. None of us need despair about the differences and the antagonisms which exist, provided



we do not stand in the way of respectful and sincere attention to all sides and views. With whatever glory romance invests King Arthur and his Knights, according to chronicles, they squabbled and fought until the Round Table was erected. Layamon, elaborating Wace's description, tells of how the Knights fought on a certain Yuletide day, and how the slaughter ensued, whereupon King Arthur took summary vengeance—"slaying all the kinsfolk of the man who started the fight, and cutting off the noses of his women-folk". After this the King evolved the idea of the Round Table to which all Knights came, as equals, to deliberate and work out a plan of lasting peace.

The Round Table is a symbol ; it is more than a mere phrase. A meditation on the symbol always yields some inspiration. At any Round Table real help is given by those who evaluate correctly the nature of the symbol. Whatever the subject discussed there certain fundamentals belong to that Ideal, and in them is enshrined the potency which makes or mars its work. Here an attempt is made to consider these fundamentals, common to all Round Tables.

There are four eternal basic principles of the Universe which affect all things and creatures ; they also belong to man, the small universe, and affect the whole of his life and all his actions. Making a practical application we find them emerging as follows in reference to the Round Table Ideal :—

I. Purpose is the Spirit—*Ātman* : In political language, terms of reference as to the actual purpose of a conference must be clear and definite ; confusion proves fatal ; evasion and equivocation are germs of future differences and strifes. Philosophers themselves are at cross purpose, the moment they lose sight of the fact that an impartite principle unites all diversity. When the Spirit, which unifies all, is overlooked in any discussion, or at any time in the discussion, confusion results. Just as "all things whatsoever in Nature are comprehended in the One" (*Gītā*, XIII, 30), so there must be a heart-perception of those who sit at the Round Table about the Spirit of the gathering which is inherent in its purpose. How ? By noting, the already existing common basis subsisting between all who foregather. Any advance, any further evolution, must start from that. The active aspect of the purpose is the desire to find a solution. "Desire arose in the first cause" (*Rigveda*, X, 129) ere evolution started. So the desire to attain a goal must form part of the purpose which starts any Round Table gathering. Terms of reference are impersonal ; desire to reach a goal is in the Ego, the Individual, the *Jīva-Ātmā*, the Knight of the Round Table.

II. Tolerance is the *Buddhi*, the Discerning Power, the pure and compassionate reason, the first and foremost of the *shaktis* or forces necessary to enlighten the proceedings, to give shape to the deliberations and to reach the goal. Its passive aspect expresses itself in the attitude—"my opponent is



welcome to his views ; I have mine ; let him go his way and I will go mine". But this will not do for the Knights of the Round Table who come together for lasting peace. The active aspect of tolerance is that wisdom which puts away, for the time being at least, its own cherished views, and even convictions, so that the truth underlying the opposing view may be learnt. Not only must all views be welcome at a Round Table meeting, but each of them must be judiciously examined by every one present. Another factor—the attitude of give and take, the sense of the fitness of things, of essentials and non-essentials in compromise ; this is intimately associated with the third principle of—

III. Knowledge about the subject-matter of a conference is its Manas—Mind. Delusion and illusion (*moha-māyā*) can only be destroyed by Wisdom—*Jñānam*. It is necessary to elucidate thoroughly *all* that is involved in the subject under discussion ; to study dispassionately and find all the facts of the case. Weaknesses arising from mere personal positions must be abandoned ; true precedents must be found for guidance ; adaptability to use such guidance must be practised. The highest title of the Buddha is *Tathāgata*—He who is like His Predecessors. In this concept, all Knights of the Round Table should find the strength which comes from the illumination of right ideas, impersonal principles, unselfish motives. How shall a man be sure of his own motives and principles, unless he checks them by the knowledge of the Great Knights who have led human feet to the heights of perfection ?

IV. All these three are embodied in a Vehicle—*Vāhana* ; they incarnate in a body, which lasts for a time—the period of the conference. The body will be disorganized, if not visibly then invisibly, the moment the above named three principles are not adhered to. *Kāma*-passion, *Krodha*-anger, *Lobha*-greed, natural to all mortals, will envelop the Knights like smoke surrounds fire (*Gītā*, III, 38) and unless precaution is taken, body pollution will result. Personal notions intrude on impersonal principles, mar the work of the Round Table and the Knights depart to councils of war. The record of the meeting must be like the Book of Nature, the Karmic Mirror which reflects with faithful exactitude the words and deeds of the Knights ; for it becomes the basis of discussion for the future legitimate and harmonious development of the original purpose.

On such foundations alone can be raised a temple to real Unity and ordered Progress. Wish to lead on the one hand, wounded vanity on the other, must be watched. The true Knight of the Round Table should labour to be an impersonal force, careless of praise or blame, and take for his motto—"Peace with all who love Truth in sincerity".



## WHAT THE WEST CAN LEARN IN AND FROM THE EAST.

[Upton Close is a well-known writer, one of those very few who have shouldered the responsibility of acting as ambassadors of peace and goodwill between the East and the West.

He has travelled in every Asiatic country, including Siberia. He was Investigating Officer for the United States Government in Shantung in 1916-19, adviser to Chinese students during the revolution of 1919, and Chief of Foreign Affairs under Wu-Pu-Fu in 1922. Many delightful and informative volumes do credit to his pen.

In this article every Westerner in the Orient, and especially in India, will find practical help. Our Indian readers will do well particularly to note his remarks on the Motherland.—EDS.]

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As my conception of what the West can learn in and from the East is fundamentally from what I learned in and from the East, I can most profitably make this little article personal.

I went "East" an exaggerated product of the West in its hyperbolic form—the frontier of America. I was born among Red Indians and lumber-camps in the most productive primeval forest in the world, and saw in my youth the site grow into a series of little towns all competing desperately to become the "big city". Mechanization was reaching its peak and I shared the enthusiasm over each clever new device, over the automobile and the wireless. I imbibed the fervour of the "booster" spirit. I shared what Tagore has ironically called "the amazing ecstasy of record breaking" and unquestionably accepted the slogans "bigger and better" and "progress" in exploitation of the earth's surface and products as representing the highest effort of the highest breed of men.

Fortunately there was a dark but surpassing beauty in that country, and a soul in the child to which it spoke, and I think the first doubt regarding the creed of my environment, later to flower under the Orient's teaching into understanding, was cast by the horror men left in their wake as they reaped the forest. When I found the lines in Lao-tze and the Chinese poets which taught that the tree has as much right to exist as the man, both being manifestations of the same creation, the understanding that Nature may not exist solely for exploitation by the two-legged phenomenon came partly out of an adolescent prescience.

Relief from the worship of things in such communities came automatically in fanatical devotion to some mentally limited cult of Christianity—mine, inherited from a brave, overburdened and disappointed mother, being the teaching that the earth was utterly sinful and to be shortly destroyed and recreated into a material paradise for the elect who had lived faithfully under the hardships and obloquy



of their embraced creed. It was as its youthful apostle that I went, right out of a denominational school, into the tolerant society of China. For many such persons there is no hope, as those who have met a certain type in the mission community in Asia know. I was favoured with an heredity of internationalism and travel, and the prejudice-killing experience of roughing it among people of every mental shade and background from Atlantic to Pacific while a self-supporting boy.

Ten years of mental and spiritual growth were spent in Pacific Asia. It was in mid-life that I went to India, and the spiritual wealth of the East climaxed for me in this order.

The first great change wrought in this young Westerner was the revamping of the religio-moral-philosophical theorism of his life—for these are never separated in the young. The mere matter of contact with a different society which to his surprise he found not primitive but to contain, in spite of overpopulation and undersanitation, delightful human companionship, and indisputable beauty in art, manners and human souls taught him that all standards and values are relative and historical, not immutable fiats of God. In other words he learned that God and Law are the sum of innumerable items of human good constantly being added to. The inevitable corollary of this discovery was the disappearance of arrogance. He became willing to learn as well as to teach. Yet he did not lose his feeling of his right to teach things which his new friends had overlooked, as do some sentimentally unbalanced Westerners who come in contact with the more mature civilizations.

The young man had in his blood the two extremes of Western culture: from his French maternal ancestors the attitude that life is an end in itself, and from his Scotch progenitors the dour but stern conviction that life is only an end to something else, here or hereafter. He had left the logical West believing that this schism within himself must be fought to a conclusion even should the struggle destroy him. It was the unlogical and human wisdom of the East which taught him that opposites can exist side by side, that in all nature they do exist side by side, and that his varying tendencies need not at once be brought to a unity. He learned that problems which cannot be solved might well be left until, unawares, they had solved themselves. The East literally saved his emotional life. It might do as much for Western nations and societies, could they grasp its wisdom.

The courtesy of the East at first struck the young Yankee as ridiculous or at least patronizingly quaint. His West had brought him up to believe that manhood and honesty consisted in reducing all relations to abrupt directness and a rough familiarity which was felt to be indicative of equality. As he became included in the fine manners of his new environment he began to see the conception of the preservation of human dignity lying behind these formalities. Eventually he understood that robbing a fellow of respect might be a greater sin than lying. Yet he wondered if frankness could not be attained without rudeness.



He had been trained to "keep going". To give the impression of being overwhelmingly busy was thought "smart" where he came from. It took him longer to learn that true greatness gives the impression of restfulness than some other things. He had grown up to believe that leisure was sinful. The East taught him that leisure was made for man as well as work, and that man is made for both. He came to understand that eggs which hatch into worthwhile creatures must be nested over.

Closely allied to the sense of leisure came the development of the sense of pleasure. He began to discover that the West, which believed only itself developed, while fascinated with mechanical toys had overlooked the senses given to every normal man. He learned the delight of the development of delicate shades of taste in tea drinkings; he found a colour appreciation of which he had never dreamt and which brought him as definite a thrill as going up in an airplane; he found body grace which was almost an unknown art in his land existing from dancers to coolies and waiters; he found the human nose cultivated—scents having names, poor people buying incense with as much feeling of satisfaction as in buying food. He found that a two-penny fan was not a fan unless it was made in some beautiful shape or bore a few beautiful lines or colours. He discovered artisans who enjoyed their creation as much as their wages, and found that men could live in beauty in spite of pathetic paucity in material things. Above all he found people—although in this very East rapidly becoming fewer in number—still able to take recreation in the original sense of the term instead of merely to seek amusement. The first implies a oneness with nature and art; the second implies an artificial exhilaration. He saw Japanese gather around a lotus pond at dawn to hear the pop of the opening buds as they greet the sun; he joined autumn-leaf and moon viewing parties and saw thousands of families spend a tenth of their monthly income and two nights of hard travel for the joy of a day of quiet ecstasy in the forest. He wished to go back to his West to tell it that these *things could be learned in the East provided they were learned quickly before the East had entirely unlearned them, fascinated with machines.*

It required some years for the mellowing of mind within him to reach to his pride of race, arrogance of nationalism, and fervour of patriotism. When he came to examine the first he found that it no longer existed; the second seemed a rudiment of an earlier age, as unnecessary and burdensome to mankind to-day as feudalism; the third must be made compatible, it seemed, with consideration to the other man's interests and viewpoint.

By this time the Westerner was on the way to maturity of mind as well as years. His experience in genial, tolerant, agnostic China had created in him a scepticism regarding the religious outlook, and his increasing contact with the avidity for machines and power and the trust in materialism of the young generation of Asiatics was making him tolerantly sardonic. It was then he went to India. He found greater sordidness, deeper superstition, more unbalanced copyism



than ever, but there are all things in India. In India he found also the greatest souls, the most civilized minds he had met. He glimpsed that combination of scientific thought with the religious attitude, the sense of oneness with and reverence for the universe and patience toward and trust in the unfolding of its phenomena which means true liberation.

There are two "Wests": The West of faith in religious formulæ inherited from the era of Martin Luther, and the West of faith in evolutionary materialism brought in by the scientific age. A strange amalgamation of the two exists in most Westerners of to-day's generation. The key to the Western man's mind is the conception that he individually is the centre of the world, and that all movement proceeds from his conscious and ambitious efforts. This is not without its constructive hint and I hold that the East has much to learn from the West as well as the reverse. The driving power of the Western man is his haunting sense that he must remedy the something that is wrong, and the history of his culture thus far has been first a trusting in his own activity combined with religious creed, then a trusting in his own activity combined with scientific formulæ. Now it tends, as outstandingly evidenced in Russia, to be a trusting in his own activity combined with social-economic doctrines. The Western man, with a few great exceptions, has not yet found the power in himself, rather than in his activity, to repair his world. The East, in full cognizance of its deficiencies—and the deficiencies of the East are more obvious than those of the West—can point him on the path.

UPTON CLOSE.

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[The article which follows in a way supplements the above, and a reflection on their joint message is invited.—EDS.]



## WHAT CAN INDIA CONTRIBUTE ?

[N. B. Parulekar, Ph. D., tries to answer what sometimes is a serious enquiry, but more often a sarcastic challenge. His answer is not clear cut, nor definite; but that is natural, for Mr. Parulekar is a thoughtful man who has observed the Western world judiciously; also, his patriotism refuses merely to indulge in catch-phrases and is strong enough to give him insight into the limitations and possibilities of his countrymen; so, not hesitation but prudence guides him here.

Readers may be recommended to go to his original article and our introduction to it in the February number of this journal, to really value the arguments herein presented.—EDS.]

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In a way what follows is a sequel to an editorial query attached to my previous article in *THE ARYAN PATH* of February entitled "What Hurts Liberalism in Europe." Therein I tried to indicate some of the more serious handicaps placed in the way of liberal initiative in present day Europe. At the same time I could not help observing that one comes across groups of forward-looking people, almost in every country in Europe, who are anxious to build a better scheme of life and are eagerly looking to India for some decisive guidance and new direction for the future. Very pertinently the Editors put the question in their Preface to the article, asking what India might have really to contribute to an enquiring world at this particular juncture. The same question has occurred to me over and over again and I have put it also to my friends in Europe, America and India. Though it may be somewhat too early to give a definite answer, yet I believe the time has come when certain possibilities may well be suggested.

In the beginning, it is necessary to disassociate oneself from a class of people, who are naïvely optimistic, and who can be divided into two groups. One of them believes very ardently in the past greatness of India and points out that this country was enjoying a high state of civilized existence, when others were yet in barbarism. The ancient history of India, its culture, and the remarkable contributions of some of the great ancient thinkers, form the basis of their argument that, with so much in the past, what India needs now most is mainly a number of able interpreters who can unfold the ancient wisdom for our guidance. This type is to be found not only among the orthodox but also among some of the "modernised" men. The second group of people believe just the contrary. According to them everything being wrong with us, the only way out lies in adapting ourselves to the manners and the modes of thinking of the west on a wholesale basis. In other words they believe total westernisation to be the best means of bringing India into line with the rest of the world. Though apparently opposed to one another both types of thinking are finally based on a view of least resistance, which consists in thinking that civilizations and cultures are found ready-made so that others coming after may be



left with the simpler task of adopting them. A large part of educated India tries to shelter itself somewhere between these two extremes, though the actual point of compromise is rather the result of an accident—mostly under economic pressure—than due to clear courageous thinking.

In Sanskrit literature, the Wise Man is called “*Dr̥ṣṭa*” or a “Seer,” implying thereby that knowledge is the fruit of direct experience rather than appropriation of information. *No people can hope to inherit what their ancestors or other groups might have achieved, without at the same time living it in their own lives as a day-to-day experience.* In other words to be worthwhile and really workable, modes of life and thought must carry that stamp of individuality which is marked out by a race or generation from its own struggle to exist and to understand. Applying this test I am convinced that in the experience of our own generation there are elements, which to my mind, are extremely profound. If we would live less haphazardly and more consciously in order to utilise their values, there might rise a pattern of ideas consistent with our own consciousness and carrying thereon a mark of truth.

Further, one must dispense with the age-long superstition of intelligence being given over entirely to a scheme of contemplative life. Mankind has conveniently divided itself into those who are active and those who are merely meditative, with the result that they have either glorified instinct or worshipped simply “Ideas.” The divorce of action from thought has a ruinous result on both. It has stimulated men to build on the one hand a mechanical world, and has led them to conjure an ideal world on the other in moments of relaxation or revolt. The result has been that, in the actual state of affairs, ideal aspirations live either as exiled or at best as alien elements allowed to subsist under sufferance. This has been the fate of the classical western philosophies, which, in their desire to free reason from theological dogmas, banished it also from the realm of “matter.” Theoretically, contemporary European life was being explained in the mode of Leibnitz as proceeding according to a scheme of “pre-established harmony.” This no doubt reflected more the wish of men, who had renounced life in the favour of more active elements, than the existing conditions. Actually, harmony was far away from being realised. Nations were engaged in mutual wars, large scale economic exploitations at home and abroad, in Asia and Africa in the form of organised slave traffic, empire building and appropriating material resources of other people without justice. According to a modest estimate within a course of two centuries nearly a hundred million inhabitants of Africa perished in the slave traffic conducted by Europe; yet there was not an outstanding philosopher or a thinker in classical terms to protest like Plato in his *Republic* against the spread of injustice.

We in India shall be paying a still greater price if intelligence continues to be absent-minded at times of crisis and live alienated from active life. Steeped in poverty as we are, we shall be forced to



sell our intellectual resources—irrespective of the prospective master—for a pittance and live in a state of clerical serfdom. Something like this is already happening to our educated classes. If intelligence fails to be productive, and social, economic, and cultural life seems to be jarring on our ears, the reason is not too far to seek. A society cannot stand on its legs unless the thinking man is at the same time the “working man,” *i.e.*, unless intelligence agrees to come also to the market-place. The challenge of circumstances is specially pressing at the present time and those who run away from their responsibilities will be looked on as renegades for generations.

Keeping these things in mind, if one begins to examine the possibilities of the Indian intelligentsia, one might hope to suggest a possible answer to the question, what can India contribute. By intelligentsia I mean those men and women, who are actively engaged in using their minds for something more than making a living; because these are the people, whether educated or not in the ordinary sense of the word, who really mould our world for good and bad. Looking into the available resources of an educated Indian mind in modern times, one is led to discover a surprisingly large amount of wealth and variety that has gone into its making. Sets of circumstances, which in the course of history should be found separated by centuries, have conspired together to play their rôle simultaneously in the span of even a single generation. The result is, that an originally intelligent mind has a chance of rendering itself many times more fruitful.

For example, a young educated Indian undergoes three stages—I may say lives—three lives or three civilizations compressed in the span of about sixteen years of his education.\* He is generally born and brought up in an agricultural environment, wherein India of old still continues to exist untouched by modern mechanical civilization. India, as it were, is a God-given nursery, where one can enjoy the company of over 260 million peasantry, free men placed in the midst of nature. What does it mean? The early Greek was city-bred and lived segregated from the soil whose inhabitants were condemned to slavery. So the thinking Greek was soon starved of fresh nourishment and died out. The mediæval European intelligentsia was tinged with the aristocratic air of the feudal system or was born of a church-hierarchy. Then the modern educated generations in the West are so completely urbanized that they have lost the touch of the soil. On the other hand the Hindu intelligentsia springs from the midst of a farming population whose imagination has created the richest folk-lore in the world. These villagers write their own plays, compose their own poetry, and preach their own religion. They possess a remarkable common sense in human relations, a gratitude which is almost a second religion, and lastly, an almost inborn ability to see beyond suffering, which you may call their philosophy. All this comes like a gift from the cradle in the first round of the educated Indian life.

\* The writer might well draw a parallel: not so very long ago in Scotland, the sons of crofters, brought up on the land, went to the university, owing to stupendous sacrifice on the part of the parents, and passed into the competing world to the glory of their country.—EDS.



Its second stage means an abrupt leap of over centuries. Here the young man lives in a city with an environment far separated from the surroundings and the general make-up of his early life. He confronts the modern mechanical civilization, gets University training as good or bad as probably in other countries, and in short, passes from India of old to India of new, all within a short course of time.

Then follows the third stage which is as enriching as it is spectacular. One has to think the parallel of an imagined Abraham Lincoln emerging from his log-cabin to Philadelphia, where he meets for the first time a variety of fresh settlers like the Dutch, the Germans, the Scotch and other immigrants from different European countries. In addition, let us suppose he also discovers that every other native born American reads Chinese and speaks too when called upon. He also finds out that the American to be educated, has to know intimately the life, literature, civilization and thought of the Asiatics, over and above those of Europe and America. Now if you substitute English in place of Chinese, Europe in place of Asia, and think of a gifted Indian in place of Lincoln, you may visualize the amount of material gotten together in a modern Indian mind. In fact if an educated Indian looks critically within the make-up of his own personality, he will find therein instruments of knowledge covering different centuries and nations gathered together, an access to knowledge both of his own country as well as of others. In short, his equipment is really enviable. I have not yet spoken of the intellectual, imaginative and emotional contents of such a mind. There is something subtle, something evasively deep, which, if brought to bear on modern scientific subjects, will show, as in the case of Sir J. C. Bose, a side in scientific researches not yet known. In mental sciences, particularly in psychology, religion, philosophy and art, the contributions of such a mind may supply new perspectives to those fields. Lastly, let me point out the immense practical urge brought out of a struggle for political freedom, an economic consciousness in the country, a general social revival and other major issues confronting people in India. These have to be further embraced by the consciousness that out of such efforts may emerge some living principles which, if exemplified in the life of a Nation, may serve to bring about a new hope both to India as well as to the rest of the world.

If the foregoing description of the possibilities of the Indian intelligentsia is true then *the present is the most auspicious time for a number of thinking men to band themselves together to experiment with certain emerging ideas.* Non-violence is the principal among them. It is a partial view of the present movement in India to look upon it as only an effort for political freedom of the country. Something more substantial, more revolutionary of current ideas, and of more permanent value is involved in the programme of Mahatma Gandhi. If non-violence succeeds, it means lifting of human disputes on to an ethical plane, cutting at the root of wars and the domination by physical forces. When a world, tired of mutual conflicts, is longing for an assurance of permanent peace, it behoves the idealistic type of



men to work out as fully the implications of using spiritual means to the exclusion of physical forces, because it might supply what William James was searching for, namely, a "Moral Equivalent to War."

Looked at under this aspect India has an enviable meaning and mission for our modern world. We can afford to take this risk because our human resources are far more extensive than those of any other country. Compared to France, Germany, Japan or even the United States of America, we have to care for a larger population of human souls. We are, therefore, committed to the performance of a potentially promising task whose success may mean the conversion of a fifth of the world's population to a new line of thought and conduct. This will have at once liberated us from petty traditional allegiance and qualify us in future to be instruments of a larger peace proposition. If the intellectually inclined Indians shake off their environmental fears and take up this challenge, I am inclined to think that their capacities will be far more fruitful and their lives will have a definite contribution to make. It is often the fear of the present that makes us poor for the future. It may mean considerable sacrifice of immediate gains in the search of a newer path; but the reward will be sufficiently compensating. We are living at a period when old orders are rapidly disintegrating and a new world is in the making. What greater challenge to human intelligence than such a chance to recreate a new order, even bigger than known to our ancestors? To gather resources moral, material and physical, spreading over a territory wide as the earth itself, and to bind men irrespective of their creeds, country or colour to a new allegiance, is a task worthy of great aspirations.

If I seem to have singled out the issue of non-violence as the supreme test of the Indian intelligentsia, it is because that principle seems to embody a mark of spiritual progress which is the criterion of thoughtful conduct in our present day world. The problem of the clash of human differences has been too sharp for us to be neglected. It seems to frustrate efforts towards constructive lines more than anything else. Those, therefore, who will contribute to its solution will at the same time have done the service of lifting our generation on to a higher constructive plane. Then only our philosophy may have a meaning, and our history or traditions will no longer be a drag on us. My contention is that the Indian intelligentsia has possibilities sufficiently large to meet this problem and if they could only realise them, India will have answered a substantial part of the question of what she can contribute to the world.

N. B. PARULEKAR.



## THE SCIENTIFIC METHOD.

[**Mr. Max Plowman** is known for his good work on Blake, the Mystic, about whom he has written *An Introduction to the Study of Blake* and other books.

During the War he served on the Western Front, but later resigned his commission, was court-martialled, and wrote his apology in a small book entitled *War and the Creative Impulse* which acknowledges its indebtedness to Rabindranath Tagore's *Nationalism*.

Last July he assumed responsibility for *The New Adelphi* as one of the two Editors. We welcome him as a contributor to *The Aryan Path*, and draw our readers' attention to some very Theosophical ideas about scientific idolatry, hardness of religious creeds, and so forth.—EDS.]

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The western world is very sure, and very unsure. It is very sure about evolution, but very unsure about what it means by evolution. It is very confident about "the scientific method," but equally certain that the scientific method is an interminable process of thought destructive of the comprehensive idea. Philosophically the western world stands balanced upon knowledge, which knowledge is much or little as it is regarded from the standpoints of actual or potential knowledge. Actually this knowledge is vast, so vast that no single mind can comprehend the sum of what is available: potentially it is little, so little that the man of science, who stands as prototype for the western world, strikes an attitude of childish humility before the thought of potential knowledge and in the face of any kind of finality becomes wreathed in tolerant smiles of almost senile agnosticism.

Evolution is of course a primary fact: life changes and in the process of change, things grow. The whole truth about evolution is that things grow and change. That this should be seems fairly obvious; but in the western world this knowledge has worked a revolution. Since the revolution, the minds of men, instead of being focused to comprehensive conceptions (of god, the universe, life, the soul, or the whole duty of man) have been shaken into the study of the processes. The focal glass has been removed from the kaleidoscope. *We cannot tell the time, but we know how the clock works.* Our knowledge instead of being direct to the why and wherefore of life, now consists in knowing the how. And because the "how" is rational knowledge, available to any intelligence capable of patiently pursuing the path of least resistance, it acquires an immense democratic authority. What can be known by all without the exercise of any creative faculty has a finality to every mind—an irreducible basis of conviction not to be gainsaid. What can be known by all is called fact, and because belief in its existence wins universal assent, it gains the properties of the absolute and thus becomes "truth." Then, since there can only be one absolute, the fact becomes not only truth but "the truth."



So, out of what was admittedly a little knowledge, we evolve the dangerous but authoritative instrument known as "the scientific method." This proceeds by the methods of laying one fact upon another—of turning a wall-eye to all that will not stand the test of rational understanding and thus rebuilding the universe upon sure foundations—which foundations are, as we have seen, the fact that things change! Much is thus built upon very little, and trembles accordingly. No wonder the western world is a little unsure of itself. No wonder misapplied science is called upon to wash its hands of its own progeny. No wonder the most eminent scientists cultivate, as a side-line to the flow of their pure intelligence, religious forms of thought based upon mystical conceptions utterly at variance with "the scientific method."

Why did the discovery of the fact of evolution cause such an earthquake in thought? To this there seems but one answer: the death-like fixity of the current religious beliefs, the gross materialisation of religious ideas. Spiritual truth is essentially without form: the material universe is the means selected by spiritual truth for its manifestation in form; but the form is the garment of truth; it is truth's means of becoming intelligible to sense. Therefore the ever-present need of man is that he should know the life-giving essence from the garment, and the ever-present temptation is the temptation to accept the evidence of the senses as final in the belief that spirit and form are one, in short, the temptation to idolatry.

When the fact of evolution became apparent to the western world, the first thing this fact collided with was organised Christianity. Now the word "Christianity" has come to mean almost all things to all men; but Christianity, like every powerful expression of spiritual truth, has, in process of time, and with the inevitable materialization of life in this world, hardened into a corporate form and become an encrusted organization with an exceedingly small residue of spiritual life. Whenever the form of spiritual truth thus hardens it becomes its own enemy and a prey to the weakest assaults of error. When the images of truth are accepted as truth and not perceived as material embodiments, then the soul sleeps the sleep of death, the mind rots among the authenticity of facts, and what may be described as the irreducible mean of truth—the least important but most obvious fact becomes the standard of truth. Whereupon the images of truth are destroyed and what is called "rationalism" naturally, inevitably, and really cleansingly, supervenes.

That is, in brief, what has happened to the western world within the last century. There has been a wholesale destruction of idols. To the rational mind this always sounds pleasant, but the less obtuse will be able to distinguish between the wanton destruction of truthful images and the worship of idols. The devastation of nihilism is certainly to be preferred to the worship of false gods; but in the past ages man has never destroyed his means of expressing the most comprehensive knowledge available to him at the time without, later on, having to regret the destruction. The ruins of Greece and Rome are now the proudest embodiments of truth possessed by



those countries: the internally mutilated cathedrals of England are her finest works of art, and art only approves that in religion which is true. To-day there is more of true religion to be found in the National Gallery at London than in the proceedings of Westminster Abbey and Westminster Cathedral put together. But the corollary that we should therefore cling the more fiercely to those expressions of truth which have yielded undying forms is a false one, just because it denies the truth of evolution, or growth, which is the most transparent of all truths. What we must learn, and what is hardest of all things to learn, is that there is no *thing* in the wide universe to which man can cling for truth. That is the teaching of Jesus when he said to his followers that God was able of the stones to raise up children unto Abraham. Directly God becomes a fact he ceases to be God.

Religion is the attitude of the soul to experience. We stand more nearly faced by the world of our own experience than by the whole world of material phenomena. The substitution, therefore, of a scientific for a religious attitude, which so many people in the west believe they have accomplished, is not a real substitution at all: it is merely an atrophy of consciousness for the benefit of the intellect. The supreme necessity of individual life is the comprehension of individual experience, and the opportunity of achieving this is the greatest gift of life. Here "the scientific method" entirely ceases to function. Apart from experience there is no "knowing" in the world of relationship; yet to each of us no knowledge can be more important than the comprehensive knowledge and understanding of experience. The man has not yet been born who could choose a wife according to the scientific method; yet until this method can assist us in the most elementary of our necessities we shall reasonably distrust it as a guide to good life. The point is that there is not one means of knowing facts and another of knowing truth; all knowledge is one and is derived from spiritual intelligence. Of this spiritual intelligence, the facts of science are the veriest sediment of truth. When, and not until, this is realised, the western world will be ready for the truth of religion.

MAX PLOWMAN.



## KARMA, THE GREAT EVOLUTIONARY FORCE.

[**Gerald Nethercot** is a young English journalist, dramatist, and poet, deeply interested in Indian philosophy and familiar with the trend of Indian thought. Therefore his article is full of Theosophical teachings. It is always beneficial for Theosophists to learn that there are individuals who have understood Theosophical propositions with the help of ancient Eastern books—Theosophy not being the exclusive property of any. It should, however, be borne in mind that the complexities and details of such propositions are most confusing and it is almost impossible to master them without the Key supplied by H. P. Blavatsky.—Eds.]

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There are, I believe, few terms more misunderstood than Karma. It is no exaggeration to say that a big proportion of people in the West have never even heard of it. If you ask those who have what it conveys to them, they will mostly tell you vaguely that it is some belief in retributive punishment current in the East. Few students of the subject even, to my mind, really appear to grasp its significance save in a limited sense, and those who reason along Theosophical<sup>1</sup> lines are too often in the habit of thinking of the activity of this principle in Nature merely in its relation to humanity. The same applies to India.

What then is Karma? It will be better if, at the start, we clear our minds of preconceived ideas, and state definitely what it is not. In the first place we must throw overboard any impression that it is retributive punishment. That is the common error in the West. There is no vengeance in Nature. That was the belief held to some extent by the Greeks. What may very well be a fine allegory on this is contained in the Orestean Trilogy of Æschylus, where the Erinyes, the avenging furies which pursue Orestes, develop at last, under the influence of Athena, who personifies Justice, into the beneficent Eumenides.<sup>2</sup> Secondly the sphere of its activity is not confined to the human race.

What then is Karma? It is Justice. Not justice in the limited meaning in which we use the word to-day, but justice in the Platonic sense: that is to say, it is that principle in the Universe which maintains harmony. By it is perfect equilibrium brought about. Its essence is order, and ultimately, it is the law of causation in Nature. Without

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<sup>1</sup> Our author must distinguish between Theosophical and neo-Theosophical; it is true that the doctrine has been twisted and made to fit such illogicalities as vicarious atonement and forgiveness of sins by priests, themselves not free from sins; but for all that, the truth about Karma taught by the Indian Masters of H. P. Blavatsky is available for any enquirer, some of the reliable sources being—*Glossary* (under Karma); *The Key to Theosophy*—Section XI; *The Ocean of Theosophy*, Chapter XI; *The Secret Doctrine* Vol. I, 634-647 and Vol. II, 302-306; the U. L. T. Pamphlet No. 6 on "Karma".—Eds.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. *Secret Doctrine* II, 305 where light is thrown on that other trinity of Greek goddesses—Nemesis, Adrasteia and Themis—Eds.



it the Universe would be chaos. Nay more, without it the Universe could not be. To come to scientific terms, it is the perfectly adjusted law of cause and effect, that "conservation of energy" which cannot be affected in one part without affecting the whole.

So much for that side of it. Now for that realm of its operations which concerns us most—the human race. Here we come up against a difficulty, and that is that Karma and its part in the evolution of the individual remains incomprehensible unless one is prepared to accept its inevitable corollary, the law of Reincarnation. A number of people in the West reject Reincarnation with never a hearing, either because they are materialistic by nature, or so bound by some other theory that they are incapable of assimilating a new idea of any kind.

"Reincarnation! Nonsense! Prove it," they will say. I would ask them to prove any of their ordinarily accepted theories, theories which have become commonplaces of thought now-a-days. Can they demonstrate the existence of ether? Can they prove the law of gravitation? Can they even prove beyond all question that the earth is spherical? Of course they cannot. Yet they admit these ideas because of their inherent reasonableness, and because they fit so well into the known scheme of things. It is the same with Karma and Reincarnation. There is no proof at our present stage of evolution, but the thing is so essentially sane and reasonable, and explains so many things which otherwise seem chaotic, that any unprejudiced person is bound to admit that it is at least worthy of being regarded as a possible explanation of life. It is not as if these people could offer an alternative theory of any philosophic importance which could reconcile the seeming injustice in the world without inner conviction that, despite this, justice does rule. They cannot. For the purposes of this article at any rate, the reader will have to take Reincarnation as a working hypothesis.

Reincarnation might be termed a subsidiary law to Karma, and is a direct effect of Karma.<sup>1</sup> It is the Karmic laws which bring the individual down into incarnation. This gives rise to the question: What is the reincarnating principle in man? A little thought will be sufficient to show that it is not what is commonly termed the personality. In other words Mr. Smith will not reincarnate again, but only that in Mr. Smith, which is eternal. We never can know in this world that reality of which the person we know as Mr. Smith is but the temporary reflection. This is the Ego, the real man, and to use an old metaphor, he is the actor who plays many parts. Each life is a different rôle, and the personality which we think is the man, is but the costume worn for the purpose of that rôle.

Man is a spiritual entity, and for him to unfold his latent qualities, it is necessary that he should undergo varied experiences. He incarnates in order to make himself master of physical conditions, and the experiences force him to set in operation multitudinous causes which

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<sup>1</sup> Rather than calling it subsidiary, it should be recognized as the twin doctrine; if Karma cannot be understood without Reincarnation, much less can Reincarnation be understood without Karma.—EDS.



could not possibly be worked out in one life. Thus it is that certain effects are carried over from one life to another, and thus it is that one man is born rich and another poor ; and why one man meets with ill-health, and another is always robust.

The maturing effects remain latent in the period between one incarnation and another, to attach themselves to the Ego in some future life. These karmic fruits are developed by means of what are called in Buddhistic philosophy, the *Skandhas*,<sup>1</sup> themselves the result of Karma. These are five in number, being respectively, material qualities, sensation, tendencies of mind, abstract ideas and mental powers. These attributes form the personal man of each incarnation. They clothe the Ego, and by them is he made conscious of the conditions surrounding him in physical matter.

Each action and thought affects the constitution of these *skandhas*, and therefore the man will receive at the commencement of his next incarnation those attributes which he has merited by his conduct in his previous life. The concatenations of various causes, beneficent or otherwise, set up by the man will attach themselves to this personality, having remained intent until the time was ripe. In the moral worlds, which are not three-dimensional, the cause is not necessarily immediately followed by its effect.

As the *Mahābhārata* says :

“ See the potter’s moulding harden from the soft and yielding clay !  
Destiny to-day is master ; man was master yesterday.”

Thus, “ as a man soweth that also shall he reap ” and so perfect justice, which is perfect wisdom, and which again is perfect love, is carried out. Karma is the great evolutionary stimulus in Nature, and provides those impacts without which there would be no growth. And as the displacement of water in a pond, caused by the dropping into it of a pebble, will in time affect the position of each drop in the pool, so every action and thought of each individual affects, either for the general good or the general ill, entire humanity.

In the space at my disposal I have done my best to elucidate this vast and complex subject a little, but have unavoidably dealt sketchily with that which needs volumes.

GERALD NETHERCOT.

<sup>1</sup> Much confusion exists about this word, and still more about the ideas it is meant to convey. See the After-Note to this article.—Eds.



## SKANDHAS.

### A NOTE ON THE ABOVE.

Below we print four extracts on this important but difficult subject, which even among Theosophical students is generally not well understood. Skandhas are germs of life on all the seven planes of Being, and make up the totality of the subjective and the objective man. Every vibration becomes a skandha, and every thought and wish and feeling produce skandhas which are closely united to Astral Light pictures. As a Mahatma's letter points out Esoteric philosophy reckons seven Skandhas; the exoteric skandhas have to do with the objective man, the esoteric with the inner and subjective man. Further, we are taught, a mental change, or a glimpse of spiritual truth, may make a man suddenly turn to the truth even at his death thus creating good Skandhas for the next life. The last acts or thoughts of a man have an enormous effect upon his future life, (though he would still have to suffer for his misdeeds), and this is the basis of the idea of a death-bed repentance. But the Karmic effects of the past life must follow, for the man in his next birth must pick up the skandhas or vibratory impressions that he left in the Astral Light, since nothing comes from nothing in Occultism, and there must be a link between the lives. New skandhas are born from their old parents. With this in mind let the student reflect upon the following:—

1.—*Samskâra* (Sk.) *Lit.* from *Sam* and *Kri*, to improve, refine, impress. In Hindu philosophy the term is used to denote the impressions left upon the mind by individual actions or external circumstances, and capable of being developed on any future favourable occasion—even in a future birth. The *Samskâra* denotes, therefore, the germs of propensities and impulses from previous birth to be developed in this, or the coming *janmas* or reincarnations. In Tibet *Samskâra* is called *Doodyed*, and in China is defined as, or at least connected with, action or Karma. It is, strictly speaking, a metaphysical term, which in exoteric philosophies is variously defined; *e.g.*, in Nepaul as illusion, in Tibet as notion, and in Ceylon as discrimination. The true meaning is as given above, and as such is connected with Karma and its working.

*Glossary*, P. 267.

2.—*Skandha* or *Skanda* (Sk.) *Lit.*, “bundles”, or groups of attributes; everything finite, inapplicable to the eternal and the absolute. There are five—esoterically *seven* attributes in every human living being, which are known as the *Pancha Skandhas*. These are (1) form, *rûpa*; (2) perception, *vidana*; (3) consciousness, *sanjna*; (4) action, *sanskâra*; (5) knowledge, *vidyâna*. These unite at the birth of man and constitute his



personality. After the maturity of these Skandhas, they begin to separate and weaken, and this is followed by *jaramarana*, or decrepitude and death.

*Glossary, P. 280.*

3.—It is the group of Skandhas, that form and constitute the physical and mental individuality we call man (or any being). This group consists (in the exoteric teaching) of five Skandhas, namely; *Rupa*—the material properties or attributes; *Vedana*—sensations; *Sanna*—abstract ideas; *Sankhara*—tendencies both physical and mental; and *Vinnana*—mental powers, an amplification of the fourth meaning the mental, physical and moral predispositions. We add to them two more, the nature and names of which you may learn hereafter. Suffice for the present to let you know that they are connected with, and productive of *Sakkayaditthi*, the “heresy or delusion of individuality” and of *Attavada* “the doctrine of Self,” both of which (in the case of the fifth principle the soul) lead to the *Maya* of heresy and belief in the efficacy of vain rites and ceremonies, in prayers and intercession.

*Mahatma Letters, P. 111.*

4.—We believe in an unerring law of Retribution, called Karma, which asserts itself in a concatenation of causes and their unavoidable results. And how or where does it act? Every labourer is worthy of his hire, saith Wisdom in the Gospel; every action, good or bad, is a prolific parent, saith the Wisdom of the Ages. Put the two together, and you will find the “why”. After allowing the Soul, escaped from the pangs of personal life, a sufficient, aye, a hundredfold compensation, Karma, with its army of Skandhas, waits at the threshold of Devachan, whence the *Ego* re-emerges to assume a new incarnation. It is at this moment that the future destiny of the now-rested *Ego* trembles in the scales of just Retribution, as *it* now falls once again under the sway of active Karmic law. It is in this rebirth which is ready for it, a rebirth selected and prepared by this mysterious, inexorable, but in the equity and wisdom of its decrees infallible LAW, that the sins of the previous life of the *Ego* are punished. Only it is into no imaginary Hell, with theatrical flames and ridiculous tailed and horned devils, that the *Ego* is cast, but verily on to this earth, the plane and region of his sins, where he will have to atone for every bad thought and deed. As he has sown, so will he reap. Reincarnation will gather around him all those other *Egos* who have suffered, whether directly or indirectly, at the hands, or even through the unconscious instrumentality, of the past *personality*.

*The Key to Theosophy, PP. 109-110.*



## SELF, THE DISCIPLINARIAN.

[B. M. is an old-world man living by his old-world methods in our era. We are fortunate in having secured a few reports of his talks to his intimate friends. The Bhagavad-Gita is the book he has mastered through long years of study and meditation; but further, having lived according to its tenets more successfully than is generally possible, his thoughts breathe a peculiar fragrance. The papers have been translated from the vernacular; it should be understood that they are not literal translations, and the translator has adhered more to ideas and principles than to words. Although B. M. knows English, his inspiration becomes impeded in employing that medium of expression and so he prefers not to use it. We think our readers will find real inspiration in this series.—EDS.]

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“The Spirit in the body is called Maheswara, the Great Lord, the Spectator, the Admonisher, the Sustainer, the Enjoyer, and also Paramatma, the highest Soul.”  
—*Bhagavad-Gita*, XIII-22.

To discipline the lower nature by the higher is to raise the self by the Self. The superior aspect of our being has to look after the sensuous and passional part in us.

Discipline which is imposed upon boys at school is only partially effective, as it is imposed from without. Modern educationists are finding out what the old Gurus well knew, that unless the understanding and willingness of the pupil are at work the discipline imposed remains impotent.

The school of life also imposes upon us all certain discipline; we chafe against this because we have not grasped that this is an honest universe and in it nothing happens by chance but everything is an effect from a previous cause, which effect in its turn becomes causal. The real and only teacher who can discipline us is our own Higher Self.

Suffering, chastisement, frustration, which under the Law of Karma we encounter, discipline us provided they succeed in bringing the lower and satanic nature of ours in contact with the Higher and Divine in us. Thousands suffer but do not learn from their suffering. We learn from life-events, especially the painful ones, only when our thinking-discriminating nature reviews and evaluates the event. Generally people see the finger of an outside God in all their life-events and so pray to Him and try to propitiate Him and thus prepare themselves to become rank atheists. We have to learn to see the finger of our own Higher Self, for *there* is the source of all adjustment and discipline.

People often say—“If I can take care of my moods and selfishness I should be all right.” They do not know the mechanics of the human machine, and ignorance cannot succeed in psychological experimentation any more than in physical. One has to know whence moods and selfishness arise, what superior agency can cure them, and how. All this knowledge is available in the *Bhagavad-Gita*.



The thirteenth discourse describes the human machine ; how it operates ordinarily , what is the effect of its perfect operation ; and what is the technique for the latter.

Concentration on the contents and characteristics of the Higher Self in us is the alpha and omega of the Hidden Life.

What the Inner Ruler in each one of us is, should be the subject for study and reflection. Once its powers are intellectually known by us we will be ready to use them and realize in ourselves their strength. We are universal and impersonal intelligences ; each one of us has to know this fact in our personal beings. This is evolution. When the separated personal man recognizes that he is neither separate from the whole of Nature, nor is he the mask known to his fellow-mortals, but that he is a Centre of Life and Light in himself, he takes the first step. This intellectual recognition results from study, from meditation, and from the spirit of sacrifice.

Now, in the above-quoted verse we are taught the characteristics of the Higher Self.

In the innermost recess of the heart dwells the Lord who is the Supreme Self—Maheswara and Paramatma. In each one of us is the Lord, and in all He is a ray of the One Self. The Supreme Self is like the Sun, and Its ray dwells in each and acts as the Lord in the body.

The verse gives four striking characteristics of this Lord, the Inner Ruler immortal in us—(1) the Spectator, (2) the Admonisher, (3) the Sustainer and (4) the Enjoyer. If we could in some measure grasp this four-fold function, we should see light in the midst of the darkness which now prevails.

The God in us is the eternal witness of all that happens in or to us. The body has its powers, the mind also, with which it functions; will and feeling produce other phenomena ; but whoever the agent producing action of body, speech or intellect, the Spiritual Soul, the Real Man, is the Spectator. It is true that there are Godless men, *i.e.*, men who having denied the existence of their spiritual principles, have lost for themselves the sure guidance that comes from the Higher Self. Even such can retrace their steps by honest enquiry and persistent search. This Being in us who watches the panorama of events, has to be recognized by our brain-minds. For then he manifests his second power.

The God in us is the admonisher ; whenever the senses of flesh, dragging the mind after them, make us commit wrong, as invariably happens, the Higher Self speaks. It uses our conscience which is the voice of all our accumulated experiences and tells us what not to do, where to desist. It is always well to listen to the voice of conscience, but we must learn to make sure that it is the voice of conscience, and further that it is in accord with the expressions of laws which constantly operate in Nature. When through the study of first principles and basic fundamentals which metaphysics give us we give culture to our conscience, the Higher Self reveals to us his third power.



The God in us is the sustainer of all our actions. This might sound strange and raise the question—can the Higher Self sustain the wickedness of the lower self, with which men are so closely identified? It is to be understood that every action of ours has a lesson to impart and every experience yields its power to the human soul. When we have acquired the habit of attending to our voice of conscience; and when we have learnt to move after thought on the basic principles involved in our movement, we do not indulge in deliberate wrong-doing. These two processes are our safeguards, and yet, being but frail mortals, we do commit errors. Because of the attention we have paid to our conscience, and the precaution we have taken to consult the codes of the Science of the Self, we gain even from our error due good. This is due to the sustaining characteristic of the Higher Self. His sacrificial nature is great. He, so to speak, makes himself a scape-goat for the foibles of the lower self, because that lower self has brought itself in line with the vision and admonition of the Higher. And as sacrifice always begets joy we see how the Higher Self enjoys.

The God in us is the enjoyer. In his own realm, *i.e.*, in his own native state, the Self has no opportunity to learn about the mighty magic of prakriti or matter. That is why he embodies himself in matter, and learning in and through it becomes master of matter. When his agent and ambassador the lower self lives and moves and has its being rooted in the higher, the latter enjoys the process of unfoldment and growth. Like the bee, the Higher Self sucks the nectar of Life, till it is all-knowing self-conscious Life.

To attain contact with, and experience, the nirvanic bliss of the Spiritual Self, we must begin by recognizing the existence of the divinity in us. Next, we should proceed to listen to its admonitions and advice, and learn through proper study its ways and methods, so that its sustenance reaches us. Then its joy and bliss will be ours, and in face of trouble and encumbered with pain, we shall still radiate the Light of Wisdom which is peace and happiness.

B. M.



## THE PURGATION OF SUFFERING.

[**John Middleton Murry** needs no introduction to our readers. This contribution from his pen is, as much of his book on *God*, founded on some interior experience. Naturally, therefore, it lacks clear-cut firmness, and the feeling of groping for something expresses itself. This is all the more reason why it should command sympathetic but intelligent consideration.

H. P. Blavatsky in her *Secret Doctrine* (II, p. 475) writes these pregnant words :

Nor is it the less natural that the materialist and the physicist should imagine that everything is due to blind force and chance, and to the survival of the *strongest*, even more often than of the *fittest*. But the Occultists, who regard physical nature as a bundle of most varied illusions on the plane of deceptive perceptions ; who recognise in every pain and suffering but the necessary pangs of incessant procreation : a series of stages toward an ever-growing perfectibility, which is visible in the silent influence of never-erring Karma, or *abstract* nature—the Occultists, we say, view the great Mother otherwise. Woe to those who live without suffering. Stagnation and death is the future of all that vegetates without a change. And how can there be any change for the better without proportionate suffering during the preceding stage? Is it not those only who have learnt the deceptive value of earthly hopes and the illusive allurements of external nature who are destined to solve the great problems of life, pain, and death? —Eds.]

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“Do you not see,” John Keats wrote to his brother in April 1818, “how necessary a world of pains and troubles is to school an intelligence and make it a soul?”<sup>1</sup> This is not an assurance that we can take from anybody ; we are impelled to ask the man who ventures it for his credentials. The credentials of Keats are excellent, none better. At the moment in which the necessity of suffering as a means to soul-creation became thus obvious to him, he was suffering indeed. His fortunes were shattered, his love disappointed, his life doomed. He spake with authority, and not as the scribes.

I know of no matter on which one would more readily keep silence than this of suffering. Nothing is more intimate, nothing more utterly a man's own than his suffering. To speak as the scribes, to make comfortable generalisations on suffering is not to be endured. And it is hardly to be endured that a man should speak of his own. Who can dare to say : “There will never be suffering greater than mine”? And if greater suffering may be, how shall he know that his truth, however hardly won, however precious, however enduring, will withstand the corrosion of another's pain?

I love John Keats ; my love of him, as a human being, scarcely stops (where the wise tell us all love should stop) on this side idolatry. I believe that in the days when he wrote those words to his brother, he was veritably illumined ; he saw, with a simple clarity, a great

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<sup>1</sup> Cf. “For mind is like a mirror ; it gathers dust while it reflects. It needs the gentle breezes of Soul-wisdom to brush away the dust of our illusions. Seek, O Beginner, to blend thy Mind and Soul.”—*The Voice of the Silence*.—Eds.



truth concerning human life. I revere him for that discovery, which other men had made before him, and others will make again, but every man must make for himself in his own way. Yet precisely because I love and revere him, I cannot forget his death-bed cry. "Oh, Brown, I have coals of fire in my heart. It surprises me that the human heart is capable of bearing and containing so much misery. Was I born for this end?" There are coals of fire burning in my heart whenever I read those words.

I choose Keats because I know him, because he suffered as few men have suffered, and because in him the opposition is naked. Moreover, the intimacies of his noble life now belong to the adamant and unchanging world of eternity. There will be, there indeed are, those who say that Keats in his last extremity of pain denied his former illumination. Nor would I take it upon me to deny that denial. There are labyrinthine paths of pain along which few mortal men have travelled, and those who travel them never return.

The difficulty is plain. We can speak with certainty of suffering only when we have passed beyond it; and when we have passed beyond it, *it* no longer exists. And again, whatever conviction we may feel that our own suffering is justified by the mere fact that it has been wrought into the pattern of our lives, we cannot be sure that, under the stress of suffering far greater than any we have endured, the sense of justification would not fail.

In short, a man may speak of suffering just so far as his own experience of suffering goes, and no farther; and he can speak for himself alone. He may say, as I would say, that *so far as his experience goes*, suffering can be changed from a privation to a privilege: that he has known moments of realisation when it seemed as clear as day to him that, even if he could, he would not, have the bitterest moments of his life otherwise than as they were. They belong, irrevocably, to that texture of experience which has made him what he is; and how shall he deny one atom of the stress that has shaped him? The thumb of the potter presses hard upon mortal clay. Is that grim pressure good? Is it bad? We can only say, It is.

And that simple saying, *It is*, which means so much to some, is the reward of suffering. Whether suffering be bad or good, we can say of it one certain thing: that it is to all men the swiftest, and to some the only, path which leads them beyond good and evil. The moment comes in suffering when we understand that it is childish and foolish to rebel, and we rebel no longer. We submit, we accept. There is nothing else for us to do. We make no merit of the inevitable. As our suffering, so our acceptance comes by destiny. If at first we are tempted to make a virtue of our necessity, we quickly outgrow the temptation. We see that nothing that we are is veritably our own—not our suffering, not our endurance, not our acceptance. These happen, simply *happen*.

That acknowledgment is terribly radical. When it comes to us (for when we make it, we understand that it is not *we* who have made it) we are stripped naked indeed. Nothing is left. We die.



Yet in that death something is born.

I have no doubt that all this has been said many times before, and with authority. But I, from my own small experience, would lay stress on a distinction, between soul and spirit. I use these words because I have no others. The soul, as I use the word, is the perfect unity of mind and body—the unity out of which the elements, mind and body, are separated by human discourse, and into which they must be reintegrated again. Spirit is that which is born of the awareness of ourselves as total unity, or soul; it is, indeed, that awareness. It is what remains when we have been, if only for an eternal moment of lucid contemplation, wholly detached from our total selves, or souls. The way to spirit is through the soul; but soul is not spirit. For even soul belongs wholly to the world of existence and becoming. Spirit which knows even the soul as immersed in the world of becoming, is itself eternal.

Soul-perfection, therefore, as I understand the phrase, ends in soul-rejection. The consummation of the soul lies in its own detachment from itself. In the word of Indian religion, “Thou art not that”<sup>1</sup>—not even that total and reintegrated unity which is the soul. But this reintegration into unity is necessary: man must become his soul, before he can be detached from it. And then it is not *he* who is detached; he is that from which pure spirit is detached.

Through suffering comes purgation. But to believe this is no facile answer to the problem of evil and pain. The burden of that problem, borne to the end, and left finally unsolved, is the bitterest component of the suffering of which we speak. Each man must bear, as he can, the suffering of the world—not merely the trivial portion of it which comes directly to him, but the far greater one that comes from the imaginative realisation of all the unmitigable pain that has been, and is, and will be. Then truly he suffers; and then he passes beyond the possibility and the need of consolation, in the knowledge that “Nor God, nor demon can undo the done.”

That is the first great purgation of man: to know that there is, and *can* be, no consolation. With this knowledge he passes into the first loneliness. The desires of the heart can never be fulfilled; the problems of the mind can never be solved; the universe rejects him. Then he descends into his own darkness—the unknowable from whence he springs. And, by a miracle, he is renewed. He has re-entered that which was before the desires of the heart or the questions of the mind were framed.

So, by suffering, man attains the realm where suffering is not, and regains his own totality. He becomes a soul. Yet he does not

<sup>1</sup> The Upanishadic teaching is positive—“Thou art That.” We doubt not that if the gifted author went to the *sources* of Indian philosophy rather than to their modern interpretations, he would find a great light illuminating the subject of soul and spirit, as also that of the evanescent personality and the immortal individuality. The components of the psychic and spiritual natures in man are fully explained by H. P. Blavatsky in *The Key to Theosophy* (Section VI.), and we need not add that her teachings are identical with those of the Ancient Indians.—EDS.



cease to suffer. In the darkness he did not suffer, because there was no I to suffer with. But in the new light he suffers again, though not with the old suffering. Then he suffered because the desires of the heart and the hunger of the mind could not be satisfied. Now these have left him, and he suffers simply, as a creature in the world of becoming. And this simple suffering is worse than the first, because it is directly accepted. *It is.*

Then begins the second loneliness, and the second purgation. Here there is no darkness, but a serene and cruel lucidity. In it he makes the final surrender of all that he has won—his very soul. *He is not that.* And that, I believe, is the end. He suffers no more. For that which suffers is not he: and that which is detached from himself cannot suffer. It is impassive and impersonal and eternal—the soul beyond the soul, or the pure spirit.

J. MIDDLETON MURRY.

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*Seek in the heart the source of evil and expunge it. It lives fruitfully in the heart of the devoted disciple, as well as in the heart of the man of desire. Only the strong can kill it out. The weak must wait for its growth, its fruition, its death. And it is a plant that lives and increases throughout the ages. It flowers when the man has accumulated unto himself innumerable existences. He who will enter upon the path of power, must tear this thing out of his heart. And then his heart will bleed, and the whole life of the man seem to be utterly dissolved. This ordeal must be endured; it may come at the first step of the perilous ladder, which leads to the path of life; it may not come until the last. But, O disciple, remember that it has to be endured, and fasten the energies of your soul upon the task. Live neither in the present, nor the future, but in the eternal.*

—*Light on the Path.*



## PERSONAL AND IMPERSONAL METHODS.

[**J. D. Beresford** presents an excellent theme: it is founded upon some experience of his own, but the deductions drawn are Theosophical. We draw our readers' attention to the Note which follows.—EDS.]

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There is a sense in which it is true to say that we can learn only by experience. Jesus said, "If they believe not Moses and the prophets neither will they believe though one rose from the dead," a saying which for my present purposes may be paraphrased without altering the intention, into "There is no presentation that will convince those who are not ripe for belief." And this reflection, which can never be long absent from the mind of one who is eager to share his knowledge with another whether as teacher, parent, or friend, confronts me with the effect of a barrier when I attempt, as I am now proposing to do, a differentiation between two fundamental attitudes towards man's relation to eternity.

The last phrase is chosen with deliberation, as I hope by the very vagueness of it to avoid those familiar associations which have such a hypnotic effect upon the average mind. I was, for instance, recently present at a Commemoration Service in one of our well-known public schools. The sermon was preached by an important dignitary of the English Church; and the phrase upon which he chiefly depended in addressing those five hundred school boys was their "relation to God." After the service I spoke to one of them and asked him what meaning the Dean's phrase had had for him, personally. And though he is an intelligent boy, he could give me no answer save in some other formula of the same order. Moreover I believe it safe to assume that no other boy there, possibly no adult, in view of the nature of the congregation, had reached the stage of spiritual development and knowledge at which such an immense phrase could be separated from its comparatively meaningless associations and recognised as posing a question beyond our present spiritual capacity to answer intelligently.

In substituting so relatively comprehensible a phrase as man's relation to eternity, I am, no doubt, begging an important question. But I claim that it is a question which must be begged. The idea of God becomes in Middleton Murry's words "too vast to be my friend, too intimate to be my enemy." And if I am unable after patience and long effort to explain to some audiences my beliefs concerning the lesser articles of my creed, how can I presume even to speak of God?

What I intend, therefore, in the present connection represents nothing more than a statement, submitted without any dogmatic assertions or reference to proof, that I regard my passage through the experiences of this world as no more than an interlude in the life of the Spirit. And when I come to speak of two "fundamental attitudes"



towards spiritual progress and of that which I, myself, have chosen, I assume no more than that both are influenced by the major premises that life in the flesh is transitory and largely illusive.

The first of these attitudes demands explanation, for any dictionary definition in this connection is surrounded with pitfalls. It is founded on the assumption that a man (or woman) may by diligence and great powers of determination so far subdue and command the body as to taste the powers and knowledge of immortality while still inhabiting, though it be only by his own will and at his own discretion, the temporary instrument of the flesh. This assumption is common, also, to all believers in the esoteric wisdom ; but where the roads divide—and there are more than two of them, though I am speaking of two only in this article—is in the method by which the object may be attained. I propose to label these for my present purpose, the “Personal” and the “Impersonal,” but I do so solely for convenience and without any pretence of using the terms as a philosophically accurate description. (In my own mind they have much the same connotation as Black and White Magic, but I do not wish to emphasize the parallel.)

The Personal method, of which I had some experience in 1922-23 is entirely independent of any religious creed. It does not seek Nirvana or Paradise, and its Hell is represented by Nietzsche’s “eternal recurrence,” a principle that differs in important particulars from that of the “Wheel of Life” to which we may be bound by carnal desires or spiritual indifference.

The technique advocated by the school of which I am writing is elaborate and progressive. In so far as it is directed towards the control of the body, I have little fault to find with it. One of its first and perhaps its most valuable principles concerns the discovery and elimination of physical habits, more particularly those that are not, at the beginning of the training, present in the consciousness. The methods of attack are various including increasingly difficult physical exercises, but they are all more or less subject to the development of what is known as a form of double-consciousness. This may be attained, we are told, by maintaining a constant awareness of and watch upon the self in every action of waking life. In speaking the student must listen to the sound of his own voice, in his association with his fellows he must be continually aware of his facial expression, his gestures, his every movement, never throughout the day must he cease to have knowledge of his reactions in order that eventually he may free himself completely from automatism, or the performance of any act, however trivial, carried out entirely below the level of consciousness.

Against this as a principle of self-training, I have no ethical objection, but I very soon discovered that if I continued the practice I must abandon my profession as an imaginative writer. In the first place the writing of fiction necessitates the temporary sinking of the personal identity. If a novelist is to understand the characters he tries to portray—and how shall he portray them if he does not—he must lose himself in their identities at least as far as an actor loses



himself in the part he is playing. And the further this imaginative effort is carried, the greater will be the success of his characterisation. But, in my experience, the perpetual maintenance of self-observation entirely forbade this sinking of the personal identity in that of another though it were only the fictitious person of an imagined character in a novel. The two processes were antagonistic in principle and the only escape from the dilemma was by way of assuming an impersonal, critical attitude towards the people of my story, which would have meant, in my case, the cultivation of what would have been, in effect, an entirely different technique.

In the second place another antagonism was aroused into which I cannot enter in detail since its explanation involves too much personal history. In brief there was an aggravation of an old struggle between two desires, (1) the desire for separation from worldly responsibility in order to practise some such principles as I was then studying, and (2) the realisation of the necessity for self-sacrifice, represented in this instance by the continued devotion to a work that was often wearisome but was my sole means of supporting my family.

So far, however, I have spoken only of the attitude of mind necessary for the physical training, and where I actually join issue with the teaching of this school is on a far more important point: the question of our relation to humanity. In this the first principle advocated was the cultivation of a supreme indifference. Acts of mercy, of self-sacrifice, of generosity were encouraged but they were to be performed without the least regard to the gratitude or ingratitude of those on whose behalf they were made. They were not to be regarded as acts of charity but of self-development. I might be advised to spend my energies on behalf of a fellow-creature, but not to win his affection, nor, so far as I was concerned, because I regarded him as one to be loved or pitied.

The practice of this method leads to great detachment from and independence of the opinions of the world at large. When we become indifferent alike to love and hate, to praise and criticism, we approach that Nietzschean ideal of the Superman which is, incidentally, an ideal, also, of this school of thought. By such means we may, as I very surely realised, reach a state of development in which we shall be equipped with powers, beyond the attainment of common humanity. In rare cases, an individual here and there might win that complete independence of the body which is the ostensible object of the whole training. But granting this, I believe now that even in those rare cases, this road is the way of ultimate damnation.

That realisation came to me quite unexpectedly. I had been talking of the method I have just described to a mystic of some attainment who had followed his own independent path; telling him what I have told here. He listened with great interest, and I, having wondered at first if he would dismiss the whole teaching as a form of charlatanry, gathered confidence as I continued. At the end he told me that the method I had described was valid inasmuch as it might, if rigorously followed, produce the result desired; but that it was evil.



He then went on to say that the successful followers of this road were those spoken of in Christ's parable as coming to the wedding of the King's Son without a wedding garment—the mystical garment of love.

Now, I opened this article by postulating that there is no presentation which will convince those who are not ripe for belief, and I must assume that from many readers this reply of the mystic will evoke no response. Again there may be others who will reject it out of their own greater wisdom. But to me, who was at the particular stage of ripeness I have suggested, this explanation came with a sense of revelation. It was simply spoken, without gesture or emphasis, one of those quiet comments that my friend was accustomed to make with no hint of fervour or of dogmatism. Yet I instantly recognised his words as being true, or at least as revealing an aspect of truth that I could not refuse. And from that time, I have followed another path.

I have called this the "personal" method because the whole attention of the student is directed inwards towards the ego. It is not "selfish" in the worldly meaning. The indifference that the student must diligently cultivate includes complete independence of all those physical rewards and satisfactions that make the happiness of so overwhelming a majority of the world's population. Moreover the task is further weighted by the necessity for mixing with the world. The asceticism derives from the mind and although the body must be trained and subjugated, there is no easy way of practice by the retreat to solitude. Nevertheless, though any man (or woman) who follows this path must renounce every kind of worldly satisfaction, he makes the sacrifice for a purely personal end though it be for the training of his spirit and not for the enjoyment of the world, not even to the extent of displaying or exercising his acquired powers,—subtlest and most intriguing temptation to those who have acquired the habit of self-control.

Of the "impersonal" method, I have little need to write here. It implies, as every earnest follower of Theosophy must know, the complete reversal of the practice I have just described. All sight of the end must be forgotten in the means, which is the abandonment of self in the love of Mankind—an ideal which even Christ, Himself, did not fully realise.

This is, indeed, the more difficult way, but, as it seems to me, there can be no other road to Nirvana. So long as we look inwards, though we may incredibly strengthen our spiritual powers, we are in the very process creating an entity that is antagonistic to the great world spirit into which we cannot, therefore, be absorbed. For then, in the words of the parable, I quoted above, the end must be that "outer darkness," the vast limbo in whose solitudes, may be, will take place some process of slow disintegration that in the course of future cycles will permit a new beginning.

Such, as I see it, is the choice that may open to those who have reached a certain stage of spiritual development. It must, I think, have been a choice once offered to Edward Young, the poet, who had a



vein of simple mysticism that is often obscured by his orthodox piety. Yet he must have known something of the alternatives when he wrote :—

Who worship God, shall find him. Humble love,  
And not proud reason, keeps the door of Heaven ;  
Love finds admission, where proud science fails.

J. D. BERESFORD.

## A NOTE ON THE ABOVE.

To the students of the *Voice of the Silence*, with its central message of the Two Paths, Mr. Beresford's Personal Way would represent the Path of Emancipation of the Buddhas of Selfishness, and his Impersonal Way the Path of Renunciation.

The Blessed Masters of H. P. Blavatsky, in helping her to record the ancient teachings laid great stress on the dangers of spiritual selfishness, and warned the aspirants not to fall into the snare of personal mukti or emancipation. Theosophy teaches the fate which overtakes the Pratyêka Buddhas; says H. P. Blavatsky :—  
“Caring nothing for the woes of mankind or to help it, but only for their own *bliss*, they enter Nirvana and—disappear from the sight and the hearts of men. In Northern Buddhism a ‘Pratyêka Buddha’ is synonym of spiritual selfishness.” This very highly important tenet has been corrupted by certain neo-Theosophists as will be noticed by comparing the original edition of the *Voice* with the revised ones.

Says the former :—

*Thou hast the knowledge now concerning the two Ways.  
Thy time will come for choice, O thou of eager Soul, when thou  
hast reached the end and passed the seven Portals. Thy mind is  
clear. No more art thou entangled in delusive thoughts, for thou  
hast learned all. Unveiled stands Truth and looks thee sternly  
in the face. She says :—*

*“Sweet are the fruits of Rest and Liberation for the sake  
of Self ; but sweeter still the fruits of long and bitter duty. Aye,  
Renunciation for the sake of others, of suffering fellow men.”*

*He who becomes Pratyêka-Buddha makes his obeisance but  
to his Self. The Boddhi-sattva who has won the battle, who  
holds the prize within his palm, yet says in his divine compassion :*

*“For others’ sake this great reward I yield” accomplishes  
the greater Renunciation.*

A SAVIOUR OF THE WORLD is he

*Behold ! The goal of bliss and the long Path of Woe are at  
the furthest end. Thou canst choose either, O aspirant to Sorrow,  
throughout the coming cycles !*



In this cardinal teaching Theosophy is one with the original tenet of the *Gita* as of the Buddha, though the later-day followers of both have misunderstood and misinterpreted it.

Further, H. P. Blavatsky writes in her *Theosophical Glossary* :—

PRATYÊKA BUDDHA (Sk.). The same as “*Pasi-Buddha*.” The Pratyêka Buddha is a degree which belonged exclusively to the Yoga-Charya school, yet it is only one of high intellectual development with no true spirituality. It is the *dead-letter* of the Yoga laws, in which intellect and comprehension play the greatest part, added to the strict carrying out of the rules of the inner development. It is one of the three paths to Nirvana, and the lowest, in which a Yogi—“without teacher and without saving others” by the mere force of will and technical observances, attains to a kind of nominal Buddhahood individually ; doing no good to any one, but working selfishly for his own salvation and himself alone. The Pratyêkas are respected outwardly but are despised inwardly by those of keen or spiritual appreciation. Pratyêka is generally compared to a “*Khadga*” or solitary rhinoceros and called *Ekashringa Rishi*, a selfish solitary Rishi (or saint). “As crossing Sansàra (‘the ocean of birth and death’ or the series of incarnations) suppressing errors, and yet not attaining to absolute perfection, the Pratyêka Buddha is compared with a horse which crosses a river swimming, without touching the ground’.” (*Sanskrit Chinese Dict.*) He is far below a true “Buddha of Compassion.” He strives only for the reaching of Nirvâna.



## SERMONS IN STONES.

[ **Kumar Ganganand Sinha, M.L.A.**, did good work as a research-scholar of the Calcutta University after taking his M.A. degree. He edited *Barhut Inscription* along with Dr. Barua. Of late his political work has kept him busy, but we are glad he made time to contribute even this short article to our pages.

Our author aptly describes Asoka's pillar edicts as Sermons in Stones; the story of this righteous monarch, more famous for his acts of peace than for his acts of war is well-known. Writing about one of these edicts Madame H. P. Blavatsky said :—

“The sentiments are lofty and poetical, breathing tenderness for animals as well as for men, and a lofty view of a king's mission with regard to his people, that might be followed with great success in the present age of cruel wars and barbarous vivisection.”—Eds.]

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Of all the epithets given to India, the one which can be said to be of universal application is that it is “a land of religion.” It may be a “Howdah-land,” a “Tiger-land,” a “Slave-land” and so many other kinds of land to some, but to practically all, it is a “land of religion,” since religion used in its wide sense permeates every walk of the life of those who populate this vast continent. It aspires to spiritual sovereignty over the world because the age-long experience of these ancient people has taught them that temporal sovereignty is ephemeral and, however benevolent, cannot be for the lasting good of mankind, Max Müller rightly observes :

The Indian never knew the feeling of nationality and his heart never trembled in the expectation of national applause.....The only sphere where the Indian mind found itself at liberty to act, to create, and to worship, was the sphere of religion and philosophy ; and nowhere have religious and metaphysical ideas struck roots so deep in the mind of a nation as in India. The Hindus were a nation of philosophers.....Taken as a whole, history supplies no second instance where the inward life of the soul has so completely absorbed all the practical faculties of a whole people, and, in fact, almost destroyed those qualities by which a nation gains its place in history.

This essence of India's supreme will found expression in the personality of Asoka Maurya, perhaps the greatest of the emperors of India in historical times ; and to this day, the stones set up by him in different parts of the country proclaim to the world that an everlasting sovereignty cannot be attained through war and bloodshed but through love and moral uplift of the people, achieved by the practice of “Dhamma”.

Prof. Rhys Davids explaining Asoka's “Dhamma” points out that he never meant exactly religion by the word but rather “what it behoves a man of right feeling to do—or, on the other hand, what a man of sense will naturally hold. It lies quite apart from all questions of ritual or theology.” In this sense we can say that he preached something which may be called universal. As a proof of it we know from his edicts that he made no differentiation between sect and class and aimed at benefiting all.



A study of the inscriptions on these stones reveals to us how he sought to give his vast temporal sovereignty extending over practically the whole of India, except the southern extremity of the peninsula held by Choḍa, Pāndya, Satiyaputra and Keralaputra kings, an ethical base and made even the other powers of Asia bow down to his superiority, a thing which perhaps no other monarch has up to this day been able to achieve.

The Buddhist monarch, as is well known, was in his early days primarily a warrior prince who aimed at adding principalities to principalities by the strength of his arms. If he had pursued his career of militarism he would have succeeded ere long in subjugating the Tamil states and Tāmraparṇi towards the southern extremity of India and would probably have gone beyond the confines of Bhāratvarsha and established an empire like that of Rome. But we know that the wars and bloodshed with which he was subduing mankind subdued his own heart, and with his Kalinga war ended his passion for territorial expansion by the sword. The ideal of brute-force gave place to the ideal of love; and, giving expression to his changed mentality in Rock Edict VI, he says :

There is no higher duty than the welfare of whole world. And what little effort I make is in order that I may be free from the debt to the creatures, that I may render some happy here and that they may gain heaven in the next world.

As Professor D. R. Bhandarkar says, "Asoka aimed at what is not simply the brotherhood of man, that is to say, the brotherhood of human beings, but rather the brotherhood of all living beings. It is the whole animate world with which he feels he is connected, and his supreme duty lies in securing them not only temporal but also spiritual weal." In one of the minor rock inscriptions it is said :

All men are my offspring. Just as for (my) offspring I desire that they may be precisely do I desire it for all men. If you ask : what indeed is my desire towards the neighbours in order to know "what is the will of the kind for us in respect of his unsubdued neighbours," the reply is : they should understand that the Beloved of gods desire that they should be unperturbed towards me, they should trust mine, (and) they would receive from me happiness, not misery. And they should further understand ; "the king will bear with us as far as it is possible to bear," (but) they should follow Dhamma for my sake in order that they might gain this world and the next. For this end do I instruct you. Having given you instructions and made known my will, nay my immovable resolve and vow, may I be free from debt (to them); so acting accordingly, you must discharge your functions and must inspire them with confidence, so that they might understand ; "the king is to us even as a father; he sympathizes even as (his) children," so having instructed you and intimated the will, my immovable resolve and vow, I shall remain with you as my local ministers, for this business. For you are competent to inspire them with confidence and (ensure) their welfare and happiness of this world and the next. By so doing, you will gain heaven and also discharge your debt to me.

This clearly indicates that Asoka's attitude as that of a father was by no means restricted to his own subjects but extended also to those of the frontier kingdoms, so as to embrace the whole of mankind as he knew it. He meant what he said, and the account which we have of his work finally substantiates it.



He grew and imported medicinal roots and herbs and established dispensaries and Pinjarapoles, dug wells, and planted shade-giving trees not only in his own vast empire but even outside it (Pillar Edict VII).

He took steps to prevent wanton cruelty to animals and curtail their slaughter (Pillar Edict V) and conferred benefits on bipeds and quadrupeds, on birds and aquatic animals, even up to the boon of life (Pillar Edict II).

Further, he created the institution of Dhamma Mahamatras to carry out the propagation of his Dhamma and charged his descendants with the duty after he was dead. He made himself available at all hours and in all places for despatching people's business, prohibited all cruelty to animals in Samājas, and substituted tours for Dhamma for pleasure trips (Vihāra Yātrās).

Asoka, as we note in his Rock Edict XIII, refers to his conquest through Dhamma achieved both in his own empire and "the bordering dominions as far as six hundred yojanas." Thus his newly forged weapon of Dhamma conquered for him not only the whole of India and Ceylon but also Syria, Egypt, Macedonia, Epirus and Cyrene which were subject to the Greek rulers. There are passages to indicate that he carried on his religious propaganda in China and Burma also. Nay, we are led to think that this greatly influenced Christianity and it is difficult to avoid the conclusion that for one of its cardinal doctrines, the brotherhood of man, Christianity was indebted to the teaching of Buddha, spread by this Buddhist monarch.

Thus we can see how Asoka's preaching made the Hindu mind averse to worldly pleasure or pain and take once again to religion and philosophy. It would have been well for the world to follow the lead but that was not to be. Those neighbouring powers which were terribly afraid to measure swords with the army of the Magadhan monarch found an easy prey in his successors and destroyed the hope of India's unification as a nation. This ruined India politically, commercially and industrially. But the fact remains that although the Mauryan Empire may have suffered, the great king was responsible for raising India in cosmopolitanism and humanitarianism—the basic principles of Hindu society. He gave the world and especially the Far East not only India's religion and philosophy but, what is more important, the essential features of Indian civilisation. It is primarily this tale of India's superiority that the monuments set up by him in the third century B. C. tell us.

GANGANAND SINHA.



## THE GREAT SELF IN DAILY LIFE.

[W. Stede, Ph.D. (Leipzig), gives one more instalment of his reflections on some great thoughts of the ancient sacred texts.—Eds.]

*Nāyam Ātmā pravacanena labhyo  
na medhayā na bahunā śrutena :  
Yam evaiṣa vṛṇute tena labhyas  
tasyaiva Ātmā vivṛṇute tanūm svām.*

*Kath II 23. Mundaka III 2.3.*

*Analysis* or Word Understanding: Not is this Ātman to be gained by text-reading, nor by much learning: whom indeed It chooses, by that one is It to be gained: and even to him the Ātman reveals its own subtle Self.

*Synthesis*, or sense, *i.e.*, heart understanding: The Divinity within is not obtained by sacrifice, nor by clever studious zeal. It will choose the worthy, and to him his subtle Self reveal.

Our text gives one of the finest settings of the fundamental thought which moves everybody who strives for the ideal and who wants to be clear about his relation to the source of life and to the world around him.

The poetical setting in the original is not artificial but spontaneous. In many philosophic texts of the Vedic period we find a spontaneous outbreak of feeling in rhythmic shape. Prose is inadequate for the expression of deepest thought. The true artist alone understands the world best, and in the ancient seer we have poet and philosopher combined. The artist alone can explain the world because he can recreate it. The inner logic and cogency of the argument is not concealed, hidden, or confused by raising it into the poetical sphere. But it is deepened, strengthened, made more true by rhythmic form. Poetic diction represents a deeper affinity in vibration with the Primary-Soul than ratio-logical and philological prose. Inspiration is measurable by wealth and variety of poetic figures. The speeches of the oracles and the divine messages of prophets are given in rhythm.

The main idea of the stanza centres in two words—"vṛṇute" and "vivṛṇute." No translation can reproduce the effect and the deeper relation of the two in this antithesis. They form point and counterpoint in a symphony of truth. The root *VR* means to cover and with prefix *vi*—to "re-veal" as well as to choose.

Great emphasis falls on the word Ātman. It is no help to consider its philological meaning. Nor does it matter what terms we use to convey an approximate idea of what those felt who uttered the word first as a word of their mother tongue, and then in this special setting. Whether we say Life, Spirit, Thought, Mind, Feeling, Nature, God,



the Principle of Integrity and Health—all are versions of the One-Grand Theme, describing the intrinsic principle of the Universe, source as well as eternal presence of energy and beauty.

Where and how do we realise the Ātman? In our *thoughts* Ātman is the Great Thought—the womb of all thoughts. Our happiness depends upon the consistent thinking of this great thought.

The power of man lies in his thoughts. How can man's thoughts grow and ripen if he is always concerned with so-called "work"? People work themselves to death, that is, they toil and toil without plumbing even once the Great Thought which would promote their inner growth. Unless something that will last for ever is produced in the day's work, that day will be wasted. Work or the result of work does not last for ever, it is an immortal idea. It is only feelings and thoughts and visions which are eternal possessions. All other work is of secondary importance.

How can we retain thoughts? It is evidently impossible to retain them in the noise and tumult of a fair of vanity and business, where all are chasing after a material "more" instead of after spiritual balance; we can retain them only in a collected, concentrated, undistracted frame of mind which some saints have called *prayer*, which in its widest sense is application of concentration.

To attain this tranquillity of mind one must gain self-control and balance, and in connection with these virtues let us turn to some illuminating texts from the Buddhist *Dhammapada*.

" *Attā hi attano, nātho ko hi nātho paro siyā ?  
Attanā hi sudantena natham, labhati dullabham.*"

" Self his own helper is ; what helper could be someone else ?  
In Self if well-tamed, Self gains a helper hard to gain."

The predicate "tamed" of the above quoted verse is supplemented by "restraint" and "conquest" in the following stanza (104) :—

" *Attā have jitam seyyo ya c'ayam itarā pajā  
Attadantassa posassa niccam samyatacārino.*"

" A conquered self indeed is better than conquest of  
the rest of men,

The Self of him who is tamed in self acts forever in  
restraint."

This theme is outstanding in the Buddhist Canon—that unless a man saves himself, he will never obtain salvation. It rules out the idea that anything necessary for one's welfare could be done by anyone else.

Let us consider one or two of the outstanding modern ways of behaviour in which balance and self-control need to be exercised most if we want to obtain victory over ourselves and be masters of circumstances as well. It is a commonplace to preach balance with regard to the physical use of our senses. Of far greater and more vital importance is moderation with regard to mental and spiritual activities which may lead to disturbance of balance.



First and foremost on the list of culprits causing disturbance of mental balance is hurry. It makes one sad, nay even fills one with horror, to see what immense amount of impatience and senseless rushing is going on everywhere. To most people thought is nothing, life is nothing.

Hurry must be counteracted by perfect stillness, relaxation and quietude. Any occasion which favours concentration must be taken advantage of. Seven times seven days of seclusion are the surest means of attaining perfect balance.

Another very common cause of defective mental balance is too much reading. It is repeating a common phrase to say that the mind needs even more rest than the body. As fasting is good for the body, so also is it excellent for the mind. It is even more necessary. The mind must never be overfed so as to cause indigestion. The modern way and method of reading with its tendency towards unlimited expansion is detrimental to real, valuable, permanent personal results. Too much study makes one blind to the realities of life.

Study and mental work are to be compensated by rest and sleep. Study needs memory; by thorough relaxation alone can we recall any memory. Looking backward is even more important than looking forward. Most people do not know what rest is beyond the removal of tiredness. It is after that however that the benefit of real rest begins.

Let us consider the deeper character of study so that we can judge better the nature of its excess.

(a) Study and all activity of the mind is *super-individual*. Mental work means work in company with higher forces which are beyond our control. With our hands we work individually, with our minds we work universally. The use of higher powers, however, demands great care and moderation; it must not be overdone, or it loses its strength.

(b) Right study depends on right rhythm. Atmospheric and climatic conditions, seasonal and diurnal periods, hours favourable for spontaneous activity, need to be observed. Any irregularity in this direction cripples the mind's growth and disturbs the natural rhythm of the Soul.

(c) As in all vital or pranic processes, it is equally essential for us to keep the *appetite* for study keen. How can appetite thrive on an overfed mind?

Speaking from experience—the more I have been self-willed, driven by a desire for something (even desire for study), the less I have lived, and the fainter now are my memories of that condition. But the more I become positively responsive to the unseen forces of the Universe, the more my whole self is one with nature in its loveliness, the more I feel the breath of Ātman, the deeper and more unforgettable is my realisation of Life.

What is our highest ideal?—to turn the passing moment into our lasting possession.



Our hearts and minds are at their best in holiday time. Does not this show that holiday conditions are necessary, natural and desirable? Why do we not introduce such conditions into everyday life and take things easy, thereby gaining in every direction? Because we are fools, slaves to routine and prejudice; because we have sold our souls, naturally autonomous, to the mechanism of bureaucracy.

The surest way to right balance and self-control is twofold. Cultivate the sense of beauty and the feeling of harmony; consider life as an art. Secondly, be honest with yourself, believe in your own genius, and carry through at all costs that which you have set out to achieve. Remember the words the Buddha spoke at the close of his life: *Appamādena sampādettha*—Be unremitting in earnestness.

In conclusion let us welcome this opportunity of discussing the best and noblest thoughts of the ancient Scriptures. We moderns are foolish to think that we are constantly progressing with all our modern invention. Are we not losing more and more of the primary elemental universal life-force, which is equal to thought-force? It would be a blessing *not* to progress for a century, but to reflect on the achievement of truth by those thousands of thinkers and poets who have gone before us, endeavouring to find that which is really essential. We have forgotten this. We think only that true which is fashionable, which is of the day.

W. STEDE.



## DIMENSIONS IN SPACE AND HUMAN UNDERSTANDING.

[Ivor B. Hart, O.B.E., Ph.D., B.Sc., was introduced to our readers last April.

Here he has given us a provocative article; he suggests a solution of a current problem in physics making use of a Theosophical explanation given so far back as 1888—forty-two years ago—and which he finds of unusual interest and value.

H. P. Blavatsky asserted: "It is only in the XXth century that portions, if not the whole, of the present work will be vindicated." (*Secret Doctrine* II. 442). Again, "In the twentieth century of our era scholars will begin to recognize that the *Secret Doctrine* has neither been invented nor exaggerated, but, on the contrary, simply outlined; and finally, that its teachings antedate the Vedas. This is no pretension to *prophecy*, but simply a statement based on the knowledge of facts." (*Secret Doctrine* I, xxxvii). The process has already begun.—EDS.]

Modern physics develops apace, and with this somewhat irritating characteristic—that rapidity of progress tends to carry the physicist beyond the bounds of simple interpretation. Familiar as everybody is with the name of Einstein and the phrase "relativity," the doctrine underlying that phrase remains within the comprehension of a lucky few. The reason is not far to seek. Einstein and his fellow-workers have brought us up against four-dimensional space, and we find it hard to realise what this means. We have lived our lives and have inherited from our forbears and are bringing up our children in the three-dimensional manner. Extension in space has already meant for us the traditional analysis of form into length, breadth and thickness. The conception seems all complete, and superficially we are hard put to it to see where a fourth dimension can be fitted in.

What then are we to say, we who are yet still gasping and groping in this new endeavour to look at the world around us in a completely new suit and through strange lenses, when we find ourselves confronted with the further suggestion, at the hands of Professor O. W. Richardson, that even the four-dimensional world will not do—that we may even have to think in terms of a five-dimensional world?

This, at least, we may say with reasonable confidence and understanding—that mathematically there need be no limit to the number of referential dimensions to a system of geometry.

Professor Nicholson freely confesses that the physical conception of a fifth dimension is beyond him. Why, then, introduce it? The point is most interesting. The two great features in the development of modern physics are undoubtedly the doctrine of relativity and the theory of quanta. The readers of this article are presumably not necessarily students of physics, and we will not therefore enlarge on these two great contributions to modern science. It will suffice to say that each has thrown light on a number of hitherto inexplicable facts and phenomena. Each is a theory and the reader will appreciate



that a theory is entitled to current acceptance until it has broken down through a proven inability to explain the facts and phenomena related to it. It would be idle to pretend that these two theories represent the last word in the quest for the truth in physics. But each has made such contribution to our sum of knowledge that clearly the two compel recognition as great advances. Nevertheless they still leave gaps. Not only so, but the quantum theory calls for assumptions that are not reconcilable with the doctrine of relativity. So we come to the position in which Professor Richardson finds himself. There is no necessity, he tells us in effect, for the abandonment of these theories *in toto* because of these difficulties above referred to. He suggests that by bringing in the conception of a five-dimensional scheme the difficulties will smooth out, and the contrary assumptions become reconciled.

No doubt we shall hear of further developments along these lines in due course. When they come, they will presumably again receive the privileged comprehension of a favoured few.

Meanwhile it is pertinent for us to approach the matter afresh from a new angle. Is it, after all, so impossible to attempt a physical interpretation of these spatial phenomena for the "man in the street"? With all its difficulties, there is at least one section—though perhaps a strictly limited one—of the public to whom a physical imagery is permitted by virtue of a mental training along special lines. We refer to students of esoteric science in general and to Theosophists in particular. To them the problem of a four-dimensional space is not new and the extension of the problem to that of a fifth dimension is a complication in degree only. The point was interestingly discussed by H. P. Blavatsky as long ago as 1888 in her now classical work on esoteric science, *The Secret Doctrine*. This is a work that orthodox students of science must of necessity find strange reading. We need not, however, be unduly concerned as to this. On page 251 of Vol. 1 of *The Secret Doctrine*, in the course of a discussion on the "Fourth Dimension of Matter in Space," the author writes, ". . . while it is perfectly true that the progress of evolution may be destined to introduce us to new characteristics of matter, those with which we are already familiar are really more numerous than the three dimensions. The faculties, or what is perhaps the best available term, the characteristics of matter, must clearly bear a direct relation always to the senses of man."

Here is an interesting thought which opens up pertinent possibilities. Blavatsky argues a relationship between the attributes of matter and the senses of man. There is surely a commonsense basis for such a relationship. "Matter has extension, colour, motion (molecular motion), taste, and smell corresponding to the existing senses of man," she tells us. It were surely better to say "known" senses rather than "existing" senses. The quest for the unknown is not peculiar to physics. After all, there is much yet to be learnt regarding human personality and in regard thereto there is no reason why we should assume the orthodox five senses as a complete list. Psychic phenomena,



for instance, no longer belong to the realms of fancy and romance. Few modern men of science will deny, as a minimum, that the data for the reality of such phenomena undoubtedly exist. Many go further and recognise frankly the existence of a psychic sense in man—a sense highly developed in some and potentially present in all. May we not here see a clue to the future comprehension of the cosmic scheme as it is rapidly being developed for us by the mathematical physicists of to-day? Blavatsky refers to the future development of a further characteristic of matter additional to those above referred to such as extension, colour, etc.; and with an appreciation of the difficulties attendant upon a time when Einstein was yet a child and the theory of quanta was yet unborn, she gropingly and tentatively<sup>1</sup>, speaks of it as “permeability.” To-day we might equally refer to it as a space-time continuum? The underlying thought is the same.

Looking, then, for the parallel development that might appropriately come in our understanding of ourselves, is there not also developing within us the additional sense of man that Blavatsky speaks of as “normal clairvoyance” and that in these days we refer to as the “psychic sense”? Here, then, is the possible link between the work of the modern mathematical physicist and the interpretation of the new world he is presenting to us through the mental imagery of man. The suggestion is worth more than a passing thought, and we venture to suggest it may well compel more and more the attention of all reasonable-minded people with the passage of time.

IVOR B. HART.

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## A NOTE ON THE ABOVE.

[To assist those who desire to understand the subject treated of in the preceding article we print below some extracts from H. P. Blavatsky's *Secret Doctrine* to supplement the one quoted by Mr. Hart in the article itself.—EDS.]

For clearer understanding on the part of the general reader, it must be stated that Occult Science recognises *Seven* Cosmical Elements—four entirely physical, and the fifth (Ether) semi-material, as it will become visible in the air towards the end of our Fourth Round, to reign supreme over the others during the whole of the Fifth. The remaining two are as yet absolutely beyond the range of human perception. These

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<sup>1</sup>. Neither “gropingly” nor “tentatively”; H. P. Blavatsky was well aware that when the permeability of matter is realised man would also know of his sixth sense, as he now knows five.—EDS.



latter will, however, appear as presentiments during the 6th and 7th Races of this Round, and will become known in the 6th and 7th Rounds respectively. These seven elements with their numberless Sub-Elements (far more numerous than those known to Science) are simply *conditional* modifications and aspects of the ONE and only Element . . . This latter is not *Ether*, not even *A'kasa* but the *Source* of these. The Fifth Element, now advocated quite freely by Science, is not the *Ether* hypothesised by Sir Isaac Newton—although he calls it by that name, having associated it in his mind probably with the *Æther*, “Father-Mother” of Antiquity. As Newton intuitionally says, “Nature is a perpetual circulatory worker, generating fluids out of solids, fixed things out of volatile, and volatile out of fixed, subtile out of gross and gross out of subtile . . . Thus, perhaps, may all things be originated from *Ether*.” (Hypoth. 1675).—I. 12-13.

Nature is never stationary during *manvantara*, as it is ever *becoming*, not simply *being*; and mineral, vegetable and human life are always adapting their organisms to the then reigning Elements, and therefore *those* Elements were then fitted for them, as they are now for the life of present humanity. It will only be in the next, or fifth, Round that the fifth Element, *Ether*—the gross body of *A'kasa*, if it can be called even that—will by becoming a familiar fact of Nature to all men, as air is familiar to us now, cease to be as at present hypothetical, and also an “agent” for so many things. And only during that Round will those higher senses, the growth and development of which *A'kasa* subserves, be susceptible of a complete expansion. As already indicated, a *partial* familiarity with the characteristic of matter—permeability—which should be developed concurrently with the sixth sense, may be expected to develop at the proper period in this Round. But with the next element added to our resources in the next Round, *permeability* will become so manifest a characteristic of matter, that the densest forms of this will seem to man's perceptions as obstructive to him as a thick fog, and no more.”—I. p. 257-58.

The humanities developed coordinately, and on parallel lines with the four Elements, every new Race being physiologically adapted to meet the additional element. Our Fifth Race is rapidly approaching the Fifth Element—call it interstellar ether, if you will—which has more to do, however, with psychology than with physics.”—II. 135.



# CONTACTING THE INVISIBLE.

## IV.—THE PATH OF THEOSOPHY.

[This is the last instalment of a carefully prepared statement on intercommunications between the visible and the invisible worlds ; the preceding ones showed what false occultism implies ; in this contribution the true Occultism of the Great Masters is dealt with. In the pandemonium caused by scientific scepticism, spiritualism, psychism, religiosity, Theosophy once again introduces order by explaining all phenomena and by imparting direct knowledge of the right way to soul-life.—EDS.]

THEOSOPHY, as originally recorded for our cycle by H. P. Blavatsky, and as taught and applied by her is far removed from practical Occultism as popularly imagined. It is the very reverse of the Occultism exemplified in Mediumship and Psychism. It has nothing in common with the basic dogmas of religious revelations and sectarian creeds, nor with the theories and hypotheses with which modern science abounds. Theosophy includes them all, because it includes the whole of Nature, which contains falsehood and error as well as truth, evil as well as good, ignorance and misconception as well as knowledge.

Theosophy pure and simple is a system of philosophy and ethics, the science of their study and application in all the relations of life. In its practical bearings it is psychology in the highest sense, and is, therefore, a system of education dealing with the human mind, its elements, its acquired characteristics, its capacities for further evolution.

According to the consistent declarations of H. P. Blavatsky, Theosophy is not of human origin, invention, or discovery, but is, in point of verifiable fact, an importation of selected portions of an unchanging Secret Doctrine which covers the cycle of evolution of every degree and class of permanently organized, mutably organized, and unorganized Life. It comes from perfected Men—not "Spirits".

The investigator of the claims made on behalf of Theosophy is foredoomed to failure if he confuses it with any other system, whatever its bearings on the many religions and philosophies at all times currently espoused. All this may be and should be left for subsequent consideration. The initial question to be asked in respect of any teacher or teaching should be : What do you claim to present or represent, and what are your assumed credentials ? Examined on this basis of inquiry Theosophy will be found integrally *sui generis*. It is unique because self-contained, consistent throughout with itself and with every verified fact of human experience. Its credentials exist and can be found in the whole course of recorded history, in every myth and tradition, in all objective Nature, in the subjective experiences of every man. Its teachings unite the whole of Nature in orderly and unbroken sequence, making of existence at any point and in any world a relation and not a finality, an evolution which is an ever-becoming.



The evidences of Theosophy are, then, everywhere and in every phenomenon. Its proof lies in the observation and study of any and all phenomena, physical and psychical. Its verification depends upon the will, the moral nature, the reason, the choice or conduct of the individual man—upon the use made by him of the highest faculties and powers of his own mind. As he pursues this use the individual of to-day, as in all former times, will find that other men have preceded him in this research and have succeeded where most men have failed—that other men have achieved the perfection of physical, intellectual, and moral evolution; in other words, have attained Divinity through the unification in themselves of *all* the elements of being. Such Beings are the conscious embodiments of the whole of Nature. Theosophy as a Teaching derives from those perfected men who have become Masters of Wisdom, and are therefore called *Mahatmas*—Great Souls. All men are Souls, so that the distinction of the *Mahatmas* lies in their greatness; they have completed the Grand Cycle of Spiritual Evolution where other men are still enmeshed in one or another of the mazes of Mediumship, Psychism, and their fruits in the religions, sciences, sects and schools of humanity at large.

The *human* mind, with all its unexplored capacities, all its unknown elements, all its latent powers, is the prism from which issue the multi-coloured fractionations of the Primeval Light “which never shone on sea or land,” and these spectral rays are, by their respective recipients and votaries, mistaken for “the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth”. One and all, they proceed from, and rest upon, the misunderstood psychological experiences of the Human Soul. That such experiences *are* misunderstood is overwhelmingly demonstrated by the simple and easily verifiable fact that not one of these revelations is either consistent in itself, or with the normal experiences of the individual in question; with the experiences normal and abnormal of other men; with the known facts of Nature. Nor do any of the numberless revelations afford knowledge in the same sense as that word is used with respect to every-day life and the conduct of its affairs. The same internal and external evidences which disclose the errancies in all these *unnatural* revelations from invisible worlds and beings, are the identical evidences which confirm the inerrancy of the Secret Doctrine. The known higher nature of every man has to be either discarded or subordinated in whole or in part, if he is to become recipient of or believer in any particular communication or intercommunication with “Spirits”. In Theosophy, it is the known lower nature of the man which has to be rigidly disciplined and subdued to the point of its complete reconciliation and unification with his higher faculties, and *their* entire ascendancy in his conduct, which is set forth as the *sine qua non* condition precedent to the Occultism of the Secret Doctrine.

Not until this drastic self-imposed discipline is completed, or at all events fully entered upon, can there be Inter-communication with the Occult world or worlds within the meaning of Theosophy as transmitted, recorded and exemplified by H. P. Blavatsky. The



Occultism for which her Theosophy is a preparation and a door of entrance is to-day, as it always has been and will continue to be, an absolute *terra incognita* on any other terms than those disclosed from cycle to cycle of human evolution by the various Messengers or Incarnations of the Secret Doctrine.

Those terms are not imposed, they are implicit. He who enters this world, enters through its door of birth and no other; he who leaves this world, departs through its door of exit and no other. He who passes from human to super-human or sub-human consciousness passes in one way and no other. And just as surely as the higher or the lower consciousness has to be left behind as the compensation for entrance into this world, just so surely has human consciousness to be parted with by him who would pass through the Gates of Occultism. Human consciousness has either to be fully assimilated by and absorbed in the Higher consciousness, or—it has to be expunged from or absorbed in the lower consciousness.

It cannot be too often or too strongly stated that in the Occult world there is no mixture of incompatible elements, as in human consciousness. This is why each self-styled Occultist, of whatever brand, is always absolutely sure that he is "right". He is, while still occupying a physical body, either in *Kama Loka* or *Devachan*, *i.e.*, one or other of the after-death states to which the Reincarnating Ego normally goes only in dreams, delirium, and at physical dissolution. This is the actual condition, according to Theosophy, of the Medium and the Psychic. *He is dead, and does not even dream that he is dead, to the Higher consciousness.* To him the state in which he finds himself is that higher consciousness itself. He can no more be roused from it than the dreamer can be persuaded he is dreaming, or the delirious patient be persuaded that he is unbalanced, or than the dead man can be brought back to life here. He *cannot* entertain any ideas soever incompatible with the dominating "meditation with a seed" which forms the substratum and support of the Occult world which has engulfed his human consciousness. One needs but to reflect that human consciousness always acts "with reservations"—mental, moral, physical. This is because it is implicitly recognized by the human being that there are "two sides to any question"—and this recognition in turn arises from the experience of contrast between "opposites". In the Occult world of the Medium and the Psychic there are *no* contrasts, *no* opposites.

*All* Mediums are marked with the inextinguishable mark of Vanity; *all* Psychics are marked with the unmistakable mark of Egoism. The one represents the dispersion of Personal consciousness, the other its extreme of concentration. Discrimination lost, how can the victim know that he has lost it? Poles of consciousness reversed, how can either Pole know that it has become Invert? Mediumship and Psychism, however pure the one or exalted the other, arise from the complete Personification of the religious instinct. Both spring from that final, because both highest and lowest, *Maya* or Delusion in Spiritual evolution—the delusion that Self in the individual is distinct



from Self in the race, from SELF in all Nature. A study of the "Voice of the Silence," with its intimations of the Paths trodden by the *Dharmakaya*, the *Sambhogakaya*, the *Nirmanakaya*, gives the rarest and subtlest of all Occult presages of the final resultants of the Personification through many incarnations of the religious instinct. The highest Psychism, the purest Religion, can never open the mystery of the *Nirmanakaya* path—the Path pursued by the great Masters of Wisdom and their Messengers and Disciples, the Path to which the philosophy, the ethics, the science of Theosophy gives *natural* entrance when its precepts have become the constitutional *practice* of the Neophyte in this true Occultism.

Psychism in religion, like Psychism in science and in daily life, is founded upon "facts", *i.e.*, *phenomena*. Theosophy and the Occultism to which it leads is based on the Principles of all existence and existences, their *conscious* recognition, study, application. Principles do not arise from phenomena, even the noblest, any more than Life originates from "matter". Theosophy comes direct from *living Men*, the "Knowers of the SELF;" from Divinity Incarnate—not from disembodied spirits of any degree soever.

Psychism, mistaken for Spirituality, has vitiated all the great Messages of the past through the unconscious substitution of the idea of Revelation for the Principle of evolution—*moral* education. The longing of the disciples for intercommunication on their own account led them to "wander from the *discipline enjoined by the Teacher*". Little by little what was originally intended to become a School for Instruction in the Mysteries was turned into religion and religious austerities. This tendency, the Karma of the whole human race, has been once more quickened by the Theosophical Movement of our times. Devotion to Masters as to a Personal God or a Communicating Spirit is affecting many Theosophists in whom the religious instinct is naturally strong. Misconceiving the nature of the living Messenger, they could but misconceive the *spirit* of her recorded Message. From this point of departure it is inevitable they should proceed on their own motion to try to open up "communication with the Masters"—and get results in accord neither with the Teaching nor the Example of the Messenger. This is "natural"—but it is not Nature's order: "When the disciple is *ready* the Master *will appear*".

Not upon the Medium or the Psychic, not upon the religious-minded Theosophist, depends the future of the pure Theosophical Movement, but upon those few, those all too few, who hold undeviatingly to the straight and narrow Path of the Predecessors.



## IN THE WORLD OF BOOKS.

[In our February number, in this section, appeared an article showing the marvellously surprising knowledge of the ancient Hindus on the subject of painting and the arts. In our May issue, their great knowledge of Botany was detailed and described. Below we print an article which shows their practical political sagacity, and their administrative skill—EDS.]

### GUILDS IN ANCIENT INDIA.

[K. R. R. Sastri, M.A., B.L., Fellow of the Royal Economical Society, is well known for his research work in connection with the trade guilds in old India. He is the author of *South Indian Guilds*.—EDS.]

The East had solved many problems of communal life organization in the dim past. The several trades in ancient India had organized themselves into guilds thus increasing their cohesion and "educating themselves in self-government." As Dr. Radhakumud Mukherjea has it "the growth of guilds means that the industrial units are sufficiently efficient to partake of a public life and regulate themselves by common rules as part of a whole or a common organism (1)." Since Mrs. Rhys Davids wrote her valuable article in the *J. R. A. S.* (1901), and Mr. E. W. Hopkins wrote his chapter on "Ancient and Modern Hindu Guilds" in *India, Old and New*, Indian scholars like Dr. Radhakumud Mukherjea and Dr. R. C. Majumdar, have gone into the subject in greater detail, though the former Professor would go further than any other scholar with reference to the functioning of guild organizations in Ancient India. The present writer has after a detailed economic study of representative districts in South India in 1919-21, tried to establish the existence of certain guilds functioning down to this day (2 & 3). In the increasing interest taken in India's past, it is hoped that a succinct account of these guilds in Ancient India, culled from literature, inscription and coins, will have more than a passing interest.

The sole evidence of the existence of guilds in Vedic times is the occurrence of श्रेष्ठिन् ("Sreshthin") and श्रैष्ठ्य ("Sraishthya") in the Vedic texts (4). Macdonnell and Keith translate this as "the presidency of a guild" (5). Had guilds developed in the early Vedic times? Geldner no doubt detected reference to guilds in the *Rig Veda*. What Professor Hopkins wrote in 1901 appears rather more dependable. The fact of "development of guild activity in early Vedic times is still in the region of doubt."

(1) Dr. Radhakumud Mukherjea, *Local Government in Ancient India* p. 41.

(2 & 3) *South Indian Guilds*, K. R. R. Sastry, with a foreword by Dr. Alfred Marshall of Cambridge. Also Beni Prasad, *Theory of Government in Ancient India*, p. 334.

(4) *Aitareya Brahmana*, III, 30, 3; *Taittiriya Brahmana*, III, 1, 4, 10.

(5) *Vedic Index*, Vol. II, pp. 403-404.



In post-Vedic times, guild activity becomes a common feature. The many interpretations of the term श्रेणि : “Sreni”—are cited by Dr. Radhakumud Mukherjea (6). With Dr. Majumdar the term may be taken as standing for a “corporation of people belonging to the same or different caste but following the same trade and industry.” The general term is “Sreni” as well as पूग (“Pūga”); as Mr. K. P. Jayaswal puts it, “the difference between the two is not very clear” (7).

### *Kinds of Guilds.*

In the Jataka period there is reference to guilds, especially in the Uraga and Nigrodha Jatakas. The King is said to have assembled eighteen guilds (8). The translation runs as follows: “Eighteen companies of men, masons, blacksmiths, carpenters, painters, men skilled in all arts and crafts, with their razors, adzes, spades, hoes, and many other tools.” There is mention of a “league of five hundred robbers” (9); and a reference is made to a “smith’s village of a thousand houses and a head smith” therein (10). “Garland-makers of Savathi” are described in the same Jataka (11). A reference is made in another Jataka to a “master-mariner” (12); the town of carpenters containing a “thousand families” and “two master-workmen” is found in the same Jataka (13). The village of five hundred robbers is mentioned also later in that Jataka (14). There is a pointed reference to a “chief smith” in the next Jataka (15). A list of guilds is given by Professor Rhys Davids (16). With the supplemental aid of inscriptions Dr. R. C. Majumdar makes out the following list of twenty-seven artisan guilds (17).

- |                                            |                                             |
|--------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------|
| (1) Workers in wood.                       | (15) Painters.                              |
| (2) Workers in metal.                      | (16) Corn-dealers.                          |
| (3) Workers in stone.                      | (17) Cultivators.                           |
| (4) Leather-workers.                       | (18) Fisher-folk.                           |
| (5) Ivory-workers.                         | (19) Butchers.                              |
| (6) Workers fabricating hydraulic engines. | (20) Barbers and Shampooers.                |
| (7) Bamboo-workers.                        | (21) Garland-makers and Flower-sellers.     |
| (8) Braziers.                              | (22) Mariners.                              |
| (9) Jewellers.                             | (23) Herdsmen.                              |
| (10) Weavers.                              | (24) Traders.                               |
| (11) Potters.                              | (25) Robbers and Freebooters.               |
| (12) Oil-millers.                          | (26) Forest police who guarded the caravan. |
| (13) Basket-makers.                        |                                             |
| (14) Dyers.                                | and (27) Money-lenders.                     |

(6) Radhakumud Mukherjea, *Local Government in Ancient India*, pp. 29, 30.

(7) K. P. Jayaswal, *Hindu Polity*, Vol. II, p. 76.

(8) Jataka VI. 1 and 427.

(9) Jataka II. 335.

(10) Jataka III. 281.

(11) Jataka III. 405.

(12) Jataka IV. 136.

(13) Jataka IV. 158, 161.

(14) Jataka IV, 430.

(15) Jataka V, 282.

(16) Rhys Davids : *Buddhist India*, p. 90 et seq.

(17) Majumdar : *Corporate Life in Ancient India*, pp. 18, 19.



The Jataka period is dealt with by Dr. R. Fick, and it is his considered opinion that during the seventh and sixth centuries B.C. the heredity of profession, localization of different branches of industry and the institution of *Jetthaka* (alderman) seem to have characterized guild activity. The term "Apprentice" appears frequently in the Jataka, but "no terms or periods or other conditions of pupilage" are given<sup>(18)</sup>. A president (*Pāmuka*) is mentioned. Heads of guilds might be "important ministers in attendance on the King"; the suggestion is plausibly made that wealthy guildsmen were *personæ gratæ* with the King. As Mrs. Rhys Davids puts it, the first appointment to a supreme headship of guilds along with the office of Treasurer is mentioned in connection with the kingdom of Kāsi. The learned writer argues: "Possibly the quarrels twice alluded to as occurring between Presidents of Guilds at Sāvatti in Kosala may have also broken out at Benares and have led to this appointment"<sup>(19)</sup>. An officer, *Bhāndāgarika* (Treasurer of Stores), is mentioned in the Jataka<sup>(20)</sup>.

Was there any distinction between a "*Pāmukha*" and a "*Jetthaka*?" "This," answers Mrs. Rhys Davids, "is not apparent"<sup>(21)</sup>. To whom were those *Jetthakas* responsible? The exact amount of control which the alderman "exercised in practice"<sup>(22)</sup> is not clear.

From the fifth to the third century B.C., these guilds are well recognized by the State. In the *Vinayaka Pitaka*, two disciplinary rules are laid down: (1) That the guild was entitled to arbitrate on certain occasions between its members and their wives; and (2) that its sanction was necessary for the ordination of the wives of its members<sup>(23)</sup>. The *Gautama Dharma Sutra*<sup>(24)</sup> authorizes "cultivators, traders, herdsmen, money-lenders and artisans to lay down rules" and the King shall give the legal decision after having "learned the affairs from those who have authority." In *Gautama*, we have again the proposition that "laws of districts, castes and families; when not opposed to sacred texts, are an authority."

In Kautilya's *Arthasāstra*, special concessions are given to guild merchants; and the guild is an important factor in the state fabric in the fourth century B.C. "Guilds of workmen shall have a grace of seven nights over and above the period agreed upon for fulfilling their engagement"<sup>(25)</sup>. Artisan guilds shall divide their earnings (*vetanum*) either equally or as agreed upon among themselves. Those who "can be relied upon by guilds of artisans may receive the deposits of the guilds"<sup>(26)</sup>. These guilds shall be entitled to receive their deposits back in times of distress.

(18) *J.R.A.S.* 1901, p. 865.

(19) *Jataka* II, 12,52; IV, 43.

(20) *Jataka* IV, 37.

(21) *J.R.A.S.* 1901, p. 866.

(22) Beni Prasad: *Theory of Government in Ancient India*, p. 312.

(23) *J.R.A.S.*, 1901, p. 865.

(24) Chapter XI, verse 21., cited by Dr. Majumdar at p. 24.

(25) Kautilya's *Arthasastra*, 2nd Ed., translated by Shama Sastry, p. 227.

(26) Kautilya's *Arthasastra*, 2nd Ed., translated by Shama Sastry, p. 245.



*Srenibala.*

Considerable difference in interpretation has centred round the term “श्रेणीबल” (*Srenibala*) occurring in *Arthasāstra*. Kautilya enumerates in Book IX, Chapter 2, six categories of armies of which *Shrenibala* is the third. This army is ordained fit for action at short notice and in the vicinity. Mr. Shama Sastry translates it as “corporations of soldiers.” Professor D. R. Bhandarkar means by it, “Soldiers maintained by guilds”; yet another translation runs as “guilds practising military arts.” Mahamahopadhyaya T. Ganapati Sastri in his Commentary would follow Professor Bhandarkar’s translation. जानपद आयुधीयगणरूपं बलं.<sup>(27)</sup> Professor P. P. S. Sastry (Presidency College, Madras) would translate this as “the army that is composed of units raised from among the city-folk and equipped and maintained by them.” Kautilya, astute diplomat that he is, wants the state to utilize these “soldiers maintained by guilds” when the enemy’s army consists “mostly of soldiers of corporations”. There is also mention of “Kshatriya Guilds,” and “*Sreni-mukhyas*” or heads of guilds.

References to guilds in the Epics do not add much to the economy of guilds proper. “*Srenibala*” appears in the *Mahabharata*; the reference to मध्यस्थमण्डलं<sup>(28)</sup>—*Madhyasthamandalam* (sphere of influence of *Madhyasthas*) does not help one. Mention is also made of गणमुख्याः—chiefs of *Ganas*<sup>(29)</sup>. These *ganas* have now, by common agreement among scholars, reference only to political groups. According to Mr. K. P. Jayaswal, “Pūgas had some judicial powers but their decisions were appealable to *Kula* and *Gana* courts”<sup>(30)</sup>. The same learned author cited from the *Atharvana-parishishta* that in the Pushya coronation ceremony, “the King after the ceremony allowed audience to Brahmins and saluted the wives of the leaders of the subjects, associations or guilds, whereupon they gave their blessings”<sup>(31)</sup>.

In the *Ramayana* there is a reference to सयोधश्रेणी<sup>(32)</sup>—(*Sayodha Sreni*)—“guilds of soldiers.” Another passage in the same *Kānda* run thus :

ये च तत्रापरे सर्वे सम्मता ये च नैगमाः ।  
रामं प्रति ययुर्ह्यः सर्वाः प्रकृतयः तथा ॥<sup>(33)</sup>

[There, all his subjects, those that were dear to Rama (men of note), (all) city merchants, and (all) city guilds lustily went after Rama.]

(27) M. M. Ganapati Sastry’s Sanskrit Commentary on Kautilya’s *Arthasāstra*.

(28) *Mahabharata* “Ashrama Vasika Parva”—Chapter VII.

(29) *ibid* III. 248, 16.

(30) K. P. Jayaswal : *Hindu Polity*, Part I, p. 124.

(31) K. P. Jayaswal : *Hindu Polity*, Part II, p. 44.

(32) *Ramayana*, II. 33.

(33) *Ramayana*, II. 83, 11.



The term “*Naigama*” is important in view of the later finds of “*Negama Coins*.” “*Naigama*” stands exclusively for the “association of the city-merchants”. The body of the people associated with the *Nigama*, the bourse or the guild-hall were called “*Naigama*”<sup>(34)</sup>.

In the *Hari-Vamsa*<sup>(35)</sup> there is reference to “booths reserved for guilds” with their banners, to witness the wrestling contests between Krishna’s and Balarama’s followers.

“*Sreni-Dharma*.”

The Dharma Shastra period is *par excellence* the epoch when guilds thrived most. We have authoritative evidence, literary as well as epigraphical. Manu ordains: “A King should enforce his own law only after a careful examination of the laws of castes, and districts, *guild-laws* (italics mine) and family-laws.” श्रेणीधर्म or “usages of the guilds” are well recognized by the head of the State. Yajñavalkya prescribes banishment for stealing the property of the guilds. In another passage Yajñavalkya has it that “the King must discipline and establish again on the path all such as have erred from their own laws, whether families, castes, guilds, associations or districts.” Vishnu (third century A.D.) mentions “metal-workers and smiths of silver and gold”. Professor Hopkins cites a Nepalese legend of the third or fourth century A. D. which records that Thana was ruled by a strong merchant guild.

Guilds indeed occupy a much larger space in the early than in the late Dharma Sastras. Professor Hopkins assigns two reasons. Guild-life is, according to him, a characteristic of Buddhistic and Jaina environment; and the comparative decline of industry and commerce in the last centuries of the ancient age come in handy also. Though the Sangha was a Buddhistic institution, it has to be remembered that Buddhism and Hinduism had so much in common, that Buddhism is not so much a distinctly new religion as an emphasis on certain features of Hinduism. That the guild-system is a *distinctly Aryan* product is historically a more correct proposition, and this finds an additional support from the opinion of Dr. A. K. Coomaraswamy that “guilds must have existed in Persia from the earliest times”<sup>(36)</sup>. The ancient Persian references deserve to be gone into in greater detail by competent scholars. That the guilds have never altogether vanished from India and do persist to this day in some parts of the country<sup>(37)</sup> may warrant an *a posteriori* inference that since a characteristic Aryan institution it has survived the impact of new ideas and ideals; and Buddhism either in its pristine character or later Mahayana form is found thriving only outside the land of its origin.

The inscriptions of the period found at Nasik and Junnar refer to guilds and the custom of investing sums therein. The *Caitya* at Karli

<sup>(34)</sup> K. P. Jayaswal in *Hindu Polity*.

<sup>(35)</sup> *Harivamsha*, Chapter 86. V. 5.

<sup>(36)</sup> A. K. Coomaraswamy: *Indian Craftsman*, p. 16.

<sup>(37)</sup> *Vide* K. R. R. Sastry’s “The Madura Saurashtra Community”—Bangalore, p. 44 ff.



is the gift of a Sheth of Vaijayanti. Inscription 24 of Luder's list describes the wife of a Sheth "dedicating a four-fold image of Bhagavat"<sup>(38)</sup> An investment of money with the "Seni" (guild) of bamboo workers and with the guild of "braziers" is also mentioned<sup>(39)</sup>. Another inscription specifies the gift of a seven-celled cave and a cistern by the guild of corn-dealers<sup>(40)</sup>. An inscription refers also to a Board of *Sreshthis* and *Sarthavahas*.

### *The Clay Seals.*

The seal die of terracotta was discovered by Sir John Marshall at Bhita near Allahabad ; and he found it at the "house of the guild"—the office of the Negama<sup>(41)</sup>. At Vaisali, seals of *Naigama* of Sreshthin, Sarthavaha (traders) and Kulika (merchant), were discovered<sup>(42)</sup>. These discoveries also included three specimens of seals bearing the legend "*Sreshthi—Kulika—Nigama*," and no less than 274 showing the legend, "*Sreshthi—Sarthavaha—Kulika—Nigama*". Sixteen other specimens of seals were found by Dr. D. B. Spooner. Negama coins appear also in Plate III, Nos. 8, 9, 10, and 11<sup>(43)</sup>. These coins are struck by the State "for the use of city merchants"<sup>(44)</sup>. One Nasik inscription has it that the "investment with certain guilds has been proclaimed and registered at the town-hall, at the record-office according to custom"<sup>(45)</sup>.

### *Naigamas.*

Mr. K. P. Jayaswal has sketched the working of the *Naigama* or the association of city merchants. It has for its basis the Nasik inscription above cited as also the find of the "Negama coins." The *Naigama* should have had its "assembly-hall" and office where it held its meetings even as the "Paura Janapadas" (townmen) held theirs in their "Sabhas and Squares." Does not one find "a donor—a nobleman—recording at the Nigama Sabha his investments with certain guilds, srenis, of the town Govardhana," with the direction that the interest should go "to certain charities in perpetuity"? Then comes the very happy surmise, "*Naigama* thus was connected with and probably over the *srenis* or the guilds of the city<sup>(46)</sup>."

In the later Dharma Shastra period, the *raison d'être* of these guilds as given in Brihaspati<sup>(47)</sup>, resolves itself into, (a) prevention of danger and (b) proper discharge of member's duties.

Certain formalities are mentioned which accompanied the formation of a new guild. A curious custom called "*Kosha*" or the drinking of sacred water, lays down that if a new applicant

<sup>(38)</sup> *Epigraphia Indica*, Vol. X. Appendix, p. 5.

<sup>(39)</sup> Luders, 1165.

<sup>(40)</sup> Luders, 1180.

<sup>(41)</sup> Archæological Survey, Annual Report, 1911-12.

<sup>(42)</sup> Archæological Report, 1903-04, p. 104.

<sup>(43)</sup> Cunningham : *Coins of Ancient India*, 63.

<sup>(44)</sup> K. P. Jayaswal ; *Hindu Polity*, Part II, p. 77.

<sup>(45)</sup> *Epigraphia Indica*, Vol. VIII, p. 83.

<sup>(46)</sup> K. P. Jayaswal ; *Hindu Polity*, Part II, p. 77.

<sup>(47)</sup> Brihaspathi Sutra. XVII, 5, 6.



survives for a fortnight after drinking the water, he is considered a fit member for admission. By the term "*Lekha Kunja*" which appears next, is probably meant a convention laying down the rules and regulations of the guild. A *Madhyastha*—a term occurring in the Mahabharata also—is frequently mentioned in relation to the working of "these guilds". As Dr. Majumdar happily puts it: "Mutual confidence having first been established by means of sacred libation, by a stipulation in writing or by *Umpires*, they shall then set about their work."

Though the Jatakas refer to apprentices, it is Narada<sup>(48)</sup> who definitely gives the rules regarding apprentices. An apprentice might be whipped; he was bound out for a given length of time, and during probation, the *Guru* was entitled to the profits of the apprentice's labour. Dr. R. Mukherjea goes farther and lays down that during the Smriti period considerations of caste did not affect the admission of apprentices into a craft. "What mattered was the consent of the apprentice's guardian and relations"<sup>(49)</sup>. Really, the relation between the master-craftsman and his apprentices was "sacred and spiritual."

The functions of these *srenis*, according to Brishaspati Samhita, are:—

- (a) The construction of a House of Assembly.
- (b) The construction of a shed for water, a temple, a pool or a garden.
- (c) Helping the poor to perform Samskaras.

The famous Mandasor inscription of Kumaragupta and Bandhuvvarman mentions "the noble temple to the Sun by the silk-cloth weavers as a guild<sup>(50)</sup>". A guild-hall is also referred to.

#### *Inscriptional Support.*

The Damodharpur<sup>(51)</sup> copper-plate inscriptions give a vivid account of the working of these guilds. Plate I. mentions one नगरश्रेष्ठि : धृतिपालः (Nagarasreshthi Dhrutipala). This Nagara-Shreshthi can be translated as "President of the town." As Mr. K. P. Jayaswal puts it with his characteristic lucidity, "divisional capitals or seats of government had their Sreshthins under the Guptas"<sup>(52)</sup>. Dhrutipala is the Nagara-Shreshthin of Koti in the province of Bengal under Kumaragupta. This Nagara-Sreshthin was one of the four members who seem to have helped the *Vishayapathi* (head of the district). The Nagara-Sreshthin had "probably to represent the various guilds or corporations in the town or the rich urban population." Plate 5 mentions one Vishayapathi Swayambhudeva administering the town in the company of the *Nagara Sreshthin*—Arya

(48) Narada, X. 2, 3, 6.

(49) Dr. R. Mukherjea: *Local Government in Ancient India*, p. 60.

(50) The Indian Antiquary, Vol. XV, p. 196; Fleet-Gupta Inscriptions, 18

(51) *Epigraphia Indica*. XV, 131.

(52) *Epigraphia Indica*. XV, 130.



Ribhupala. In the Indore copper-plate inscription of Skandagupta, a transfer of temple properties to a guild of local oil-mongers is mentioned.

#### *Guilds in South India.*

Dr. Radhakumud Mukherjea postulates that the evidence *re* "guilds of North Indian inscriptions is confirmed by those in South India." These guilds served also as banks <sup>(53)</sup>. The obvious difficulty with South Indian inscriptions is that they are later in date—of these Dr. R. Mukherjea is fully aware—and that village assemblies and not industrial guilds, as in the North, are the recipients of gifts. The Tanjore inscriptions where the shepherds had to supply ghee to the Lord at the rate of one *ulakku* of ghee for each sacred lamp look only like a communal caste affair. There is mention of a guild of oil-mongers of Kanchi <sup>(54)</sup>. A gift by oil-mongers of a certain percentage on certain articles such as female cloths is also cited <sup>(55)</sup>. Again, there is a gift of voluntary fees for conducting the Sivarathri festival by a guild of merchants : and a gift of tolls by the merchant-guild of Ayyavole is also mentioned <sup>(56)</sup>.

The constitution of these guilds, according to Narada and Brihaspathi, is found to resolve itself into a chief or president assisted by two, three, or five Executive Officers. Only honest persons acquainted with the Vedas are to be appointed Executive Officers. Failure to perform one's duties was often punished by confiscation of property and by banishment from the locality. There was also a House or Assembly meeting to the sound of a drum <sup>(57)</sup>.

By the seventh century A. D., the "guild was recognized as a corporation" in the eye of the law ; guilds possessed immovable property ; "the executive officers could contract loans on behalf of the guild ; charitable and religious deeds were performed by the guilds and one could cease to be a member if he chose to do so" <sup>(58)</sup>.

#### *The Guild and the State.*

What was the relation of the guild to the State ? A steady and gradual increase of power is portrayed in the Dharma Shastras ; but still the pointed question of Professor Hopkins persists. What was the "connection between the State-officials and the guilds ? In the kingdom of Kasi, headship of guilds and the post of Treasurer seem to have for once vested in the same person <sup>(59)</sup>. The King had certainly powers to punish guilds if "they erred from their own laws" (Yajñavalkya). The King is also to act as Umpire between *Sheths* (heads) and guilds. The King is perhaps obliged (?) to approve of whatever the guilds do to other people. Kautilya advises the King not to provoke war but conciliate the guilds. Guilds could try their own law suits but an appeal always lay to the king, and Brihaspathi

<sup>(53)</sup> Hultzsch : *South Indian Inscriptions*, Vol. II, part iii, p. 251.

<sup>(54)</sup> Madras Epigraphical Report, 1909, p. 261.

<sup>(55)</sup> Madras Epigraphical Report, 1906, p. 442.

<sup>(56)</sup> Madras Epigraphical Report, 1911, pp. 377, 378.

<sup>(57)</sup> Brihaspathi. XVII, 2.

<sup>(58)</sup> R. C. Majumdar : *Corporate Government in Ancient India*, pp. 57, 58.

<sup>(59)</sup> *J. R. A. S.*, 1901, p. 865.



has it that guilds could decide disputes, with the exception of violent crimes. Mr. K. P. Jayaswal would grant only "some judicial powers to *Srenis*, since their decisions were appealable to *Kula* and *Gana* courts." Dr. Beni Prasad is perfectly sound in iterating that "the king was to be the judge of the conformity of the by-laws of guilds with the sacred injunctions" (Dharma). In practice the state-control should have varied with "distance from state or provincial capitals, the strength of the central government, the prestige of the guilds and the character of their work."

#### *Self-governing Guilds.*

That these guilds in Ancient India were *de facto* autonomous is abundantly clear; and undoubtedly on the technical side of their transactions they were absolutely self-governing. Only on this hypothesis could one explain the control of an army raised from among the town guilds, equipped by them, and maintained in a state of readiness and efficiency. (See M. M. Ganapati Sastry's Commentary of "*Srenibala*"). Otherwise it would be difficult to account for the specific rules regarding apprenticeship sketched by Narada. Professor Hopkins has given a well merited tribute to them that "commerce in the modern sense whereby the king was advised not to oppress the guilds and not to tax too heavily was made possible through the growth of guilds"; more than all this, it, along with the Panchayat of the East, became an abode of "liberal culture and progress." (Majumdar).

These guilds function to this day in some parts of India, having survived the shocks of the middle ages. The Vaillabhatta Swami temple at Gwalior<sup>(60)</sup> (877 A.D.), the Harsha Stone Inscription of 973-974 A. D., and the Sujadoni Inscriptions of the tenth century A.D. bring the history of the guilds to the "latest days of the Hindu period." Highly developed caste guilds are found to have received the "patronage of the Moghul Emperors" (61). Mr. Proctor Sims in his report sketches the successful levying of a religious tax in 1878 and the boycotting of the recalcitrants by the Vania guild which brought them to submission in a small town in Kathiawar. Ahmedabad is found to be the spot where the system of "caste or trade unions is more fully developed than in any other part of Gujerat (62). After a detailed economic study of modern trade guilds in South India, the present writer has pointed out that there is a *fundamental coincidence* between the rules followed by artisans and merchants in distant Lahore (N. India) and those observed by engravers, goldsmiths, and traders in Madura (63), Chidambaram and Vriddhachalam in South India. Co-eval with her method of cherishing intact her ancient lore, India has *preserved to this day* her distinct *personality* in the form of these guilds (*Aryan in origin*) through an unbroken chain of continuity.

K. R. R. SASTRY.

(60) *Epigraphia Indica*, Vol. I, p. 159.

(61) Dr. Rajani Kanta Das: *Factory Labour in India*, p. 3.

(62) *Imperial Gazetteer*. Vol. V, p. 101.

(63) K. R. R. Sastry: *South Indian Guilds*, p. 44.



*The Bhagavad Gita*, translated from the Sanskrit, with an introduction, an argument and a commentary by W. Douglas P. Hill, M.A. (Humphrey Milford, London, 15*sh.*)

The *Gita* is like the Banyan tree ever young and fruitful ; more, any philosophy of life can take shelter under its canopy.

Whenever the Song may have been first chanted, and whenever it may have been first transcribed, ever since, commentators and annotators, as well as preachers and teachers, have been busy interpreting its message. Before its first European version (in English in 1785) Indian teachers, both Sanskrit and Vernacular, had expounded its message ; all through the last century, and in ever increasing measure in this one, European and American savants and their Indian chelas have written about the *Gita*, and of translations there is no dearth nowadays. This is praiseworthy in the Occidental mind, either of some modernized Hindus or of the Western Orientalists. The true Oriental, however, is not always an Orientalist and the true philosopher is not always a philologist ; still more rare is the combination of a linguist, a metaphysician and a mystic ; and so almost all of these modern versions, translations and expositions alike, be they Indian or Western, leave an empty feeling in some part of our being.

The book under review gives us that experience of empty feeling. Even the intellect is not satisfied ; but that is not to say that the author is not a learned man, or that he has failed to marshal his learning. The introduction of 98 pages shows that he has taken pains to familiarize himself with available material, but his method of research being similar to that of other Westerners his arguments and conclusions yield little that is new. Like so many others he assigns to the book the absurd date of 150 B.C. ; one single line of reasoning would demolish that figure. It is a well known fact that the *Gita* examines and reviews the various schools of thought in existence at the time when it was recorded ; now there is not a mention of the great Buddha, and that would carry us to 600 B.C. any way. But Indian chronology is the *bête noire* of all orientalists.

Similarly in grasping the contents of the book the Orientalists and their Indian protégés rely on their own philological basis and neglect to examine judiciously the philosophical any mystical foundation of the *Gita*. Our author had opportunities ; he might have succeeded in giving us an outstanding volume had he sat at the feet of some sage, at the same time that he consulted learned shastris in Benares.

While it is always helpful to have one more translation we doubt if this particular version will win any unique place with students of the *Gita*. What it gains in accuracy it loses in rhythm ; while the foot notes are interesting and in some cases informative, they will help more the students whose field is the analysis of the outer shell of the *Gita* than those who look for its soul.



Lest we seem unappreciative, let us close with this: any sincere man who takes pains to learn the *Gita* and to teach it has claims upon our gratitude. Even if the book does not benefit and bless a numerous crowd, it will help some, but most of all it must have helped Mr. Hill; in translating and expounding the *Gita*, no one can fail to receive its benediction, and every soul who is thus charged is in himself a help and a blessing to his fellows.

S. B.

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*Education for Tolerance.* By JOHN E. J. FANSHAWE  
(Independent Education, New York.)

The post-war antagonism—economic and political—between Britain and the U.S.A. has, by emphasizing their differences of ideals and traditions, promoted an unhealthy spirit of mutual intolerance. Sentimentalist appeals to their ties of language and blood, far from stimulating tolerance, drive the two peoples from comparative indifference to open hostility so unmistakably manifested in the huge mass of provocative press rubbish that—thanks to their linguistic affinity—flows freely between the two countries. Their indiscriminate promotion of Anglo-American individual contacts generally leaves each party a disgusting enigma to the other.

Whilst steps like washing off irrational anti-English prejudice and national conceit from American school histories will go to remove the obstacles, the real solution lies in a rational appeal to self-interest, self-defence and economic development. These require co-operation and involve inter-dependence. The sense of inter-dependence and inter-obligation, properly developed, will banish conceit and promote healthy understanding between the two great peoples.

The author's distinction between the sentimental and the rational is based on facts of American mass-psychology. He honestly recognises unpleasant facts and suggests the most straightforward remedy.

R. D. G.



## CORRESPONDENCE.

### MEDIUMS, NEO-THEOSOPHISTS & THEOSOPHISTS.

As I see that you invite letters from readers on the subjects treated in your Magazine I venture to offer one or two critical comments on the article by Sir Lawrence Jones in your June issue. I do not write without some knowledge and experience, for I have been a member of the Society for Psychical Research for many years, and have fairly extensively investigated the problems of psychic faculty.

In the article Sir Lawrence deprecates reliance on the "guidance of ghosts" in daily life. But in this Presidential Address he acknowledged the help of certain spirit-guides on more than one occasion.

With regard to the Afterword, you state: "The fate of the mediums (their physical and moral degradation) in itself is a serious sign". The mediums who have done and are doing such good work in connection with the Society for Psychical Research and the spiritualist bodies in this country are in every way healthy and sane. There is a section of Theosophists at present active in England whose speakers are constantly repeating insinuations of the same kind with regard to mediums. At a discussion following one of their lectures some time ago I took occasion to point out that the speaker's attitude was at the present day an anachronism, and tended to perpetuate the unfortunate estrangement between Spiritualism and Theosophy due largely to the unwarranted and bitterly hostile attacks made upon Spiritualism by Madame Blavatsky. Far wiser was the late Mr. Sinnett who wrote a most sensible pamphlet on the subject. His advice is now being acted upon by the Theosophical Society of which Mrs. Besant is the head, for their speakers constantly appear on platforms along with mediums. I suggest that before criticising you ought to ascertain what the facts really are as to what is taught in the Spiritualist Churches. These have their inspirational speakers, and a careful attention to the subject matter of their discourses will soon convince an unbiassed hearer that the teaching of the doctrines of reincarnation and karma are implicit in their utterances.

London.

ISABEL KINGSLEY.

[We are aware of the lapse of many neo-theosophists who, in spite of their claims, are really spiritualists and spiritists. Why the immortal Theosophy, taught by H. P. Blavatsky, condemns mediumism is very fully explained in a series of four Statements, the last of which we print in this very number. Madame Blavatsky was neither unwarranted, nor bitterly hostile in her "attacks"; she had the good of millions at heart who might be misled into soul-sickening and soul-destroying mediumistic practices; she warned them not by her *ipse dixit* but by full explanations, to which we would earnestly invite our correspondent's attention.—EDS.]



## ENDS AND SAYINGS.

“—————ends of verse

*And sayings of philosophers.”*

HUDIBRAS.

The June number of *The Sufi Quarterly* brings the view from the wife of Dr. Inge, the Dean of St. Paul, that “practically everybody has the Christian attitude towards life to-day, whether he is a professing Christian or not”. This attitude consists in being of service to the poor, the ignorant and the children, and Mrs. Inge likes the definition of God as good with one “o” left out. Now, first, why is goodness specifically a Christian attitude? Are there not equally good men and women in other religions? So, if Mrs. Inge were to say that judging by the desire of service our age should be regarded as highly religious (not Christian only) we would be inclined to agree, and add that there is more religion outside the churches than within. Mrs. Inge surprised a friend, answering that in a hypothetical case she would donate nineteen and sixpence of the pound she could spare to a starving family and six pence only to build a church; this is almost Theosophical. We fully agree with Mrs. Inge that “religion is not a matter of words” but of “actions and motives”. Now, noble actions and unselfish motives are seen in the mosque as well as in the church, and outside in the atheist, whom the Dean of St. Paul expects to be “filled with religious convictions”. So everywhere there are good motives and actions, and yet poverty exists and children are tortured (see below), and suffering, mental, moral and physical abounds. What then is wrong? We submit there is a missing link; between motive and action there must be knowledge, the application of the science of service. Ethics has a dual aspect—individual and corporate—and is a science in itself and forms an important *part* of the mighty Theosophic philosophy; metaphysics and mysticism are other parts. Modern churches, synagogues, mosques, are empty of true metaphysics and real mysticism, and thus suffer in their apperception and expression of ethical fundamentals.

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A shocking number of infant lives is reported to have been sacrificed in Luebeck, Germany, to the inoculating zeal of medical science. Some months ago, the report states, an anti-tuberculosis preparation was used in a baby hospital in that city to inoculate over one hundred helpless victims, of whom forty-four have died and eighty-two more are ill. An investigation is said to have been instituted by the civil authorities, involving the charging of two professors, one physician, and a laboratory nurse with having negligently caused the deaths of the babies. Individuals may be censured in this case, but, unfortunately, so strongly entrenched is the medical profession, and so staunch are the defenders of its freedom to experiment that any radical reform or check on the use of human test-tubes is hardly to be antici-



pated. Mrs. Inge will note one effect of the "religious" conviction of the scientist to serve the children. For who can doubt that the experimentors were actuated by the motive of finding truth, of relieving pain, and of serving ailing humanity?

Social conscience, social service, and study and practice of social science are knit closely together these days. Serious minded Theosophists have pointed out for many years that the remedies adopted were superficial and even injurious, that the true redress lay in regions deeper, unsuspected by the social scientist, who himself eludes definition being a composite photograph of many individuals ranging from the uninformed but noble-intentioned philanthropist to the man of seemingly great learning but really little wisdom. Such Theosophists will read with satisfaction a remarkable article in the August *Atlantic Monthly*, "Can Science Control Life?" by Lawrence Hyde. The author points out serious flaws in up-to-date sociology and says:

You cannot set to work to breed a superior race until you have first agreed upon what you mean by the term "superior"—and that is a matter on which you can get light, not from the eugenist, but from the poets, the mystics and the philosophers, people who have perfected themselves in a certain kind of discrimination, which is hardly called for at all in scientific research.

In his opinion the social scientist should look for guidance to the *social philosopher* who "would delegate to the professional statistician the type of research which it would be profitable for him to undertake". Further, it should be acknowledged that "it is the psychology of the observer that is in the last resort the key to the whole situation" and turns the tables on the psychologist by saying—"what we have to do with is the psychic constitution of the investigator."

If he is by constitution that natural man who receiveth not the things of the Spirit, the whole of his thinking, whether about psychology, economics, or anthropology, will be perverted by his instinctive repudiation of those superior values which we are obliged to take into consideration in every problem with which the mind of man is called upon to deal.

Mr. Hyde cannot help deducing—

By no conceivable refinement of his methods will the scientist ever be able to get round the fact that the most important data of all are those discoverable only by the individual who has developed the potencies of his soul. And this is a process which is not to be accomplished without the exercise of painful self-discipline and a profound humbling of the spirit.

So we have come to this, that service of man demands a compulsory self-discipline, "that purification of the self on which the religious teacher lays so much stress. For by what other means can we possibly secure the integrity of the master science of all—psychology?" Mr. Hyde does not tell us where is to be found the *knowledge*, the scientific knowledge of self-purification and self-discipline which leads to self-integrity. A would-be young aspirant for social service, agreeing with the propositions of Mr. Hyde, will require guidance and ask where to look for instruction and how to proceed. We must look out for Mr. Hyde's answer; ours is—in Patanjali's *Yoga Sutras*, in the



*Bhagavad-Gita*, in H. P. Blavatsky's *Voice of the Silence*. Ancient Asiatic psychology must be pressed into his service by the earnest psychologist of the modern West.

Mr. B. N. Krishnamurti Sarma has rendered a distinct service by contributing a spirited article in vindication of the *Gita*; he answers a view advanced some time ago to the effect that the *Gita* had no claim to poetry and was replete with grammatical absurdities and defects of diction. Mr. Sarma very ably refutes the fallacies of such a position, in the last Annals of the Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute. Among others he makes the following points :—

The *Gita*, as everybody knows, is a part and an important part of the Mahabharata. It shares the oddities of the Epic style even as any other portion of the Epic. Indeed, the Epic period is recognized to be a distinctive epoch in the development of the Sanskrit language and the Ramayana and the Mahabharata as works belonging to this period are far earlier in date of composition if not of final redaction than the Sutra period.

No claim is or has ever been made on behalf of the *Gita* that it is the *beau ideal* of Sanskrit poetry ! Hindu tradition has not cared to attribute false perfection of any kind to it.....the *Gita* is always claimed to be and spoken of as an *Upanishad* ! It is what it claims to be— a Yoga Sastra and an *Upanishad*.

Our ancient commentators have clearly drawn attention to many allegories in the *Gita*, and even third rate modern writers and booksellers of the *Gita* wax eloquent over the profound allegories of the *Gita* and dwell upon the mysterious divisions of the Mahabharata into eighteen books, the duration of the fight for eighteen days and of the division of the *Gita* into eighteen chapters.

It is considered up to date by some Hindu writers to follow the fashion set by Western orientalists and regard the *Gita* as unrelated to the Mahabharata, as almost an interpolation. So far back as 1886 the great Theosophical scholar T. Subba Rao advocated that “in studying the *Bhagavad-Gita* it must not be treated as if isolated from the rest of the Mahabharata.” Now if the *Gita* is a philosophical and mystical treatise, or Yoga-shastra, and abounds in allegories, its interpretation should not be restricted by philological notions, but should be really the task of philosophers and mystics. If, as is rightly contended by Mr. Sarma, the grammar and language structure of the *Gita* must be judged in the light of the epic style, much more is it essential to remember that the philosophy of the *Gita* should be examined in the light of the whole of the *Mahabharata*. But who is there among the Orientalists capable of expounding its esotericism ? If it is contested that there is any esoteric mystery in the *Mahabharata*, the alternative is to assert that it is an encyclopedia of nonsense, and meaningless fairy-tales.

The Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute is rendering a great service to the cause of culture by publishing the *Mahabharata* text ; has not the time come for some body of Indian philosophers to attempt a reasoned exposition of its mysteries ? Not only in reference to this historical allegory, but also in connection with other tomes, from the Vedas to the Puranas, some attempt at understanding their



contents, philosophically and not only philologically, should be made. In the February number of THE ARYAN PATH Mr. A. R. Orage wrote about the next renaissance, and closed his article thus: "What Greek and Roman culture did for the dark ages, I believe the *Mahabharata* may do for our own benighted age—more, in fact, because it springs from a higher source". We are inclined to agree with this view and, further, hold that the gem of gems in the *Mahabharata* being the *Gita*, the starting point of that renaissance will be the correct interpretation of its metaphysical and mystical propositions.

To those who boast too freely of our modern civilisation, its arts, science and medicine it may be somewhat humiliating to read of the interesting accounts by Capt. W. Hichens in his article on "Medicine Men and their Cures" (*Discovery* August 1930). He shows how the native doctor (*mganga*) of the savages of East Africa is an expert in his "business to prevent, detect and treat diseases, to which the savage and animals are prone" and that "in their mysterious way the secret clans of medicine-men have discovered cures for diseases which still baffle white medical science. Indeed they hit upon great scientific truths generations ago . . . which have recently been hailed as among the triumphs of twentieth century scientific research." He then enumerates how these men "knew long before the fact was discovered by veterinary research that the red water plague was caused by the bite of a grass-tick . . . and adopted preventive and curative measures very similar to those advocated by science today. . . In *homa* or malaria. . . the savage medicine-man made even more notable discoveries. He knew generations before. . . that malaria is transmitted by the bite of the mosquito, but that the fever was caused by minute organisms and that the prophylactic was quinine. For the everyday ailments . . . the medicine-man has an extensive pharmacopœia of medicine whose efficacy has not only been tested out over tribal generations but is a matter of daily experience in the native village. In addition to beneficent medicines however, *mganga* has naturally turned his attention to poisons and most medicine-men are experts in the subtleties of toxicology. He discovered vaccination before Jenner was born and inoculation against diseases, generations before Pasteur ever stabbed a culture."

This and the facts in archaic India—for there they had a marvellous knowledge of medicine, pharmacy, surgery, etc., as witnessed in *Charaka* and *Susruta*—and that of ancient Egyptians' skill of medicine as told in *The Book of Hermes*, brings once more to the front that every discovery and outstanding development in modern science has already been anticipated. Science chooses to ignore such facts but let us hope that it will change its methods and learn something from the Ancients whose knowledge on most subjects is still unrivalled.