

A U M

Two birds, inseparable friends, cling to the same tree. One of them eats the sweet fruit, the other looks on without eating.

On the same tree sits man grieving, immersed, bewildered by his own impotence. But when he sees the other lord contented and knows his glory, then his grief passes away.—MUNDAKA UPANISHAD.

THEOSOPHY

Vol. XIV

December, 1925

No. 2

ANCIENT LANDMARKS

II

THE FRATERNITY OF PERFECTED SOULS

THEOSOPHY teaches the existence of a Fraternity of Perfected Souls. From its ranks have come to mankind its Savior-Teachers; some with a more exalted mission than others, but each fulfilling the requirements of the cycle for which He undertakes that mission. Some as Divine Kings, others as Holy Mendicants, all come to impress on the whole or a portion of humanity the same sublime truths which form the ancient Wisdom-Religion. Hence we find that underlying every ancient popular religion is the same Wisdom-Doctrine, one and identical, professed and practised by the Initiates of every country. One body of Universal Teaching in the custody of one Fraternity of Cosmopolitan Philanthropists—such is the sublime fact which our modern world has forgotten.

Among the followers of every religion there exists a genuine and sincere faith in the divine nature of their own particular prophet-savior. On what does this faith rest? On the fact that Divine Men have incarnated to energize and inspire mankind in every age and clime. But that pristine faith degenerates in its outer expression; the adherents of each religion claim a unique position for their own lawgiver, refusing divinity to other instructors of humanity. Priestly cunning has foisted on the credulous the One and Only Son of God, or the One and Only Prophet, or its equivalent. Claims which Krishna or Buddha, Jesus or Muhammed never made for Themselves or Their Teachings, the respective followers made and now make, under priestly guidance, to the debasement of Truth and the detriment of humanity.

Theosophists have the duty to deliver mankind from the clutches of organized priesthoods. The first step towards this

emancipation is the restoration of the knowledge of old that there exist no special privileges for any soul, nor are there any chosen peoples, but that Divine Instructors are Living Brothers with one aim, one purpose, one teaching, who reached Their stature of perfection by self-redeeming work and who teach all humanity without making distinctions of any kind soever. Passion blinds the fanatic to this truth; he fails to see that the life-incidents and actions of all Teachers are identical, that the story of every Savior from Vishvakarma to Christ is the same. He is taught to believe in special privileges for himself through a belief in the uniqueness of his own prophet.

There is hardly a religious institution in the modern world from the Vedic to the Buddhistic, from the Catholic to the Swedenborgian, which does not claim some kind of a unique place for its own particular savior. This erroneous notion is to be traced to the fact that in myths and legends characters like Krishna, Hercules, Pythagoras, Buddha, Jesus, Apollonius, are represented as divinely begotten Saviors. Every one of them, whether at birth or afterwards, is searched for and threatened with death (yet never killed) by an opposing power whether it be called Kansa or Herod, Maya or Mara. They are all tempted, persecuted and finally said to have been murdered at the end of the Rite of Initiation, *i. e.*, in their *physical* personalities, of which they are supposed to have been rid forever after *spiritual* birth or resurrection. Then after this allegorical violent death they all descend to the Nether World or Naraka, Hell or Hades to save the souls of the damned; on their triumphant return they have become transformed into Gods. Thus they are given the epithet of *Soter* (savior).

Let us note a few parallels out of the many in the lives of saviors and prophets of widely separated lands and eras. The early missionaries who went to China were appalled* at finding that Fo-hi was born of a virgin whose story was but a counterpart of the narrative of the virgin Mary. In India, Krishna was born of the virgin Devaki who "bore in her womb the lotus-eyed deity," and Buddha "shot through the void as a six-rayed star and entered Maya's womb upon the right." Note that "from the time of conception the Divine Lady was free from passion and full of purity"—what else is this but the doctrine of immaculate conception 600 years B. C.? In Siam, Codom was virgin-born; his mother was the Praying Lady and was impregnated by the Sun-beams. The Egyptian Horus, the Babylonian Adonis, and Bacchus or Dionysus were all born of virgins, and so were the Mexican Quetzalcoatl and the Aztec Huitzilopochtli and Bacab in Yucatan. These South American gods were born at the Winter Solstice as their types in Asia and Europe, *e. g.*, the Scandinavian Baldur, the Persian Mythra, and numerous

* Milman: *History of Christianity*, I, 397.

others. Thus is seen the significance of the following from the famous "*Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*" by Gibbon (II, p. 383) :

The Roman Christmas, ignorant of the real date of the Christ's birth, fixed the solemn festival to the 25th December, the *Brumalia*, or Winter Solstice, when the Pagans annually celebrated the birth of Sol.

St. Chrysostom, who lived about 390 A. D., is thus quoted :

On this day, also, the birth of Christ was *lately* fixed at Rome, in order that whilst the heathen were busy with their *profane* ceremonies, the Christians might perform their holy rites undisturbed.

And how many Sons of God have been tempted, murdered, even crucified and who resurrected themselves? How many rose from the sepulchre at the Vernal Equinox, celebrated to this day in Persia as Jamshedi-Navroz. Tammuz, Horus, Atys, Memnon, they all were put to death and rose from the dead, and descended to hell to save the sin-imprisoned souls of men.

Whence this close similarity so clearly indicative of a universal tradition in connection with the birth, work, and death of all saviors? One of the ways in which the Great Lodge taught infant humanity was to cast in myth or legend form the lives of these Sons of Light. The ancient biographies of the external personalities bearing the names of Great Souls are the mystic records of their public, and parallel therewith of their *inner* lives, in their characters as Neophytes and Initiates. Hence, the manifest sameness of the means of construction of their respective biographies. However much masked and hidden from profane gaze, the chief features of such lives are common.

Narratives of these Mystic Lives are well preserved, as they contain correct keys to several cosmic and human phenomena. The non-understanding of certain incidents of these ancient mystic biographies has been the cause of the assigning of a unique position to such teachers as Krishna in India or Jesus in Christendom. For a right reading of these Lives we have further to bear in mind that every such god has three biographies in the narrative, so to say, running parallel with each other and each connected with one of the aspects of the God-Savior—historical, astronomical and perfectly mythical, the last serving to connect the other two and smooth away the asperities and discordancies in the narrative, while gathering into one or more symbols the verities of the first two. Localities are made to correspond with astronomical and even with psychic events. Thus arose in the ancient world myths truer than history, for the latter dealt with events on the planes of action, and the former narrated the happenings in the world of Soul.

Among such myths was one about the Great Sacrifice of the Master-Soul who renounced his freedom to accept the woes of bodily birth, the self-chosen incarnation of the Lord of Compassion

for the sake of Orphan Humanity. The central fact of the mystic life, that every human Soul sacrifices himself and is crucified on the fourfold cross of matter, is but a variant of that same profound truth. This fact the Lodge impressed on the minds of many peoples by spreading in their midst allegorical stories of heroes who are supposed to have gone through experiences similar to that Master-Soul and which every human Ego should emulate. Such experiences were often purposely woven into the lives of local rulers, saints and sages. Hence the birth at winter solstice, the resurrection at spring equinox—astronomical and cosmic factors; and crucifixion on the four-fold cross, descent into hell—psychological and human aspects.

The soul of all such history-myths stands unveiled in the writings of H. P. Blavatsky. In studying the teachings of Theosophy in different eras and climes a proper comprehension of this fact provides a key which unlocks many statements which otherwise sound enigmatic—some of them, even absurd.

The language of the Soul and therefore the Soul of all languages is—symbols. That language is universal. Like the incarnating Ego in Man it embodies itself in many forms. Religions, philosophies, sciences, all branches of knowledge spring from the Wisdom-Religion, which has for its vehicle this ancient universal language.

The Wisdom-Religion or Theosophy is the drama of the unfoldment of the One Life. The springing forth of the many lives from the One Life and the orderly procession of the many as the kingdoms of Nature, till they re-become the One, form the contents of the Record of the Masters, and that is Theosophy. Every stage of that long pilgrimage is described in symbols, and among them, that of the Adept-Teacher whose compassion manifests in practical sacrifice and makes him incarnate in a body of flesh and blood. There is a long line of Divine Incarnations. All religions bear witness to the fact. The occult nature of this mighty phenomenon is so holy and sacred, and withal so difficult of comprehension by the ordinary human intellect, that the truth has ever been cast in symbolic and allegorical forms. Use is made of the law of correspondence and analogy and these Teachers named "Suns of Righteousness." In our objective universe of matter and false appearances the Sun is the most fitting emblem of the live-giving beneficent Power of the Master of Compassion, who, as a self-luminous Being enlightens humanity by the great sacrifice of incarnation.

Divine Incarnations are historical facts. In Their own personalities these Beings embody Pure Truths, They are Wisdom Incarnate, the Word made flesh. Purna-Avataras, Full Incarnations of Wisdom, *i.e.*, Beings who embody the totality of knowledge gained and retained in the Mahatmic Hierarchy, are a recognized occult phenomenon in Theosophy. They are the pure channels of Cyclic Will which finds expression in and through Their corporeal exist-

ence. Hence in Them sidereal and cosmic forces manifest on the one hand, as psychological and human on the other. All Solar myths are but different versions of the same natural Primeval Mystery on which the Wisdom-Religion was based and the development of its Adepts subsequently framed.

Evolutionary impulse manifests in a sevenfold manner in Nature and in Man: seven cosmic forces unfold seven planets; seven hierarchies of beings beget seven types of humans. On man-bearing globes of our system, Beings who have been men, out of deep compassion and the spirit of sacrifice for their fellows, incarnate to impress the imperishable centre in each man's heart with the supreme and sublime fact that he, too, can, through purity and knowledge, reach the Divine status. This happened on earth when animal-man became the human being some eighteen million years ago. In collectivity but One *Being*, such compassionate Beings constituted the Lodge of Mahatmas, to form the nursery for future human adepts on this, our earth, and from this Tree of Wisdom, the Ever-Living-Human-Banyan, sprang in due season the branches known as Kapila, Hermes, Enoch, Orpheus, etc., etc. In its constitution the Lodge is sevenfold.

In one of the obscure Sanskrit documents we come across the original of the common Theosophical expression the Great Lodge—Maha-Shala, the Great House, translated in central and western India as the Great School. It is not a place but a collectivity of Beings, whose self-conscious intelligence transcends human comprehension. In that House are lodged seven types of Men, Pure Rays of Light, each but an issue of the Seven Sacred Planets called the Seven Lords—Rishis by the Brahamanas, Ameshaspentas by the Zoroastrians, Arch-Angels by the Christians. Of these Translucent Men it is said that they can no longer err. They appear on earth but at the origin of every new human race and at the junction or close of the two ends of the small and great cycle, and are known as Avatars or Incarnations. Their stay among mortals is exactly the time required, and no more, to impress upon the plastic minds of child-humanity the eternal verities which they embody in their own being, such impress remaining vivid though latent in mankind as "innate ideas." Here is the true source of the very common belief in revelation, which is not of books read or hymns heard, but of Truths impressed in the Heart of Men. This is done so as to ensure the eternal truths from being utterly lost or forgotten by the forthcoming generations.

As a result of this Spiritual Mission, some souls, however few in number, make the supreme effort to follow the noble example set by the Great Sacrifice. In every cycle and race souls have striven to express in thought, word and deed, that Impress made within their Hearts. The successes among such strivers become the Adepts and

Initiates; they continue the example set, incarnate among men to instruct and inspire, and do for their younger brethren what was done for themselves.

In the course of the spiritual and intellectual evolution of humanity, these Master-Souls taught in parables and in symbols the Primeval Truths. Thus arose myths and sacred dramas, which in course of time degenerated into dogmas and religions. At the very dawn of intellectual humanity were laid the foundation-stones of all the faiths and creeds, of every fane and church built from first to last; and those allegorical foundations still survive. Universal myths, personifications of Powers divine and cosmic, primary and secondary, and historical personages of all the now-existing as well as of extinct religions, are to be found in the Seven Chief Deities and Their correlations. These Seven in Their spiritual collectivity constitute a Supreme Unity, to which can never be offered profane worship. That Supreme Unity casts its radiance on earth and is the Lodge of Mahatmas.

There is a principle in our complex being dormant in most men; it is the Impress referred to above. It is the real awakener of the human mind and soul. First by the study of Theosophy and then by enacting in our own lives the actions of the Great Ones, we emancipate ourselves and learn the lesson of Renunciation.

Each one of us is a "Child of God"; each one of us can develop into a "Sun of Righteousness" whose life-giving effulgence kills the terrestrial passions, which are the impediments to Self-Realization. By the help of that hidden Principle we emerge triumphant from the region of lust and iniquity, become Karma-Sakshin, Witness of the karma of men, and in all the glory of regeneration we arise as the Graha-Raja, King of the Constellations, and are addressed as Gabnashman, "re-possessed of his rays."

That which is written can be read; that which is spoken can be heard, but there is that in the expression of These Mighty Masters which can neither be seen nor heard but which can be known in the hollow of the head and fully realized in the chamber of the heart. Let us all be born again this month as the Sun starts on His journey Northward on the 21st of December. He is hidden enshrined in the heart of each one of us:

Thou residest in the agglomeration of thy divine personages. Thou begettest us, Oh, Thou Unknown, and we greet Thee in worshipping each God Soul which descendeth from Thee and liveth in us.

THE PLANETESIMAL HYPOTHESIS

NASCENT Western speculation of the 18th and 19th centuries was signalized by the emission of a number of theories which have profoundly influenced scientific thought to the present hour. Not the least of these was the "nebular hypothesis" of Laplace. The power of that hypothesis and its unbroken former hold on the scientific mind can be well remembered by every student over thirty; a hold so complete that even at the present day the laity is in general unaware of its destruction; a destruction nevertheless complete, as shown by Prof. W. D. MacMillan (*Science*, July 24, 1925); Dr. Henry Norris Russell (*Scientific American*, June, 1924); and prophesied in the *Secret Doctrine* (I, 592).

The planetesimal hypothesis has taken its place, and as this theory is far nearer Theosophical teachings, as well as subject to radical future revisions, we venture to present its rough outlines.

Its sponsors, Professors Moulton and Chamberlin, believe that in former days a stray star passed within the periphery of the solar system, raising great tides upon the sun and tearing loose matter from it. This for some time existed in the form of gaseous masses or free molecules, later consolidating into planets, which in turn grew in girth by continued accretions of substance. Neither Professors Moulton, Chamberlin, nor MacMillan seem to be aware of the fact that the hypothesis in turn possesses several weak points, some of which may prove fatal. (Harry Fielding Reid, *American Journal of Science*, July, 1924.) Some of such difficulties were adequately dealt with by the nebular hypothesis. The weak point in both theories, as in so many others, is failure to recognize a continuous and unbroken law of causation, which rules throughout the career of every being, from the electron to the sun—from atom to angel.

The nebular hypothesis postulated a condensation of fire mist at points in space, through a fortuitous disturbance of the distribution of diffused matter. But in a Universe governed in all its parts by law, there must have been some reason for such points of collection having been in certain regions of space, rather than in others. A recognition of that fact and the following out of that recognition would have saved Laplace his errors.

The planetesimal theory, on the other hand, does not concern itself with the original causes of the passage of its hypothetical star through the sun's neighborhood. Yet without that passage, if the theory be true, all the life on all the planets of the solar system would have been compelled to a far different self expression or to none at all. Likewise the planetesimal hypothesis gives no reason, except in terms of blind force, for the relative positions and charac-

teristics of the planets. Yet the all-permeant Law requires a causative relationship between all parts of a given manifestation, from the configuration of a continent to the minds and souls of those who walk thereupon.

The intricacies of a human life, with all its complex feelings, faculties, and inter-relations, can only be the outcome of an immense past, commensurate with its present powers and capacities of experience. And the ancient ego, the everlasting bulb in which the fading flower of a human life is rooted, remains ever as the generating center of the unrolling of a chain of human births. Potential in the containment of every planetary center are the powers, faculties, and experiences of every being upon it. As a link in the eternal *nexus* of causation, how otherwise can a planetary body come into existence, other than as a human body does?—that is to say, as the periodical manifestation of a combination of conscious and semi-conscious intelligences developed in past aeons.

It is Fohat who guides the transfer of the principles from one planet to another, from one star to another—child-star. When a planet dies, its informing principles are transferred to a *laya* or sleeping center, with potential but latent energy in it, which is thus awakened into life and begins to form itself into a new sidereal body . . . When Fohat is said to produce “Seven Laya Centres,” it means that for formative or creative purposes, the GREAT LAW . . . stops, or rather modifies its perpetual motion on seven invisible points within the area of the manifested Universe. “*The great Breath digs through Space seven holes into Laya to cause them to circumgyrate during Manvantara.*” (*Secret Doctrine*, I, 147.)

Everything in the Universe follows analogy. “As above, so below;” Man is the microcosm of the Universe. That which takes place on the spiritual plane repeats itself on the Cosmic plane. Concretion follows the lines of abstraction; corresponding to the highest must be the lowest; the material to the spiritual. (*S.D.* I, 177.)

If modern science could but understand that consciousness is the permanent basis in which reside all the potentialities of matter, and accept the above doctrine as a hypothesis of the primary origin of planetary centers, it would find itself thereafter marching in step with Theosophical wisdom—which in the end must prevail. In many respects the following is but a prophetic rendition of present day scientific descriptions:

(From the Occult teachings) “*The Central Sun causes Fohat to collect primordial dust in the form of balls, to impel them to move in converging lines and finally to approach each other and aggregate*” . . . “*Being scattered in Space, without order or system, the world-germs come into frequent collision until their final aggregation, after which they become wanderers (Comets). Then the battles and struggles begin. The older (bodies) attract the younger, while others repel them. Many perish, devoured by their stronger companions. Those that escape become worlds.*” (*S.D.* I, 201.)

There is a whole poem on the pregenetic battles fought by the growing planets before the final formation of Kosmos, thus accounting for the seemingly disturbed position of the systems of several planets, the plane of the satellites of some (of Neptune and Uranus, for instance, of which the ancients knew nothing, it is said) being tilted over, thus giving them an appearance of retrograde motion. These planets are called the warriors, the Architects, . . . (S.D. I, 101.)

Human life is not the chance-happening of blind phenomena of matter, nor is it what one philosopher termed it: "A mere discreditable episode on one of the more insignificant planets." There is a sentient and conscious life on every planet, for the reason that Soul is as enduring as the vital principles which from age to age give birth to the planetary bodies—and it is a component part of those principles. Earth is now what we have made it in aeons past. Earth of a million or billion years hence shall be, reincarnated, what we are making it today.

REALITY AND ILLUSION

Maya or illusion is an element which enters into all finite things, for everything that exists has only a relative, not an absolute, reality, since the appearance which the hidden noumenon assumes for any observer depends upon his power of cognition. To the untrained eye of the savage, a painting is at first an unmeaning confusion of streaks and daubs of colour, while an educated eye sees instantly a face or a landscape. Nothing is permanent except the one hidden absolute existence which contains in itself the noumena of all realities. The existences belonging to every plane of being, up to the highest Dhyan-Chohans, are, in degree, of the nature of shadows cast by a magic lantern on a colourless screen; but all things are relatively real, for the cogniser is also a reflection, and the things cognised are therefore as real to him as himself. Whatever reality things possess must be looked for in them before or after they have passed like a flash through the material world; but we cannot cognise any such existence directly, so long as we have sense-instruments which bring only material existence into the field of our consciousness. Whatever plane our consciousness may be acting in, both we and the things belonging to that plane are, for the time being, our only realities. As we rise in the scale of development we perceive that during the stages through which we have passed we mistook shadows for realities, and the upward progress of the Ego is a series of progressive awakenings, each advance bringing with it the idea that now, at last, we have reached "reality"; but only when we shall have reached the absolute Consciousness, and blended our own with it, shall we be free from the delusions produced by Maya.

—*Secret Doctrine.*

FUNDAMENTAL MISCONCEPTIONS

MISCONCEPTIONS of Theosophy are as common as misconceptions of Life itself. How could it be otherwise if Theosophy is the Wisdom-Religion—the truth about Life, in all its manifestations? All perfection, and also all imperfection, inhere in Life itself, *in one form or another*.

Only the perfections already acquired survive as a Unity. Called generically Spirit, these acquired perfections manifest as the root or basis of the further evolution of each of the seven kingdoms or Hierarchies of Monads in nature—the primary centers of Spiritual Energy. The imperfections everywhere met with during manifested existence do not exist in Spirit: they have their birth, life, and death in Matter—*conditioned* existence, evolution, karma. They are non-existent in Nirvana. Otherwise Nirvana could not be, nor could that occur at each new Cycle of Manifested Existences, or Manvantara, which is taught to be the fact:

The same monad will *re-emerge* therefrom, as a still higher being, on a far higher plane, to recommence its cycle of perfected activity.¹

Nirvana and Karma are not studied as they should be—as “co-existent and co-eternal,” that is, inseparable during manifested life. They represent perfection and imperfection *per se* as inhering in LIFE: the twin Principles of Union and Separateness: Consciousness and Unconsciousness during Nirvana, Spirit and Matter during manifestation. Says “The Secret Doctrine”:

It is on the right comprehension of the primeval Evolution of Spirit-Matter, and its real essence that the student has to depend for the further elucidation in his mind of the Occult Cosmogony, and for the only sure clue which can guide his subsequent studies.²

The real essence or Monad, this Spirit-Matter, this Substance-Principle, this Atma-Buddhi, and so on, are terms used for the indivisible Unity of Life itself through all forms, states and conditions, and not to be confused with the duality of all manifestation. This misconception of the nature of Life is common to all manifested existences except the Mahatmas. Hence it affects and confronts each individual being until he becomes himself a Mahatma. “All beings,” says Krishna in “Bhagavad-Gita,” “fall into error (*i.e.*, misconceptions) at the time of birth by reason of the delusion of the opposites”—the taking of one or the other of the dual phases of Life for the real essence. Not till Life is realized as the source of *both* Nirvana and Karma is there emancipation of the Soul, and this realization can only come about through contrast—Karma.

¹ *The Secret Doctrine*, I, 256.

² *Ibid.*, I, 277.

Misconceptions are manifested to the individual first in others, and then in himself, but they run far deeper than this, are rooted, therefore, far below the surface of our existence as human beings. Man as Monad and Man as a human being are one and the same Life, but their *ex*-istence is as far asunder as can be—as far asunder as Nirvana and Karma. Man as we experience him, and misconceive him, Man of Spirit invested with Matter, is born, acts and inter-acts with all the Hierarchies of beings; dies; enters Devachan; so much of his human life as represents an addition to the already acquired perfection of the Monad, is assimilated; and that is the *end* of that human being. It is the *Monad* which re-emerges from devachan, as a still higher Being, on a far higher plane, to recommence its cycle of perfected activity in a new incarnation as a new human being.

In the Orient misconceptions of the Wisdom-Religion have survived for ages, being perpetuated by the mass while the individual is out of incarnation. Popular Buddhism confuses the Monad with the human being, the Real Essence with its mortal manifestation. So Buddhism rejects reincarnation as taught in Theosophy, and says that the man in dying is *annihilated*, but throws off *Skandhas* which later on coalesce and form a *new* man. Popular Hinduism believes in reincarnation, but not as Theosophy teaches it. Misconceiving Karma and Nirvana, the orthodox Hindu believes that certain forms of karma will condemn him to transmigration—rebirth in animal or lower forms of life. Fearing unwittingly to perpetrate this undesirable karma, he does his utmost, if a “yogi,” to “abstain utterly from action (karma)” and thus achieve Moksha, Nirvana, or emancipation. If an ordinary caste man or no-caste man, an “untouchable,” he believes he can, without quite securing emancipation, assure himself of a better re-birth by submitting passively to the inequities of this existence, by abstaining from taking organized life, and by propitiating the gods, devas, demons, pitars, what not, by various ceremonies and offerings, as well as gain a far longer sojourn in Swarga, or Devachan.

Western misconceptions of the Wisdom-Religion take other forms. Theological as well as popular Christianity believes in the Real Essence, but conceives of It as being *separate* from nature and from man, and therefore worships and tries to propitiate it as God, *the* Supreme Being, so as to be happier here and go hence to an eternal Heaven. Not seeing the One Life present in everything and everywhere the Christians, quite as logically in their way as the Buddhists and Hindus in theirs, do not believe in *inherent* immortality, or Karma and Reincarnation—Spiritual Evolution—but look on it as a gift bestowed by their Supreme Being on those who have faith in Him; and as logically believe in an immortality of woe inflicted by God upon those who disbelieve in Him or who never

heard of Him. "Works," or Karma, are enjoined in Christianity as a corollary only, to make mortal existence more tolerable for one's self while waiting for the promised immortality in Heaven, as the reward of Faith. An enormous and ever-increasing number of Western minds, as a result of advancing intellectual evolution, reject orthodox Christian misconceptions and have become Spiritualists and Materialists. The Spiritualists believe in immortality hereafter, but concern themselves very little over precedent immortality. Thus they accept the idea of the One Life in themselves and others, but confuse the Real Essence with the human personality; so they believe in the endless evolution of the human being in other spheres after the death of the mortal body. They are not so logical as the Buddhists, or the Kardecist spiritualists, but since Spiritualism like Materialism, is based on phenomena, though metaphysical in place of physical, this is not surprising. Neither Spiritualist nor Materialist has any philosophy. Materialism, or the Science of our day, not believing in any other Evolution than Physical, immortal in the mass, mortal in the individual, necessarily rejects the idea of any other real essence than Matter, cannot accept Reincarnation, does not believe in the Soul as the Evolver, and yet, since Spirit *has* a real existence within and beyond matter, misconceives it and calls it "Law;" being unacquainted with its real nature, science misconceives Law as being blind and unconscious, unjust, or rather indifferent, while depending absolutely on the *inerrancy of law*. That is why one must say that materialism, no matter how scientific, has no philosophy. The theories and hypotheses of Science, to account for this, that, and the other phenomenon in nature are as mortal and perishable as the phenomena themselves, and scarcely longer-lived, for each new generation of scientists propounds new theories to account for the same old phenomena.

The Theosophical student is one who, having in the first instance seen the misconceptions in religion, science, and the phenomena of life as experienced and explained, rejects them all, and sets out to find the Truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth. Infallibly this perception of the false, this determination to seek the true, brings him in contact with the Wisdom-Religion. He reads it; is attracted by its vastness, its profundity; something in him wakes up and responds to the great Fundamental ideas of One Life, of Karma, of Reincarnation, of Evolution Spiritual and Intellectual as well as physical. That something tells him audibly to his mind, "*this is so*," although that mind does not remember past lives, does not see the future, is unable to separate itself from the body and perform phenomena. Then the student sets out to achieve all these magical resultants. He is sure there are Masters and Chelas who can do all these wonderful things. At once, if not mightily on guard, the hunger for Truth, the yearning of spiritual aspiration, is

forgotten and the thirst for powers, for an enlarged and expanded existence in Matter, not Spirit, supervenes. This is the first Theosophical misconception liable to so delude the student that it becomes fundamental with him, as it has with so many others despite all warnings. With this fundamental misconception, more he studies, more he works, more he applies, the farther he goes astray, because he will listen less and less to the Voice of the Silence, and give heed only to one or another of the "Six which must be slain."

But supposing the student intellectually recognizes this danger and is constantly on guard against it, will that in itself save him from further Theosophical misconceptions? Only negatively. The fact that he is not immune to temptation in this one direction may well give him pause for reflection that he may not be immune in others. So he will study and apply, not merely to have a powerful mind, but to use it for the help of others, in all the relations of ordinary mundane existence, as well as to promulgate and disseminate the Theosophy he has already acquired. He will have his reward, but it will be one of the phenomena of Spirit and not of Matter. The lame, the halt, the blind, the *needy* in every sense, will be attracted to him as irresistibly as he is attracted to Theosophy. He is rich; they are poor. They will come to be fed, to beg, to borrow, to be ministered to. Will he give charity to these—the charity of the Spirit as well as of mind and body? Or will he grow weary of the incessant demands which absorb all his energies, which interfere with *his own* "progress"? Will he, in short, grow *uncharitable* toward those poor ye have always with you? Or, perhaps, will the student forget once more and begin to pose as a *Guru*, a Teacher, to these unfortunate younger brothers; begin to play the priest, receive confessions and give penances, and absolution? Or will he "let them hear the Law," and turn them to the real Teaching and the real Teacher from which he has had his own inspiration? This second voice, the temptation to "speak as one having authority," is subtle and recondite, hidden behind the thirst for powers. If not recognized when met in one's self, *before* it is met, through the struggle with the temptation to cultivate "the mighty magic of Prakriti," the student will fall before the second Gate, and both Charity and Equanimity, both *Dana* and *Shila*, will be locked against him. Many, many, are the students in all times who have failed here. From the first class have come all the "scientists," and from the second class all the "religionists" of every age. The one are caught fast in the toils of mastery over Nature—over the elementals; the other caught faster still in the coils of mastery over the minds of men. *Mastery* over something else, over others, has enslaved their Souls. They are farther far from *self*-mastery than the humble layman, than they were themselves at "their first, their initial step."

H.P.B.'s "Voice of the Silence" is advisedly "dedicated to the Few." "Many are called," as she repeated, "but few are chosen," for those few are in every case self-chosen. The first two "Fragments" are addressed to all who are "called," *i.e.*, attracted to Theosophy. The second Fragment is addressed to those who have "slain", or truly recognized the "cruel, crafty Power" of the first fundamental Theosophical misconception in living the Theosophical life, and are struggling against it. But the third Fragment is addressed only to those who have recognized, encountered, are on guard against and fighting against the second as well as the first of the Theosophical misconceptions. To these "Few" indeed does the third Fragment say:

Prepare *thyself*, for thou wilt have to travel on alone. The Teacher can but point the way. The Path is one for all, the means to reach the goal must vary with the Pilgrims.

At this stage the student will need large drafts of "Kshanti, Patience sweet, that naught can ruffle" if he is to take the third step successfully and plant himself on the Path. He will grow discouraged, unbalanced, uncharitable, *impatient*—with others, with himself, with the Teacher, and be tempted to "take the Law into his own hands."

"Beware of that little imp, impatience." It is the proving-ground for all his former study and training. He faces now, not so much his karma or the karma of others. He is facing the Karma of the race to which he belongs. The Theosophical misconceptions of the Fundamental Verities that he thought he had long ago disembarrassed himself of have been pushed back to their true root and basis—human nature. He has given up religion, but the religious notion has been there all the time. He has given up faith in miracles, but the miracle notion has been there all the time, undisturbed till now. He has believed in the One Life, but *universal* brotherhood has not vitalized him. He has sought for Knowledge and Powers, not to make Theosophy the living power in his life. He has been trying to save and elevate *himself*—to make a personal God out of human nature. All the time the "heresy of separateness" has lurked and profited by his work and his studies. Who can come to this point and calmly look at human nature in himself as he has all along looked at it in others, and go back once more to study and application of the Fundamental Principles, never to lose sight of them again, is the True Theosophist. He will fall into many errors and mistakes of apprehension and application, for he is working in Matter, but he has seen for Himself as Monad, as the Reincarnating Ego, and has the only sure clue which can guide his subsequent studies.

As Theosophical students come in increasing numbers during the rising half of the present centenary cycle of the Movement, they

will, each and all, have to face the fact of Theosophical misconceptions. It will be easy to do this as regards existing sectarian and scientific dogmas and theories. They will see that all these have arisen from fallacious perceptions of the Fundamental Principles of Nature, of the Wisdom-Religion, as derived from past presentations. But what will they do when they encounter Theosophical misconceptions of the present Message and Messenger? They will find many and various ideas of Masters, of H.P.B., of W.Q.J., of Evolution, of Karma and Reincarnation, of brotherhood, of service, of the Path. Will they be true enough students to *go to the Source*, to make it their prime affair to gain clean and clear apprehension of the Fundamental Principles and their Applications? If they do not, it is certain that they can but repeat the world-old failure of studying and applying the Path of Spiritual Evolution in the light of human nature. Already there are dozens of Theosophical and Occult societies, each with its devoted adherents, its contradictory and inconsistent doctrines, yet all using the same terms. How did all these come into being?

Through Theosophical misconceptions of the Fundamental Principles, and consequent misapplications, mentally, morally, and physically. Through students who were *sure of themselves*, who "too soon fancied themselves a thing apart from the mass." *Occult Failures* are the originators of every sect, of every creed, of every heresy, now the same as in all former times. It was of such that H.P.B. once wrote, in the words of an English poet:

I found them blind; I taught them how to see,
And now they neither know themselves nor me.

NATURE OF MIND

Mind is a name given to the sum of the states of Consciousness grouped under Thought, Will, and Feeling. During deep sleep, ideation ceases on the physical plane, and memory is in abeyance; thus for the time-being "Mind is not," because the organ, through which the Ego manifests ideation and memory on the material plane, has temporarily ceased to function. A noumenon can become a phenomenon on any plane of existence only by manifesting on that plane through an appropriate basis or vehicle; and during the long night of rest called Pralaya, when all the existences are dissolved, the "UNIVERSAL MIND" remains as a permanent possibility of mental action, or as that abstract absolute thought, of which mind is the concrete relative manifestation.—*Secret Doctrine*.

PERSONAL ISOLATION

THE art of living is the adjustment of human relations. Whether aware of the fact or not, all men and women are studying this art. In the school of life are many grades, and every human being is included in one or another of them; but even if in the same grade, no two pupils are alike—each has his own particular relation, to the school itself, to the grade in which he is at present enrolled, and especially to his fellow-students.

For the school, as an institution, has no validity; without the pupils it would have no existence whatever. That is why life—its purpose and meaning—is so little understood, so vague when thought about at all, to most people. Seeing merely a multitude of unorganized and undirected beings, they do not grasp the underlying fact that human existence *is* a school—one school—with millions of Souls—fellow-students—in attendance. Thus, living separatively, personally, they lack orientation; and quite without the faintest trace of “school spirit,” the undertone of their personal meditation is *loneliness*.

The school of life itself presents no new developments. The art of living has not changed and does not change. Human nature is just the same now as it was millions of years ago; the “qualities” in Nature are permanent—hence the qualities in human nature. Every grade in the school is unvarying in its curriculum—the scope of evolution in this “day” is fixed, as a result of the accomplishment of previous “days.” What is the cause, then, of the vast seeming variation in human experience?

It is due to the fact that no two pupils are alike. The units in the school are the variants: not the school, the grades, the curriculum, the opportunities for experience and growth. Every unit, because he is himself and no other, sees the common lot from his own particular angle of vision—the result of his own unique combination of qualities. So the very same spectacle, or grouping of conditions, looks different to every perceiver—peering out through his self-acquired instrument—and thus arises his feeling that his own situation and problem are unlike those of any other being.

They are not; and they are. They are the same; but *he* makes them different.

Would not his intense feeling of separateness and isolation, and the corresponding “natural” selfishness in thought and action which it engenders, melt away if the demonstrable truth of the foregoing were even partially realized? Indeed it would! With it would depart loneliness—to be replaced by a growing sense of mutual identity, and the commonalty of the task in which all beings are engaged.

Students of Theosophy are not immune from loneliness. To whatever causes it may be attributed by the student, the genesis of his loneliness is to be found in an application of these considerations of the philosophy. Further logical applications of the same will *banish* it! Once reason it out, and nobody, under any circumstances whatever, need feel lonely any more—unless he enjoys loneliness, as some people “enjoy” poor health, or “martyrdom,” or “sacrifice”—play-acting to themselves as audience, and thus securing a vicarious satisfaction and sop to their own vanity by basking in self-applause!

Somebody writes: “As a Theosophist I am all alone here; nobody in the town, so far as I know, is interested.” There is a “lonely” note in this—but make the application: If this student realized that there are literally thousands of his fellow-students in similar cases, a community of interest would thereupon be set up, “school-spirit” would be felt, and loneliness would disappear. Out of this expansion of the nature, forces of attraction would arise, and fellow-students—embryo or otherwise—would inevitably be found where before none seemed to be. If this appears fanciful, let any such student try it! Fulfilling the conditions is a precedent to the observation of any experiment; results will then take care of themselves—and they will be unmistakable.

Another says: “The opposition of my family to Theosophic teachings is such that even in association with those nearest and dearest I feel that I am all alone.” This is the common lot; practically every student who has taken up the study of Theosophy while still living the family life in this incarnation has met in some degree this same condition. Here again, there are thousands of them. Let the “lonely” student realize this, and he is no more alone wherever he is, or with whomsoever; and he will find that his changed attitude—his confidence, courage, at-ease-ness—will soon make itself felt among some of the opposers. They will want to know about this study which has made such a change for the better in him, and begin to investigate for themselves—as is quite often the way that families “come into Theosophy”—not as families, but first one member and then another. When conditions remain obdurate, Karma usually steps in to change them—naturally.

“I am unduly retiring, I guess, and I don’t seem to get acquainted with others in the Lodge—they don’t pay any attention to me.” Thus another student, so blessed by Karma that he can avail himself of active association and study with a definite group of students. This is separative! Oh shy and modest one, there are tens of thousands of others just like you; thus, they are easy, very easy, to find—you probably sat between two of them at your Lodge meeting last evening! It is the common lot: everybody who has any sense of relativity at all feels shy and modest and retiring in the face of

the stupendous realities of Theosophy, its immense scope, its universal purpose. Students who are not "retiring" either become that way, if sincere, or are those who have forced themselves to fraternize and take an active part—not because they personally wanted to, but because they *impersonally* realized the necessity, by application of the considerations aforementioned. Thus one "promotes" himself to another grade in the school, by replacing his interest in himself with an active interest in others. *Noblesse oblige!*

In similar ways more applications can be made, by any student anywhere, to meet any condition or set of conditions. Nobody is alone; the conditions *are* the same everywhere. The variants are the students themselves—the beings who have made and must meet the conditions. The apparent differences are only that—a seeming.

"What room is there for sorrow and what room for doubt in him who knows that the Self is one, and that all things are the Self, only differing in degree."

RECOGNITION OF ADEPTS

Very few Christians understand, if indeed they know anything at all, of the Jewish Theology. The *Talmud* is the darkest of enigmas even for most Jews, while those Hebrew scholars who do comprehend it do not boast of their knowledge. Their kabalistic books are still less understood by them; for in our days more Christian than Jewish students are engrossed in the elimination of their great truths. How much less is definitely known of the Oriental, or the universal Kabala! Its adepts are few; but these heirs elect of the sages who first discovered "the starry truths which shone on the great Shemaïa of the Chaldean lore" have solved the "absolute" and are now resting from their grand labor. They cannot go beyond that which is given to mortals of this earth to know; and no one, not even these elect, can trespass beyond the line drawn by the finger of the Divinity itself. Travelers have met these adepts on the shores of the sacred Ganges, brushed against them in the silent ruins of Thebes, and in the mysterious deserted chambers of Luxor. Within the halls upon whose blue and golden vaults the weird signs attract attention, but whose secret meaning is never penetrated by the idle gazers, they have been seen but seldom recognized. Historical memoirs have recorded their presence in the brilliantly illuminated *salons* of European aristocracy. They have been encountered again on the arid and desolate plains of the Great Sahara, as in the caves of Elephantia. They may be found everywhere, but make themselves known only to those who have devoted their lives to unselfish study, and are not likely to turn back.—*Isis Unveiled*.

SELF-EXAMINATION

THERE are two kinds of knowledge which aid us—our own experiences and those of others. There are misunderstood experiences which when recorded bring false or semi-true philosophies and religions into being. Our own experiences cause us to formulate our own philosophy and produce our own character. In both cases, misunderstood experiences, on any plane of existence, beget pain and suffering.

Shruti, Holy Writ or Revealed Knowledge, and *Smriti*, memorized or acquired knowledge, are constantly referred to in the Vedic Theosophy. Like other spiritual concepts the true import of these is now misinterpreted. In this phenomenon the student of history will find the rise and growth of exoteric creedal religions. Revelation has its true and false aspects, just as acquired knowledge has its. False ideas memorized or right knowledge forgotten are verily wombs of pain. Thus also, revelations based on recorded personal experiences, inconsistent in themselves or inconsistent with universal and impersonal records of immemorial experiences, when followed beget disastrous results.

The strength of character and the mental integrity to examine our own experiences and those of others in an impersonal way are the very concomitants of the spiritual life. Such phrases as "to follow in the footsteps of the Predecessors," "to be willingly obedient to the behests of a guru," are misconstrued by many students of Theosophy—such alas! is the power of old habits and of the spell cast by race-beliefs.

It's always a fruitful hour to reflect on how much each one of us loses by the non-memorizing of our myriad experiences. Just as people read scores of books nowadays but fail to profit by their contents, due to inattentive perusal and indiscriminate acceptance or rejection of thoughts therein presented, so also most of us pass through marvelous experiences but most of the time are unaware of the fact. Not to speak of the experiences of the Ego during the period of bodily sleep, of which most humans are totally oblivious, the experiences of this our waking conscious life mostly sink into the abyss of forgetfulness.

If we could remember all that we experience, we would be amazed at the knowledge we possess. At present our ignorance continually strikes us as of abysmal depth. Analysis and reflection will unveil to each one of us the truth that the memory of our experiences and the knowledge we possess are related, and the measure of the one is the gauge of the other. *False memory does not wholly consist of non-remembrance but of false remembrance, i.e., experiences misunderstood to such an extent that our memory is charged*

with that misunderstanding. Here is a very potent cause of a large number of actions which unconsciously to their authors produce troubles for themselves and others. False knowledge is worse than ignorance; misunderstood experiences are of greater danger than any through which we pass and know not that we have done so. How compassionate are the laws of Mother Nature—she casts her invisible veil over the major portion of the manifested universe, giving us time to master the palpable and the revealed!

Shruti or Recorded Knowledge of fully understood experiences, *i.e.*, experiences of *all* perfected men, should be memorized—such is the ancient teaching. Nowadays only a verbal memory thereof is practised, which, of course, is better than no memory at all. The study of our Theosophical philosophy should be regarded in this light. The memorizing of its *ideas*, fundamentals and principles, not only widens our universe of discourse and makes our minds truly liberal; it also provides clues and keys to the meaning of events and occurrences in our lives which are mostly sealed for us. The right performance of congenital duties, the appreciation of their real values, the understanding of their true and inner significance depend wholly on our ability to make correct application of Theosophical doctrines. Spiritual growth is dependent on this. Books read and words memorized will be forgotten; but ideas memorized through application become faculties and add to the storehouse of power we already possess.

Our proverbial short memory is but expressive of the dearth of spirituality in our midst. Practical Theosophy teaches the examination of all our deeds—mental or moral, verbal or physical; why these were performed and how is rarely asked. Instinctual and impulsive actions greatly outnumber intellectual and reasoned ones, because the actor has not the habit of self-examination. Foreknowledge is absent in us because we have not formed the habit of considering retrospectively all our performances. It is due to the same curious aberration of the human mind which is hoping for eternal immortality in the future, without the faintest effort at recognizing the immortality of the eternal past. Also, many students of Theosophy strenuously desire to remember previous lives or dream experiences but are quaintly thoughtless of the experiences of this their waking existence.

To *understand* our daily experiences we require Theosophic Knowledge; but how many of us go through those experiences and fail to relate them to our Theosophical teachings? We have to remedy this and the prescription for the fatal spiritual disease is—*Self-examination*. Every species of spiritual disease is caused by the deadly microbe of No-Self-Examination. This results in the loss of real memory which as the *Gita* puts it is veritably “the loss of all.”

The conflict of duties is caused by the conflict of memories. Our dual nature, higher and lower, is composed on the one hand of

experiences correctly memorized and on the other of those which are the bundle of false memories, *i.e.*, misunderstood experiences. That which we call the devil in us is an inchoate, unintelligent mass of experiences which repeat themselves under the law of cycles in conflict with the spiritual, *i.e.*, harmonized and purposive, experiences intelligently memorized which also repeat themselves under the self-same law. The conflict of memories or experiences repeating themselves causes conflict of duties or Karmic reactions.

Spiritual failure arises because our true memory is overpowered in any given struggle by the false. Impulse does not stop to examine the purpose, the course, the necessity of its movement toward a desired goal. Reason, reflectively and creatively, undertakes this task; intuition is always purposeful and knows the way to its objective. Self-examination is the mode which stops impulsive action and slowly makes a channel for the flow of intuition. Reason is its chief weapon—analysis ever growing minute, criticism ever becoming more watchful of the lower group of false memories.

To go over all the events of our daily life, especially those which are dubbed trivial and commonplace and examine them in the light of our philosophy, is highly necessary. Instinctual, impulsive, intelligent, intuitional manifestations—all are old memories repeating themselves—good, bad or indifferent, each has its lesson for us. Because we did not learn from an experience, it comes back to us loaded with the weight of a missed opportunity and of previous heedlessness.

The condition of consciousness through which we are expected to learn is named *Waking* Consciousness, and the qualities of wakefulness, watchfulness, attentiveness, alertness, should be its chief characteristic. Instinctual and impulsive actions are really rooted in dream consciousness—subjective and personal. Contact with the objective universe is designed to take us to the Impersonal State called the Universal Self. Therefore all spiritual progress is dependent on Waking Consciousness or earth life. Two streams migrate from beyond to make up our waking life—the spiritual perceptions, intuitive and intelligent, and the material movements, instinctual and impulsive. Our organs of sense and of action, *i.e.*, our body, becomes the playground of these dual forces. Our task is to order our waking life into a harmonious whole. Self-examination leads to purification of body and mind, waking and dream states of consciousness. Thus the two mix and mingle—the personal becomes the vehicle of the impersonal individual, while Buddhi is on the way to becoming an active agent here.

A DIALOGUE ON FAITH

HOUSEHOLDER: O reverend Sage, my way is weary, and among my burdens there is none harder to be borne than my loss of faith in human nature. In no one even of my household have I met with other than disappointment, greed, ingratitude, and betrayal of the trust I have reposed in now one, and then another, who has misunderstood the offering of my heart. Is there way I may be assured that somewhere, to someone, there may be given faith which will rest stable as yon mountain peaks?

The Sage: E'en yon mountain peaks, my Friend, will sometime pass away, dip beneath the ocean's brim, as will those persons that have dishonored thee drop from their place in the scene now limned before thine eye. But, 'tis only the foolish man who places his faith and trust in *persons*, however near or fair. Canst be thou would cherish but a mask in place of the Man himself, in place of the Soul that discards one mask but to assume another? Human nature is not to *be* trusted: this the Wise of all the ages know.

Householder: Alas, I can not live in such despair of all those who surround me! I shall go mad. Better a false faith than none at all, so long I have thought; but even this cold comfort fails me in the end.

The Sage: 'Tis not the end, but the beginning, Comrade. To gain true faith, one must renounce his old false faiths. That faith is wronged is sign and surety of its true existence and of its noble usance.

Householder: Thy words are as a blessing and as a promise unto me. Tell me more fully, that this hope which stirs in me may know fulfilment. May I, then, have true faith in thee?

The Sage: Not e'en in me, howe'er more justly than in those who have hitherto wronged thee sore. I, too, have a human nature. I, as a person, have mine own path to take—a path obscure to all others but myself—a path on which save to myself dark clouds may often seem to rest. Couldst thou rely on one, think you, now praised, and then cast off by all thy fellows?

Householder: Some mystery lies here. There *is* that in thee I could trust beyond all clouds, beyond all the evils that might encompass thee. Always would I know that thou wert true. But there is naught I have to make thee richer; no knowledge of mine could make thee wiser; no love of mine could add unto thy happiness. And so, as I fear not that thou couldst advantage thyself of what is mine, I may give freely of my love and faith to thee.

The Sage: But in that free giving, I do partake richly of all thou hast! In that free and undemanded faith, thou partakest of the

deep waters of Faith itself—that shoreless faith, which is in the heart of every being, without which no being could sustain his life. To something, higher, nobler than his human nature, every being gives his faith. Come Comrade, dost thou truly trust thine *own* human nature?

Householder: Dost ask me? No. How could I? Every day unworthy thoughts and deeds spring from it. I see. I see! I can not trust, I can not have faith in human nature, for that I too, am not trustworthy; I do not have faith in myself.

The Sage: One further step wilt, then, thou take? There is That in every human being to be trusted—That which stands behind his human nature, the Witness, the Spectator, the Knower, the Judge, the Avenger of every thought and deed—noble or ignoble, pure or vile. *That* may be trusted. In *That* all Faith resides and comes to rest. It is the Power which is exhaustless and eternal, the Power at any time to take a better course, when the old is exhausted, when the old has brought defeat, disgrace. However much my friend may betray me, I can have faith that some day, somewhere, he will repair the evil done to me and to all beings, however long ago. *That* is impartial; *That* expects nothing; *That* can not be added to nor taken from; It ever is, the Source of Faith.

Householder: That, then in thee I trust. Thou art *That*. Knowing *That* in Thee, now I can have faith to see It in my fellows.

The Sage: Yea, It is in every one. And if one uses thee despitefully another day, know through thine own human nature how a God is crucified in His. That God, that Self, is to be trusted—not the human nature which ever seeks to lure and blind. Nor shouldst thou close thine eyes as thou walkest among human pitfalls. Deal with human nature as thou findest it, and from the similitude found in thyself. The betrayals of all the world can not affect the One Reality and thy Faith supreme. Its just Law may be trusted to right every wrong in this great Universe.

Householder: The more they do betray, the more they need of this knowledge thou has disclosed to me?

The Sage: How canst thou *not* live, Comrade, till thou hast passed on this mighty Hope, till thine own Faith is full established, till thine own Compassion for sinful human nature is complete?

Householder: I give thee, O Sage, my gratitude and my life.

AMONG FRIENDS

THE long expected has happened—the mantle of the “fundamentalist” has fallen upon our shrinking shoulders! The only surprise consists in that it hath not befallen long ere this. 'Tis but the logical substitute for the epithets of “dogmatic” and “intolerant” which have been our daily food for, lo, these many years. Follows the history of the battle:

We had with us on the fated evening one Mr. Peregrine, who is by way of being an old Blavatsky student. No one recollects just how the occasion arose, but Mr. Peregrine remarked:

“I have followed and admired your work for the cause of Theosophy so long that it strikes me very painfully to see you adopting a policy which is certain to alienate just that class which you ought, in the best interests of Theosophy, to go out of your way to placate.”

“Yes? Would you mind specifying?” requested Mr. Browser.

“Why this carping and critical ‘fundamentalist’ attitude towards science?” replied the visitor. “The day is over when scientific truth can be criticized in the name of religion; and such a course will simply drive away from you all tolerant and broad-minded people.”

“Yes,” growled Captain Blunt, “I know the sort—a set of doubtful-minded ego-centric sophists, forever loudly ‘seeking the truth’ and forever in deadly fear of finding it. They will study Theosophy—or rather read the books—and be quite patronizingly friendly towards it as long as it is trimmed down to suit their tastes. But as for doing anything about it—or for it—well, hardly!”

Now, the family, being a bit “fed up” with that large class of “students” who are constitutionally incapable of having convictions and therefore resent such in others, greeted this barrage with considerable hidden glee; but in the interests of social amenities, the Judge retired the Captain into echelon with a look, and took up the campaign on another line.

“As for instance?” said he.

“Well,” remarked our somewhat ruffled guest, “the most flagrant example I can call to mind is an item in June ‘Lookout.’ The writer there uses the ‘Heaviside Layer’ as a rather flimsy peg for hanging a bald statement that scientific instruments cannot give us anything but illusions in regard to the outer universe. He says that since the Heaviside Layer is highly ionized, it affects the light rays coming from inter-stellar space, and entirely perverts the perceptions arrived at through them. Now, if that kind of statement is to be tolerated, we may just as well throw away all our scientific instruments and go back to the Middle Ages, with the *Secret Doctrine* substituting for the Holy Writ. H. P. Blavatsky was

critical enough of science, but hers was always *fair* criticism. She always had the facts to show and never fell back upon a simple denial of actual observations."

At this juncture the Doctor, who takes especial interest in "Lookout," deployed his battalions.

"Your argument," said he, "is well expressed. There is nothing wrong with it except its major and minor premises and its logic."

"I beg your pardon?" said the visitor, with frigid politeness.

"Well," said the Doctor, "in the first place, the writer of the item did not say that the Heaviside Layer in itself had anything to do with the illusionary nature of the perceptions. In the second place, he did not state his thesis as a fact, but put it forward as a possibility, or probability. Don't you think that criticism of a statement should only be undertaken as a result of a *careful* reading of it? In the third place, H. P. Blavatsky said exactly the same thing in more definite terms."

"Where did H.P.B. ever say that scientific observations were illusionary?" asked Mr. Peregrine, somewhat belligerently.

"Just a moment," said Mr. Browser, reaching into the bookcase, "I think I can settle that. If you will turn to page 530, Vol. I, of the *Secret Doctrine*, you will find that she says: 'Solar "flames" seen through telescopes are *reflections*, says Occultism.'

"On page 597 of the same volume, she says: ' "*The essence of cometary matter and of that which composes the stars is totally different from any of the chemical or physical characteristics with which Western Science is now acquainted. While the spectroscope has shown the probable similarity (owing to the chemical action of terrestrial light upon the intercepted rays) of earthly and sidereal substance, the chemical actions, peculiar to the variously progressed orbs of space, have not been detected, nor proven to be identical with those observed on our own planet*"—say the Teachers. Mr. Crookes says almost the same in the fragment quoted from his lecture, "*Elements and Meta-Elements.*" '

"Again on page 604 of Volume I, we find: 'When, therefore, the *Secret Doctrine*—postulating that conditioned or limited space (location) has no real being except in this world of illusion, or, in other words, in our perceptive faculties—teaches that every one of the higher, as of the lower worlds, is interblended with our own objective world; that millions of things and beings are, in point of localization, around us and *in* us, as we are around, with, and in them; it is no metaphysical figure of speech, but a sober fact in Nature, however incomprehensible to our senses.' "

"I don't care *who* makes such statements," almost snapped Mr. Peregrine. "They are simply a denial of observed facts and a demand to throw out of court every possible means of achieving definite and provable knowledge."

"In that case," said the Judge serenely, "I suggest you take up your quarrel with the men of science themselves, Einstein in particular, whose entire theory is the mathematical demonstration—or at least supposed to be such—of the fallacy of all our physical perceptions and some of the mental. And I think there are a few others. Is your notebook handy, Captain?"

"On tap," said the addressee. "For instance, if you will look up *Science* for September the 7th, 1923, you will find that the famous scientist Painlève suspects that the movement of the earth and stars in space is pure fallacy, and Prof. Archibald Henderson asks, 'Are we *all* indeed the victim of some strange fallacy?' Then if you will look up the *Monist* for July, 1923, and study the Nichols experiments, you will find some pretty good evidence that *nothing* is likely to be what it seems, through whatever mode of perception it may arrive. If you will also delve into the *Scientific American*, for November, 1924, you will find the following: 'Are the things about us real or are they illusions? Philosophers disagree. They admit that we cannot be sure. What we see as rocks and trees and houses may be merely imperfect reflections of some ultimate reality that men do not perceive.'

"It seems to me, Mr. Peregrine, that your attitude, logically carried out, not only denies us the privilege of discussing scientific discoveries adversely, but forbids us repeating what men of science themselves say. That is what I call being 'more Catholic than the Pope!' Moreover and besides, if you had thought a little over the paragraph criticized and noted that the statement reads, 'it may be discovered,' you would have had to deduce that the writer gave science credit for ultimately being able to *make* the discovery and rectify its own illusions."

The critic, slightly nonplussed, backed and filled for a moment and finally said, "Well, perhaps I did go off 'half-cocked' on that particular item; but really, you will have to admit that the 'Among Friends' article which claimed that there is land at the North Pole, directly in the face of scientific discovery, went much too far!"

"Well, Mr. Peregrine," said Mr. Browser, "I am not so sure that a little of the careful reading heretofore mentioned, would not have been in order to apply to said article as well. I think you will find that no one was asked or urged to the same belief. And, if one party, while expressing a firm conviction, likewise stands up for every one else's right to his own conviction, however adverse, and another party denies the right of the party of the first part to believe as he pleases—on whose side does the 'fundamentalism' lie?"

"But—well," said Mr. Peregrine, "you can hardly expect the public to be able to understand such fine distinctions."

"Evidently not," laughed the Doctor, "when even very intelligent students have such a tendency toward—well, let us call it 'hasty reading.'"

"Well, Captain," said the Judge, "just as a matter of interest what do *you* think of this polar question?"

"You can search me," replied the man of war, for once, and for a wonder, without a prompt and uncompromising decision. "I have sometimes thought that the statements did not necessarily carry that interpretation, although they do seem pretty plain. Personally, I don't see the slightest reason for arguing over the matter until final proof comes to hand."

"Especially," added the Doctor, "in view of the fact that the numerous 'friends' of Theosophy, who are forever preparing a retreat before the battle has joined, just on the possibility that 'some of the teachings may not be substantiated,' have never yet had occasion to put their plans into effect. I remind me of many a time in my youthful days, when statements in the *Secret Doctrine* caused me weary hours of agonized solicitude; but I lived to learn. Who knows but some of us will see the end of this polar riddle as well?"

"That, I think," said the Judge, "will depend far more than some may think on the progress of Theosophy and the loyalty of its students."

"What is the connection, Judge?" asked Mr. Browser.

"Well, just as a matter of personal opinion, I would say that the knowledge obtainable by the race—I mean *real* knowledge as distinguished from the mere massing of physical classifications—depends chiefly upon its moral condition. Things are not what they seem, and the keenest intellect, devoid of a moral basis, has infinite power to create illusions for itself, however seemingly based those illusions may be upon physical facts, so-called. Needless to say, if Theosophy is made the hand-maiden of science by its would-be friends, and trimmed and emasculated to pander to scientific—or rather pseudo-scientific, opinion, for *real* scientists are not quite as cocksure as their followers—Theosophy will gradually degenerate into a religion, without having fulfilled its mission, without having corrected the mental and moral atmosphere of the world to any effective degree."

All of which gave the Family furiously to think, as the guest departed politely—almost too politely.

LIVING THE LIFE

DEAR COMPANIONS:

You have the right attitude, I believe, and as time goes on more and more light will come and other steps appear. It is just to keep moving, with face turned in the right direction. Masters do not elect their disciples; the disciples elect to serve, and thus constitute themselves disciples to the extent of the completeness of their self-abnegation and service.

"I produce myself among creatures" has reference to voluntary and conscious incarnations of high spiritual beings—avatars, saviours of the people—including not only the incarnation itself but the influence of a spiritual kind that attends the being. What brings such? The *Gita* says that They come "whenever there is an insurrection of vice and injustice in the world." There is an analogy between this and what was hinted about earthquakes by William Q. Judge, who wrote at the time of an earthquake that some soul of use had been born. It is possible that such events conjoin. No doubt but that the energy thrown out by masses of men could produce disturbances affecting the earth itself and bringing into birth patriotic souls whose powers and knowledge will come into play in the mental and physical conditions produced. Local disturbances affect the place disturbed and the people whose karma placed them at that point; there is also a general effect which is shared in different degrees by individuals at other places in the country, by the country as a whole and by the world in general. It is probable that while a destructive earthquake may have a defined field it may be the production of a general condition, finding expression at the "corroded" point.

You ask as to the nature and mission of the one called "Jesus." There is reason to think that the mission of the one called Jesus was a minor one, being in a falling cycle, and that it was not so much to disclose as to cover up the avenues to occult knowledge, so that the following times of the decadence of spirituality should not have dangerous weapons left for selfish, unprincipled and ignorant people to use; hence He accentuated the ethics. This does not say that the being known as Jesus was any inferior to the one known as Buddha; they might have been the same being, in reality. The statement is that the "missions" or efforts, were of a different nature because of the different cycles and peoples. It is and must be necessary for "those who know" to hide away dangerous knowledge at times, as well as to give it out when the time is ripe. "It is under cyclic law, during a dark period in the history of mind that the true philosophy disappears for a time, but the same law causes it to reappear as surely as the sun rises and the human mind is present to see it." We

cannot judge of the nature of any of these great incarnations to the extent of saying that one is superior to the other. We can see something of the nature of the cycle and people of any period, and hence obtain an idea of the difference in the missions.

With regard to cycles, there are of course wheels within wheels and no doubt there are smaller "waves" which in degree correspond to the larger ones, but we have not much on that line in the way of direct information except that there are cycles of differing lengths within the greater cycle of the precession of the equinox. There are several remarkable cycles that came to a close at the end of this century: first, the 5,000 years of the Kali-Yuga cycle; again, the Messianic cycle of the Samaritan and Kabbalistic Jews, of the man connected with Pisces. It is a cycle historic and not very long, but very occult, lasting about 2155 solar years, but having a true significance only when computed in lunar months. It occurred 2410 and 244 B.C. H.P.B. says, "When it enters in a few years the sign of Aquarius, psychologists will have some extra work to do, and the psychic idiosyncracies of the humanity will enter on a great change." From this it would appear that the Messianic cycle *closed* in 1897.

Allied to our period, if we consider that the quality of the cycle varies in importance, and, consequently, the degree of being needed at any time, we find the conjunction of the cycles above spoken of point to a most important period; consequently, important "beings"—which may give us a clue to what the Messengers H.P.B. and W.Q.J. really were. Other periods of less importance bring incarnations of probationary chelas who are on their trial.

There may be something in the above that will enable you to bring to expression what is as yet undefined; but, if not, it may open the door to other ideas and questions.

With best regards—R. C.

PSEUDO-THEOSOPHISTS

AMONG the many classes of enemies of Theosophy the most insidious belong to its own household. The risk which the Movement runs from this enemy within the camp is doubly great because he is more than often "sincere." He retains his place in the Movement through what to him are pure motives, honesty and earnestness. His is an unconscious treason.

The profound nature of the sacred Science and the Karma which has befallen its propagation; the precipitation of the Theosophical Movement according to the exact working of cycles; its power to draw within its fold different classes of individuals age after age; above all, the law of polarity whereby opposites and extremes meet and come into juxtaposition—all these attract to the Science of Theosophy and its Movement the good and the bad alike, drawing out the beneficence and the maleficence inherent in each;—all these clearly explain to the thoughtful student the true inwardness of those who calling themselves Theosophists are the insidious enemies of Theosophy and the Movement.

As the cycle runs its course the work of studying and propagating real Theosophy is becoming more complex, especially as the enemy within the camp has the advantage of the growing interest in Theosophy and Occultism on the part of a public as yet unable in its ignorance to distinguish the true from the false and erroneous.

Let us consider some of the more serious species of this class of enemy of Theosophy, defining "enemy" as one who calls himself Theosophist, but trading on the knowledge and influence of H.P.B. exploits them for his own purpose, often in amazing unconsciousness of the same.

FIRST, there are people who "correct" and "improve" on the Message of the Masters as recorded in the writings of H. P. Blavatsky. (In passing we might mention a similar treatment meted out in a recently published Spanish translation of Mr. Judge's *Ocean of Theosophy*.) They begin on the side of form—language construction, arrangement of foot-notes and paragraphs, etc., and end by altering the very soul of her writings. Ideas which sound incorrect to them because not understood, facts which puzzle them, being outside their range of perception, undergo alteration as well as subtraction.

NEXT, follow attempts to improve on the Message itself. Profound metaphysical concepts misunderstood, and others not understood at all, tempt this second class to make up a simple presentation of the philosophy, regardless of accuracy. Beginning with the laudable task of translating for popular usage the profound writings of H.P.B., in their haste to serve the public they do not give themselves

sufficient time to understand the philosophy. They fall prey to their own hereditary tendencies and judge H.P.B.'s statements from the standpoint of their own knowledge, experience and consciousness. Thus has come into existence in a great number of books, manuals, and pamphlets, teachings as different from those of H.P.B. as is night from day. In some cases this has been admitted and explained away thus: H.P.B. was chela and medium alternately; part of her writings are therefore incorrect; that part which is correct is again to be divided into two—that which came direct from the Masters, and that which she, as a chela, herself gave out. Some of these writers claim superior knowledge, to have reached *greater* spiritual elevation than H.P.B. herself. Thousands prove their lack of discrimination and judgment by a blind acceptance of these numerous books, without any comparison of their contents with those of *Isis Unveiled* or *The Secret Doctrine* or *The Key to Theosophy*.

THIRD come the so-called "teachers" of Theosophy who claim to continue the work of transmitting the message of the Masters. They affirm the greatness and the profundity of H.P.B.'s writings, but add that fifty years have so changed the thought of the world that the very Masters of H.P.B. or Their Colleagues and Brothers are giving out additional information and knowledge. Such people publish volumes over their own name but openly or privately claim close acquaintanceship with Adepts and Mahatmas, and to be inspired by them. These books are different from those in Class II, for they do not often write of the same matters and subjects treated by H.P.B. but profess to deal out information on more recondite or practical themes!

FOURTH, the notion of a "next messenger" and of a "successor" of H.P.B. goes a step further. Some even go so far as to write of a "coming Christ" and so on; others to publish additional Stanzas of Dzyan and invented articles over the signatures of H.P.B. and her Masters. They claim communication with H.P.B. and say that she is giving out through them new and additional teachings.

FIFTHLY, there are "theosophists" who believe and think and teach *differently* from H.P.B. but *in her name* without committing themselves in public print or from public platforms. They argue that "if H.P.B. were present now and here this is how she would feel and behave—we have good reasons for saying this"—!

All these five classes are very dangerous to the Cause of Theosophy and the Masters. They flourish mostly on the devotion of their respective followers. They mis-lead the general public and especially that portion of it which is just beginning to inquire into Theosophy.

What is the remedy? It is a matter that deeply concerns every true student of the Wisdom Religion as recorded in its purity by H.P.B. THEOSOPHY invites the views and suggestions of its readers.

THEOSOPHY SCHOOL

If Sun thou canst not be, then be the humble planet. Aye, if thou art debarred from flaming like the noon-day Sun upon the snow-capped mount of purity eternal, then choose, O Neophyte, a humbler course.

Point out the "Way"—however dimly, and lost among the host—as does the evening star to those who tread their path in darkness.

. . . Give light and comfort to the toiling pilgrim, and seek out him who knows still less than thou; who in his wretched desolation sits starving for the bread of Wisdom and the bread which feeds the shadow, without a Teacher, hope, or consolation, and—let him hear the Law.

—*The Voice of the Silence.*

THIS is the great teaching that service of our fellowmen, help to those who come in our contact, is the way not only to happiness but also to progress, to growth, to evolution. The example given is that of the sun and the planets and the stars. Appearances often mislead people in trying to discover the meaning of things; for instance, if you look at the heavens, you find that certain stars are very bright, that the sun outshines all the stars. You find that the planets are brighter even than some of the stars. Yet when you begin to study astronomy you find the planets have little light of their own, that they shine by the borrowed light that comes from the sun, while less shining stars, or those that do not *appear* to shine as brightly as the planets, shine by their own light. The light is, then, inherent in them. They do not look big to us compared to the planets or sun because they are far away; because the distance between us and the sun is not so great as the distance between us and the stars.

Now the stars are like great Masters, great Spiritual teachers. They shine by their own inherent light; others shine, though they may look great, by the borrowed light of the sun and the stars. But all of us are learning to shine by our own light. Therefore if we cannot shine like the sun in all its brilliance and splendor, we have to learn to shine like planets. If we cannot shine yet by our own light, because it is obscured, obscured by the matter which we know as mind-matter, which we know as body-matter, which we know as feelings—if that light of the Spirit which we are does not show itself in us, what do we do? We try to catch hold of such spiritual light as comes from the great Stars and reflect that. And as we practise shining even by borrowed light of the Spirit, of the Philosophy, the Science of Truth, Theosophy, we gradually become clean, pure, in our mind, moral nature, in our sense and bodily nature, till presently our own spiritual, luminous, radiant, bright Self will shine, as in the case of the Masters—Spiritual Stars.

How is it that this light is to be made radiant in ourselves? This book says, why, by doing our daily duties. It is not by doing

something out of the way, something that is extraordinary; but it is the doing of the little things of life continuously, in what we call daily drudgery. Daily drudgery gives us the opportunity to make our light shine in doing all the little duties of every day work. In the following of the path of duties, as we work at all our little things of daily life, as we come in contact with men and women who are like ourselves, we begin to learn and teach, we begin to establish a friendly, a kindly, a helpful relationship with all. Following the wheel of duty, following the path of duty, we begin to see what is the wrong kind of action which we have done, what is the right kind of action which we have done. But knowledge of that does not help us unless the result of that knowledge is put into practice in the daily living. It is through the doing of duties that the spiritual light begins to shine in us.

At the present moment, in some, it is the light of the body; in some, it is the light of the mind that shines; in others it is the light of the moral goodness that shines. In the Masters it is the light of the Spiritual Nature that shines and illumines the mind, moral nature, and bodily nature. We have to get at the view—to do the things not with the help of the moral and mental nature alone, but with the help of the soul within. For the performances of *all* action we must know that we are souls, not bodies, not minds, not our moral natures and aspirations. We shine on our natures as souls. The moment we know that, all difficulties, all pain, all troubles go away, because we see pain, trouble, difficulties, as ways of learning the Great Truth, ways of helping people and things, which we come near to. We have to learn to shine by our own spiritual light within us, and by doing good action, in every day—not now and then, not once in a year, not once in six months, not once a week, but in all the daily little things of life—to remember that we are souls, and act as souls: that is the way of growth, and therefore of happiness.

FORESIGHT AND HINDSIGHT

Sometimes, under pressure of temptation, by way of experiment, or what-not, we embark upon a course which the philosophy tells us is against the law, perhaps smothering conscience with the belief that we see the karma and are prepared to pay the price.

But we are willing to pay only such portion as we see before the bill is presented; a minor part. For in the price is contained remorse and regret, which no man can experience in advance.

Thus we lie to ourselves about our willingness to pay the price, and find ourselves out too late.

MAHATMAS AND CHELAS

Summer of 1884. The Theosophical Society in its tenth year. The work in India in its sixth. H.P.B. and Olcott in Europe, Judge new landed in India, after meeting the two Founders in Paris. In India the Coulombs just expelled from the Society by the "Council" after months of mutual animosities. The Scottish Church missionaries plotting with the Coulombs the "exposure" to wreck the Society in ruining the repute of H.P.B. for simple honesty and sincerity. Mr. Hume, still nominally within the Society's fold, stirring the bitter broth of doubt, disaffection, envies, jealousies and hatreds. In London the violence of personal rivalries for leadership, the London Lodge membership split into two factions more interested in the success of their party than in Theosophy. The Society for Psychical Research being engineered by C. C. Massey, Stainton Moses ("M.A., Oxon.") and Professor F. W. H. Myers into an ostensibly impartial and scientific investigation of "the theosophical phenomena." Mr. Sinnett and Col. Olcott, completely deceived, eager to forward the S.P.R. inquiry. Mrs. Laura C. Holloway, Miss Francesca Arundale and Mohini Chatterji, tossed about like chips on troubled waters, yet still striving to be or become "Chelas" and to "receive communications from the Masters," afterwards to be embodied in "Man—Fragments of Forgotten History." All London "Society" agog over the new nine-day's-wonder. Mr. Sinnett, full of suspicions of H.P.B., sure some of her Messages were fraudulent, yet full of faith in the "Master" and trying to get "messages" behind H.P.B.'s back through anyone and everyone he thought might be "sensitive." Stainton Moses and Mr. Massey, foiled, sore, and angered because the Messages they had been favored with through H.P.B. discountenanced Spiritualism, Mediumship, and all their works, were priming their guns to "expose" H.P.B. through the medium of the S.P.R. Scarce a soul in London interested in the *laws* of all psychic phenomena, in the study of *philosophy*, in the *practice* of Universal Brotherhood—one and all those interested in the Theosophical Society in any way, sure of themselves, their eligibility and desirability as recipients of "favors from the Mahatmas."

A year before, while the mad rush was on in India, H.P.B. had published "Chelas and Lay Chelas." Now, with India in a ferment and London in a fever as the result of indiscriminate publicity, indiscriminate lust for "Chelaship," indiscriminate efforts at forcing of the Gates which never yet have opened but from within, the time was come to sound in the penetrating clarity of Truth the simple unbending facts, so that all save the fool and the madman might hear and understand. So, in *The Theosophist* for July, 1884, she inserted as the opening article, "Mahatmas and Chelas," reproduced below. Names have changed since 1884, other Egos are in incarnation, other personalities now walk the boards, but human nature now is the same as in 1884—or a million years ago. Hence "Mahatmas and Chelas" is as presently and imperishably true and applicable as ever. For those who have read "The Mahatma Letters to A. P. Sinnett," "The Letters of H. P. Blavatsky to A. P. Sinnett," and "The Theosophical Movement," and for all others this brief prologue to the mighty drama now in its forty-second year, may somewhat serve in understanding and application of the past to the present.

A MAHATMA is a personage, who, by special training and education, has evolved those higher faculties and has attained that spiritual knowledge, which ordinary humanity will acquire after passing through numberless series of re-incarnations during the process of cosmic evolution, provided, of course, that they do not go, in the meanwhile, against the purposes of Nature and thus bring on their own annihilation. This process of the self-evolution of the MAHATMA extends over a number of "incarnations," although, comparatively speaking, they are very few. Now, what is it that incarnates? The occult doctrine, so far as it is given out, shows that the first three principles die more or less with what is called the physical death. The fourth principle, together with the lower portions of the fifth, in which reside the animal propensities, has *Kama Loka* for its abode, where it suffers the throes of disintegration in proportion to the intensity of those lower desires; while it is the higher *Manas*, the pure man, which is associated with the sixth and the seventh principles, that goes into *Devachan* to enjoy there the effects of its good *Karma*, and then to be reincarnated as a higher individuality. Now, an entity, that is passing through the occult training in its successive births, gradually has less and less (in each incarnation) of that lower *Manas* until there arrives a time when its whole *Manas*, being of an entirely elevated character, is centred in the higher individuality, when such a person may be said to have become a MAHATMA. At the time of his physical death, all the lower four principles perish without any suffering, for these are, in fact, to him like a piece of wearing apparel which he puts on and off at will. The real MAHATMA is then not his physical body but that higher *Manas* which is inseparably linked to the *Atma* and its vehicle (the 6th principle)—a union effected by him in a comparatively very short period by passing through the process of self-evolution laid down by the Occult Philosophy. When, therefore, people express a desire to "see a MAHATMA," they really do not seem to understand what it is they ask for. How can they, by their physical eyes, hope to see that which *transcends* that sight? Is it the body—a mere shell or mask—they crave or hunt after? And supposing they see the body of a MAHATMA, how can they know that behind that mask is concealed an exalted entity? By what standard are they to judge whether the *Maya* before them reflects the image of a true MAHATMA or not? And who will say that the physical is not a *Maya*? Higher things can be perceived only by a sense pertaining to those higher things. And whoever therefore wants to see the real MAHATMA, must use his *intellectual* sight. He must so elevate his *Manas* that its perception will be clear and all mists created by *Maya* must be dispelled. His vision will then be bright and he will see the MAHATMAS wherever he may be, for, being merged into the sixth and the seventh principles, which are ubiquitous

and omnipresent, the MAHATMAS may be said to be everywhere. But, at the same time, just as we may be standing on a mountain top and have within our sight the whole plain, and yet not be cognisant of any particular tree or spot, because from that elevated position all below is nearly identical, and as our attention may be drawn to something which may be dissimilar to its surroundings—so in the same manner, although the whole of humanity is within the mental vision of the MAHATMAS, they cannot be expected to take special note of every human being, unless that being by his special acts draws their particular attention to himself. The highest interest of humanity, as a whole, is their special concern, for they have identified themselves with that Universal Soul which runs through Humanity, and he, who would draw their attention, must do so through that Soul which pervades everywhere. This perception of the *Manas* may be called "faith" which should not be confounded with *blind belief*. "Blind faith" is an expression sometimes used to indicate belief without perception or understanding; while the true perception of the *Manas* is that enlightened belief, which is the real meaning of the word "faith." This belief should at the same time be accompanied by *knowledge*, *i. e.*, experience, for "true *knowledge* brings with it faith." Faith is the perception of the *Manas* (the fifth principle), while knowledge, in the true sense of the term, is the capacity of the Intellect, *i. e.*, it is spiritual perception. In short, the higher individuality of man, composed of his higher *Manas*, the sixth and the seventh principles, should work as a unity, and then only can it obtain "divine wisdom," for divine things can be sensed only by divine faculties. Thus the desire, which should prompt one to apply for *chelaship*, is to so far understand the operations of the Law of Cosmic Evolution as will enable him to work in harmonious accord with Nature, instead of going against its purposes through ignorance.

DOES ATMA INCARNATE?*

Question—Is the seventh principle, the Atma, ever incarnated, or are our bodies simply projections of that principle and formed by it, as was the statue Galataea by Pygmalion? From some Theosophical books I gather that the seven principles are all incarnated from the beginning, and that each principle is evolved in turn. From others it would seem that the higher principles are never incarnated.

Answer—The fiction of the formation of Galataea by Pygmalion is such a faint and inadequate symbol or illustration that there is nothing to be gained by its use, as it will surely mislead. The evolution of the bodily form came about in the same way as that of all other forms; as said in the *Bhagavad-Gîtâ*, "All is due to the mystic power of self-ideation, the eternal thought in the eternal mind," and only in the sense that all forms are projections from the eternal can we say that "our bodies are projections of that principle" (Atma). The second sentence of the question shows that here is another case in which the very materialistic view of the sevenfold constitution of man given in *Esoteric Buddhism* and used by so many thereafter has resulted in inducing the notion that there is a separation between the so-called "principles." This idea of seven distinct things, entities, or principles in man ought to be abandoned, and is due almost wholly to erroneous nomenclature, as was strongly urged in several papers published in the *Path*. There can only be *one* principle, and all the rest are but aspects of it, or *vehicles* for it to work and manifest through. Therefore but the one principle is involved in generation, when it takes to itself six sheaths or vehicles, or shows itself under six aspects. But as it is Theosophic doctrine that this *one* principle—call it Atma—is in essence the Supreme, then its involution in matter is but partial. In order to understand nature and to reach self-consciousness, it is necessary that the six vehicles be found to work through, and what is meant in some Theosophical books by the statement that each "principle evolves in turn" is that from the beginning of a Manvantara the six material vehicles have to be evolved one after the other in due order and in correspondence with the rest of nature, none lagging behind and none ahead. For instance, at that period in evolution when we might assume that but one vehicle had been fully evolved, then man (so-called) would not be man as we know him. So we see in the *Secret Doctrine* that man, strictly as such, is not spoken of until several races or vehicles had been first fully evolved in due order and proportion.

From these considerations the old Hindu idea that what we see of man is but the inner (or outer) hard core—the material body—

**The Theosophical Forum*, August, 1890.

and that he, in fact, in his whole nature reaches even to the moon, would seem to gain some support. And I should incline to the opinion that Atma is never incarnated, but overshadows and shines into the being called man whom it has chosen to connect itself with.—*W.Q.J.*

EVIDENCES OF IMMORTALITY

Human nature is like universal nature in its abhorrence of a vacuum. It feels an intuitional yearning for a Supreme Power. Without a God, the cosmos would seem to it but like a soulless corpse. Being forbidden to search for Him where alone His traces would be found, man filled the aching void with the personal God whom his spiritual teachers built up for him from the crumbling ruins of heathen myths and hoary philosophies of old. How otherwise explain the mushroom growth of new sects, some of them absurd beyond degree? Mankind have one innate, irrepressible craving, that *must* be satisfied in any religion that would supplant the dogmatic, undemonstrated and undemonstrable theology of our Christian ages. This is the yearning after the proofs of immortality. As Sir Thomas Browne has expressed it: . . . "it is the heaviest stone that melancholy can throw at a man, to tell him that he is at the end of his nature, or that there is no future state to come, unto which this seems progressive, and otherwise made in vain." Let any religion offer itself that can supply these proofs in the shape of scientific facts, and the established system will be driven to the alternative of fortifying its dogmas with such facts, or of passing out of the reverence and affection of Christendom. Many a Christian divine has been forced to acknowledge that there is *no authentic* source whence the assurance of a future state could have been derived by man. How could then such a belief have stood for countless ages, were it not that among all nations, whether civilized or savage, man *has been* allowed the demonstrative proof? Is not the very existence of such a belief an evidence that thinking philosopher and unreasoning savage have both been compelled to acknowledge the testimony of their senses? That if, in isolated instances, spectral illusion may have resulted from physical causes, on the other hand, in thousands of instances, apparitions of persons have held converse with several individuals at once, who saw and heard them collectively, and could not all have been diseased in mind?—*Isis Unveiled.*

ON THE LOOKOUT

THE PRICES OF CIVILIZATION

The intellectuals of all lands in general admit that civilized humanity is in a parlous condition, and that unless evolution is to enter upon a descending stage, there must be a radical reform—somewhere. Usually the somewhere is elsewhere.

Many panaceas are offered, usually without the slightest suspicion that they are the outcome of that very state and condition of mind which produced the disease in the first place. Henry Ford, for instance (*Washington Herald*, April 30, 1925), thinks that faulty dietary is the cause of warfare. He says the trouble with the world is that it does not know how to eat, what to eat, and when to eat. Inasmuch as every possible combination of foods has been tried during human history without any particular relation to the war problem, other than that the better fed are simply the more efficient fighters, Mr. Ford appears to have overlooked a large number of pertinent facts. He thinks that the universal discontent is caused by digestive disturbances, and that these are the means of exciting strife.

It is certainly true that lack of food and improper food are the chief causes of warfare and of all other human ills, but that which lacks is nutrition for the spiritual element of man, which is the most important element in his constitution, and the dearth of that nutrition is nowhere more tragically or clearly expressed than in materialistic lucubrations of this nature.

ANOTHER REASON

Dr. Wm. Jasper Spillman, United States Department of Agriculture, has a reason for the deficiencies of civilization, which is far nearer the truth. Says he:

Now, I believe, we are again at a standstill. Our handicap is that we are controlled almost entirely by our passions and emotions—and we probably won't advance again until we reach the point where we are guided purely by reason. (*The Washington Daily News*, June 10, 1925)

A Theosophical statement bearing upon this conclusion reads:

At the present day *Manas* is not fully active in the race, as Desire still is uppermost. In the next cycle of the human period *Manas* will be fully active and developed in the entire race. Hence the people of the earth have not yet come to the point of making a conscious choice as to the path they will take; but when in the cycle referred to, *Manas* is active, all will then be compelled to consciously make the choice to right or left, the one leading to complete and conscious union with *Atma*, the other to the annihilation of those beings who prefer that path. (W. Q. Judge, *Ocean of Theosophy*, 1893)

There is also more truth than poetry in Dr. Spillman's suggestion that the invention of writing enabled man to put down and perpetuate untruth and thus prevented him from making any progress in the direction of truth.

CIVILIZATION OR HUMANITY?

If we listen to many of our modern medical men, it would almost seem to be a choice between relinquishing civilization and relinquishing health. A noted British dentist states that the teeth of the British people have been growing steadily worse for the last few generations; and since the teeth form a principal center of infection, this is not a hopeful prospect. Sir Thomas Horder, physician to the Prince of Wales, Dr. Chas. Mayo, and Dr. Wm. B. Peck (*Washington Post*, June 4, 1925) are agreed that health, under civilized conditions, is on the down grade and that the best and not the worst of the race are being killed off.

President Coolidge, in his Memorial Day address, pointed out the present day decline from the sterner standards of earlier days, and Ex-Secretary of State Hughes followed elsewhere in the same pessimistic vein. President Coolidge is especially concerned by the lack of individual self-control and the universal prevalence of irresponsibility. He said that the prohibition law was the most glaring example of the disintegration of self-government. Peculiarly enough, he fails to recognize that any power must grow by exercise, and that the lesson of all nature is that disuse means degeneration and atrophy.

"Before we assume too great responsibilities in the governing of others," remarks President Coolidge, "it would be the part of wisdom very completely to discharge our responsibilities for governing ourselves. A large amount of work has to be done at home before we can start in on the neighbors." (*The Washington Post*, June 1, 1925)

CULTURE OR HUMANITY?

George Brandes, the celebrated Dane, goes so far as to say that culture is dead in Europe, while he sees symptoms of progress in Russia, Japan, and China. The Editor of the *Washington Post* (May 9, 1925) takes issue with him.

The world war was, indeed, a great shock, and it rubbed some of the veneer off civilization, but the essential elements of progress and refinement it left untouched. To "Kultur," perhaps, it gave a deathblow, but the laboriously builded fabric of arts and sciences it was unable to knock down, and the artistic sense, as expressed in literature, painting, sculpture and music, remains and is prepared to go forward to new triumphs for the delectation and ennoblement of human kind.

This idea is another efflorescence of the deep-seated, albeit unconscious spirit of modern civilization. The philosophers of older and wiser races would pause in bewilderment before the atti-

tude of mind which considers so-called artistic progress and ennoblement as something worth while in itself, when divorced from the welfare of humanity as a whole. When confined to the delectation of the few, artistic gratification is on no higher plane than any other and the human race as a whole does not fare well. Those who find most enjoyment in culture, so-called, are often those least concerned with the condition of their suffering fellowmen.

THE MYSTERY OF GRAVITATION

There is a scientific delusion, obvious, but strangely persistent—namely, the idea that when a force is christened, and the mathematics of its action elucidated, that force is explained. Newton and Einstein solved no mystery—they but added new. Nevertheless, ever since the day of Newton, materialistic fanatics have proclaimed Newton's law of gravitation as an explanation of all cosmic phenomena. But even the scientific mind at length recognizes the difference between a name and a thing.

Just because the effects of gravitation are so familiar and because Newton's law accounts so completely for the motions of the heavenly bodies, except for a few minute effects which Einstein's theory represents better than Newton's, we are apt to forget how mysterious gravitation is and how little our so-called explanations penetrate the mystery. . . .

What do we mean by an explanation of physical phenomena like those of gravitation? Our so-called physical explanations are almost always mere descriptions of one sort or another and do not attempt to elucidate the "ultimate whereforeness of the thusly." . . .

In some respects nature herself seems to play the paradoxer. It is doubtless this seemingly paradoxical quality that has aroused the popular interest in it. Generally the man in the street concerns himself not at all with an abstruse scientific theory, but when the air resounds with the dispute between the adherents of the older and the newer theories and paradoxical statements fly thick and fast, the man in the street looks on with a real, though puzzled, interest. . . .

But, if and when that time comes, will the new "explanation" be anything more than a description, a description perhaps in terms more exact, more compact, more familiar or more comprehensive, but still only a description? (Walter D. Lambert, *Scientific Monthly*, May 1925, p. 479-482.)

THE GREAT PARADOX

This paradoxical quality in nature is an actual and fundamental fact, and one inseparable from manifestation of any and every kind. It exists because the universe is One and inseparable, while all action and all manifestation are dependent upon separateness and division. To trace any chain of causation back to its ultimate is to encounter the fundamental Essence of the Universe, which being of a nature beyond the range of thought, existing of itself, the "Causeless Cause," is at one and the same time the Ultima Thule of human

thought and speculation, and the most intimate and near reality of our own nature and being.

LAW OF ANALOGY

Nevertheless an understanding of gravitation can go much further than ever hereto, if placed on a basis entirely new to Science—the doctrine of mental and spiritual action. For attraction and repulsion in nature, weird as the doctrine may seem to the scientific mind, are only the outcome of corresponding conscious qualities of antipathy and sympathy existing in imponderable planes.

Everything in the Universe follows analogy. “As above, so below:” Man is the microcosm of the Universe. That which takes place on the spiritual plane repeats itself on the Cosmic plane. Concretion follows the lines of abstraction; corresponding to the highest must be the lowest; the material to the spiritual. *Secret Doctrine*, I, 177.

. . . Science finds itself absolutely compelled to accept the “hypothetical” Ether and to try to explain it on the materialistic grounds of atomo-mechanical laws. This attempt has led directly to the most fatal discrepancies and radical inconsistencies between the assumed nature of Ether and its physical actions. A second proof is found in the many contradictory statements about the atom—the most metaphysical object in creation. *S.D.* I, 485.

They call Gravity a law, a *cause* in itself. We call the forces acting under that name *effects*, and very secondary effects, too. One day it will be found that the scientific hypothesis does not answer after all; and then it will follow the corpuscular theory of light and be consigned for many scientific *aeons* in the archives of all exploded speculations. *S.D.* I, 490.

And now Father Æther is *re-welcomed* with open arms; and wedded to gravitation; linked to it for weal or woe, until the day when it, or both, shall be replaced by something else. *S.D.* I, 495.

. . . supposing attraction or gravitation should be given up in favour of the Sun being a *huge magnet*—which is a theory already accepted by some physicists—a magnet that acts on the planets as attraction is now supposed to do, whereto, or how much farther would it lead the astronomers from where they are now? Not an inch farther. . . . That such magnetism [cosmic magnetism] exists in nature, is as certain as that gravitation does not; not at any rate, in the way in which it is taught by Science, which never took into consideration the different modes in which the dual Force—that Occultism calls attraction and repulsion—may act within our solar system, the earth’s atmosphere, and *beyond* in the Kosmos. (Foot Note: . . . no *earths* or *moons* can be found—*except in appearance*—beyond, or of the same order of matter as found in our [solar] system.) *S.D.* I, 497.

The case to this day is exactly that. The sun is now known and accepted as a magnet, and conforming to H. P. Blavatsky’s prediction, gravitation and magnetism alike remain insoluble mysteries. We venture to go a step farther and say mysteries insoluble from the physical standpoint, for the following reason:

To conclude on the question of gravity. How can Science presume to know anything certain of it? How can it maintain its position and its

hypotheses against those of the Occultists, who see in gravity only sympathy and antipathy, or attraction and repulsion, caused by physical polarity on our terrestrial plane, and by spiritual causes outside of its influence? *S.D.* I, 513.

For all action, however seemingly material, has the same origin as the thought and action of humanity: and all the forces of nature act upon, and are influenced by the mental states of man.

THE ENIGMA OF THE NOVAE

In former days the sudden appearance of bright stars which soon faded out—or the flaring into first magnitude of formerly faint stars—was quite simply explained as a collision of stellar bodies, often a dark, or dead, star colliding with a bright one. But there have always been certain difficulties in the way of this theory, which did not exist for the Theosophical explanation of the so-called “novæ.” Perhaps in some cases at least this phenomenon represents a solar *pralaya*—that moment wherein the preservative and formative energies resident within the matter reach a balance against the eternal tendency toward dissolution, and then, as in the twinkling of an eye, the seven classes of fiery internal energy within the star become objectivized on the physical plane and the system is destroyed. A graphic description, in the symbology of the *Vishnu Purana*, will be found on page 370, Vol. I, of the *Secret Doctrine*. Also a Master said:

When the solar pralaya comes the whole purified humanity merges into Nirvana and from that inter-solar Nirvana will be reborn in higher systems. The string of worlds is destroyed and vanishes like a shadow from the wall in the extinguishment of light. We have every indication that at this very moment such a solar pralaya is taking place while there are two minor ones ending somewhere . . .

His mistake is that he believes a long time must be devoted to the ruin of the solar system: we are told that it occurs in the twinkling of an eye but not without many preliminary warnings. Another error is the supposition that the earth will fall into the sun. The sun itself is first to disintegrate in the solar pralaya.

Writing in *Science and Invention*, (May, 1922) Isabel M. Lewis, of the Naval Observatory, stated that the true cause of novæ is probably unknown, and that the number of novæ in the past has been as large as the number of stars now visible. She has a hint of the truth in remarking that the nova involves the destruction of all its surroundings, but that the star itself comes through practically unchanged. True, the destruction of surroundings occurs, but the continued brilliancy in the star—which does not always exist—is merely the incandescent glow of the disintegrating matter. As a living star the body exists no longer. How long is required for the dispersal of this matter is unknown, but it is observed that the brightness fades rather rapidly from the time of the outburst.

In the *San Francisco Chronicle*, (September 6, 1925) Prof. Robert G. Aitken, of Lick Observatory, discusses the matter of novæ at length, and after considering several explanations, with their shortcomings, mentions the possibility that the outburst may be due to forces in the star itself. Like Miss Lewis, however, he leaves the matter as undecided. It is quite possible that it may be within the range of physical investigation to determine ultimately that a nova is produced by internal forces. If so, a greater mystery than ever will be found in the *nature* of those Forces—for those lacking the Theosophical explanation.

SURYA'S HEARTBEATS

It is not often that a *Secret Doctrine* teaching becomes an actual fad in science, but that one which bears upon the solar cycles and the influence of the sun upon the earth almost seems to have done so—as has been shown recently *ad lib.* in these pages.

Different groups of scientists have of late agreed that the year 1926 or 1927 will mean a cycle of exceptionally severe weather. Among them are H. Janvrin Browne, Abbé Gabriel, and Abbé Moreux. It is curious that in general they base their predictions upon different cycles in almost every case, and most of them point out the proof of those cycles in past meteorological history.

The agreement from different bases is probably due to the fact that there are a great number of overlapping and interlocking cycles—wheels within wheels. But their predictions, being in agreement and also corroborated by many weather signs and certain phenomena in the animal world, seem in a fair way to be verified. Much scientific interest is now awake as to the possibilities of long range forecasting, based upon the sun cycles; in this case modern astronomy seems about to hurl itself headlong into the arms of its despised ancestor, astrology—than which, by the way, no subject has been more misunderstood or more misrepresented by its own votaries as well as by orthodox science. However, the modern versions of “astrology” are hardly of a nature to cast any credit upon the ancient system, from which they borrow their name.

SUN AND EARTH

Having dealt considerably in these pages with the effect of the solar cycles upon seismological conditions of the earth, there might be added to former remarks the fact that Prof. Camille Flammarion—extensively quoted by H. P. Blavatsky—was one of the first astronomers to propound decidedly Theosophical theories regarding the influence of the sun on the earth. An article by him on this subject will be found in the Hearst newspapers for August 16, 1925. A notable sentence reads:

A mysterious life animates our day star and is communicated to our planet by manifestations of which science has discovered only the first symptoms.

But as Prof. Flammarion was one of the first honorary members of the old Theosophical Society under H. P. Blavatsky, it would only be fair to conclude that his statement is an echo of the following:

If ever this theory of the Sun-Force being the primal cause of all life on earth and motion in heaven is accepted, and if that other far bolder one of Herschell—about certain organisms in the Sun—is accepted even as a provisional hypothesis, then will our teachings be vindicated, and esoteric allegory shown to have anticipated Modern Science by millions of years, probably, for these are the Archaic teachings . . . It is the Sun-fluids, or Emanations that impart all motion and awaken all into life, in the Solar System. It is attraction and repulsion, but not as understood by modern physics and according to the law of gravity; but in harmony with *the laws of Manvantaric motion* designed from the early *Sandhya*, the Dawn of the rebuilding and higher *reformation* of the System. These laws are immutable; but the motion of all the bodies, which motion is diverse and alters with every *minor Kalpa*—is regulated by the *Movers*, the Intelligences within the Cosmic Soul. (*S.D. I*, 529-530.)

Solar “flames” seen through telescopes are *reflections*, says Occultism. (*S.D. I*, 530.)

(Quoting Robert Hunt, F.R.S.) “*May the pulsing of vital matter in the central Sun of our System be the source of all that life which crowds the earth, and without doubt overspreads the other planets, to which the Sun is the mighty Minister?*”

Occultism answers these queries in the affirmative; and Science will find this to be the case, one day . . .

Thus, we have an important scientific corroboration for one of our fundamental dogmas—namely, that (*a*) the Sun is the store-house of Vital Force, which is the *Noumenon* of Electricity; and (*b*) that it is from its mysterious, never-to-be-fathomed depths, that issue those life currents which thrill through Space, as through the organisms of every living thing on Earth. (*S.D. I*, 530-531.)

Scientific students would do well to study and ponder over this. It is more important to biology and physiology than to astronomy; but is infinitely more important still to those who would like a real approach to an understanding of the whence, why, and how of mankind itself.

CONCRETE EVIDENCES

The biological science of last century could almost be said to have assumed as its chief object a destruction of every vestige of the vitalistic theory. While it did not entirely succeed, it was able by mere brute force of prejudiced opinion to obscure and discredit to a large extent that doctrine, upon which hangs the whole question of the immortality of man, as well as of the validity of Theosophical teachings. Therefore when such apparently “wild” statements as the above are published, it is well to be able to show in terms of material biology that they are not pure inventions.

Dr. Robert T. Legge, of the University of California, states that extensive experiments show that light has the following effects, among others:

Massive destruction of white blood cells.

Changes in the amounts of an unidentified chemical substance hitherto unknown.

Increased coagulability of clotting . . .

The more surface of the body exposed to the sun's direct rays, the higher the resistance to certain diseases. (*Stockton Record*, Aug. 25, 1925.)

These effects, of course, for the time being will be ascribed to physico-chemical forces, which is really no explanation, however good as a description. Moreover, Sir Henry Gauvain has discovered (*Popular Mechanics*, September, 1925) that exposure to the sunlight immensely stimulates mental ability; and he has the experiments to show for it. Now there is an anomaly in this finding. His facts are correct, but it is also true that in the tropics the effects of excessive sunlight seem to be anything but stimulating to energy, either mental or physical. And if sunlight is health-producing, why is life so short under the tropical sun? The explanation—which some day will be cast into orthodox scientific phraseology as a new discovery—is as follows:

One of the mysteries of physical life is hidden among these "lives." Their action forced forward by the Life energy—called *Prana* or *Jiva*—will explain active existence and physical death. They are divided into two classes, one the destroyers, the other the preservers, and these two war upon each other from birth until the destroyers win. In this struggle the Life Energy itself ends the contest because it is life that kills. This may seem heterodox, but in Theosophical philosophy it is held to be the fact. (W. Q. Judge, *Ocean of Theosophy*, 1893, p. 35.)

THE OLDEST FAILURE

Mr. Rupert Hughes, in the *San Francisco Examiner* (August 9, 1925) presents some harsh facts, whose contemplation should be salutary for the thinking American mind. The frequent recent advocacy of restoration of the whipping post as a remedy for crime, brings forth from Mr. Hughes some very unpleasant and very undeniable truths.

It seems that American "humanity" is of rather recent birth. Not only did we maintain slavery, as all know, for many years after other nations had outlawed it, but in addition, sailors in the United States Navy were flogged long after the whip had vanished from the British Navy and been forbidden in British merchant marine; but it remained as usual for the religious sects to make the worst and fullest use of the lash. Our "godly" Puritan forefathers, it seems, were especially addicted to the whip as a remedy for heresies—with a special penchant for persecuting the old, weak and helpless. It is a valuable fact, unearthed by psycho-analysts though long ago taught by Theosophy—that a "persecution complex" is the outcome

of a suppressed vice of the same nature in the persecutor—a lesson which our modern reformers refuse to read. And more than one student of Colonial days has been amazed and horrified to discover the seething corruption which underlay Puritan rigidity and persecution. Mr. Hughes says:

The marvelous effects are imaginary. The whip may quiet an unruly criminal for a time, but the influence of pain and terror can only be evil. There may be a cringing, truculent obedience for a while, but it is not sincere conviction, it simply fills the soul of the punished man with black hate and longing for revenge, and its ultimate effect is poisonous. . . .

The hypocrisy of the whippers is an ugly phase of it. They proclaim themselves interested only in the protection of society and morals and reverence for the law. But consciously or unconsciously, they are longing for revenge on someone who has violated their standards. . . .

And the only person I can think of who really ought to be whipped is the person who believes in whipping. . . .

How can people call themselves good citizens and claim the right to punish when their stubborn souls will learn nothing from thousands of years of history? They make themselves fools and fiends and defy all the lessons of time and then expect to teach a poor criminal to love them and their wisdom by making a red network of his bleeding flesh.

Reform your own souls first, ladies and gentlemen who believe in the lash. (*San Francisco Examiner*, August 9, 1925)

Mr. Hughes' words could hardly be bettered, other than to draw attention to the fact that they are susceptible of a much wider application.

THE REAL CAUSE OF AMERICAN CRIME

Crime in the United States is becoming syndicated and organized in true "big business" style, and the time does not seem far distant when the ordinary citizen may find himself the pawn in a game between the great barons of legal and illegal big business respectively. American civilization slides fast down the incline to the condition of Italy after the fall of Rome, where "government" was carried out by great members of the nobility, without regard to the welfare of the citizen or to common humanity or decency. Many remedies are offered, practically all cut from the same material as that upon which the foundations of the underworld are placed—namely, a materialistic and selfish outlook upon life. The real reason will be found in the *Ocean of Theosophy*:

Take, for instance, the United States and the Red Indians. The latter have been most shamefully treated by the nation. The Indian Egos will be reborn in the new and conquering people, and as members of that great family will be the means themselves of bringing on the due results for such acts as were done against them when they had red bodies. Thus it has happened before, and so it will come about again. (*Ocean of Theosophy*, 1893)

PROHIBITIONS

Referring to the Report of the Federal Council of Churches of Christ in America on the results of the first five years of Prohibition, the *Chicago Tribune* remarked:

Besides its valuable data, the report should accomplish a much needed public service, namely:

It should remind the hundreds of thousands of well-meaning believers in Prohibition that to disagree with them is not a sin or evidence of debauched character. One of the outstanding facts of the controversy over Prohibition or the effort to impose teetotalism by force of government, is the lack of temperance or even Christian charity among its professional champions and many of their most pious followers. The report of the council confesses that the facts are not all one way and that there is a seamy side to the great experiment, and therefore we hope it will open many ardent souls to a little more of the temperance in mental and spiritual things that they would impose in matters of carnal habit upon their neighbors.

The bitterness and untruthfulness exhibited by the protagonists of Prohibition, coupled with a rather general tendency nowadays of telling "the other fellow" what to do, brings us up sheer against the fact that the forward looking people of this country are being thrown willy-nilly into battle against those who would pass laws regulating the thought and action of their private lives.

Many modern reformers seem unable to distinguish between the Criminal Code, which prescribes penalties for crimes committed against persons and property, and "blue laws," which attempt to break into the personal life and regulate the habits and "morals" of the people. Such thinkers fail utterly to see that common and statute law can go only a very little way in regulating the life of the people. Real progress is a matter of slow evolution from within, and the attempt at vicarious regulation is due to incomplete knowledge of the real nature of man. This ignorance produces the somewhat callose idea that men can be made good by rules and regulations imposed from without, while all history records the failure of force, of institutionalized religion, and any and all forms of vicariousness.

Theosophy calls for individual responsibility and for an energization from within. It teaches that each man's life is the result of his former living, and the present state of mankind the "sequence of a past eternity of causes and processes"; that "the Karma of this earth and its races is the combination of the acts and thoughts of all the beings of every grade which were concerned in the preceding Manvantara or evolutionary stream from which ours flows." If we see this to be true, we will then see clearly that all efforts to reform by sumptuary or blue laws are just as futile as would be the attempt of one feeble man with one little broom to turn back the mighty Mississippi at flood-time.