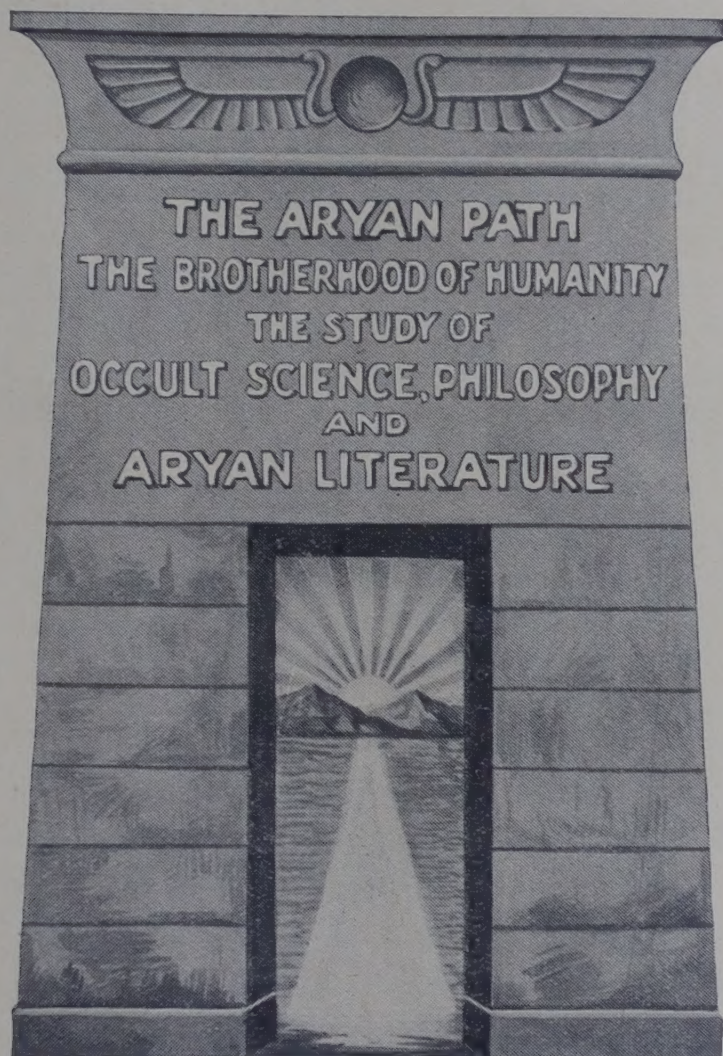




THE THEOSOPHICAL MOVEMENT

A MAGAZINE DEVOTED TO



Vol. X No. 6

April 17, 1940

Look to the future; see to it that the continual performance of duty under the guidance of a well developed Intuition shall keep the balance well poised. Ah! if your eyes were opened, you might see such a vista of potential blessings to yourselves and mankind lying in the germ of the present hour's effort, as would fire with joy and zeal your souls!

—K. H.

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- (b) The study of ancient and modern religions, philosophies and sciences, and the demonstration of the importance of such study ; and
- (c) The investigation of the unexplained laws of nature and the psychical powers latent in man.

सत्यान्नास्ति परो धर्मः ।



There is no Religion Higher than Truth

BOMBAY, 17th April, 1940.

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AUM

THE THEOSOPHICAL MOVEMENT

BOMBAY, 17th April 1940.

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WHITE LOTUS DAY—1940

“Look at this pool, O Disciple, where grow White Lotuses : there are earth and water, gifts of the Gods turned to scum and dirt by the hands of men. Out of these the plant with green leaves of beauty, and tender curved branch on which the bud opens responding to the warm blessings of the Sun.

“So art thou, O Disciple. Out of earthy scum the seed of spirit has sent forth the branch of mind on which the bud of thy soul is burgeoning. Turn not away from the Light of the Teacher ; respond to the blessings which flow from Him ; spread subtle fragrance for thy fellow-pupils ; let beauty attract the eyes of many who are further away.”

—From “THE MIRROR OF MAGIC.”

As a student of Theosophy matures, overcoming his own blemishes and prejudices, his gratitude to the philosophy deepens. He is able to see what a difference in kind there is between the bulk of mankind as it lives in misery and on hope and as it could be, striving ever upward and onward, turning every force of evil to good by the light of Wisdom—the destroyer of fear, and the creator of a steady will that operates in harmony. He feels deeply grateful to the Great Theosophists for sending H.P.B. with the Torch of the Wisdom-Religion at which he has been fortunate to kindle his own small heart-light, and which has strengthened him to face the fight, to go on with the battle against passion and personality, against consuming lust and selfish love, against an environment poisoned by ignorance. The forces that sweeten life have reached almost the zero-point ; sourness and bitterness go forth from millions of eyes, millions of finger-tips ; and diseases are breathed out by men and women who walk their carnal way—mentally vacuous, morally irresponsible, unconscious of the grave harm they do to others and the graver injury they invite upon themselves. The student of Theosophy feels—“I might have become, would have become, one of this crowd but for the message of H.P.B.”

And such thoughts most naturally crowd upon his consciousness as White Lotus Day approaches. On Wednesday the 8th of May, Theosophists all over the world will commemorate the 49th anniversary of the Passing of their Guru, but preparation

is needed if that commemoration is to be a real one. On the outer plane students will gather in large numbers. Our audiences will be augmented by the presence of friends and admirers of Theosophy and H.P.B., for, the band of those who acknowledge the worth of both, humbly admitting that their circumstances and temperament favour not their practice of Theosophy is a growing one. Then there will be readings and speeches to energize afresh the old, to inspire the new to walk the Path H.P.B. showed. There will be floral decorations and lights—fine symbols of the fragrance and the radiance which H.P.B. has left behind. The spirit of fraternization will envelop all who have gathered to remember and to salute the Great Soul to whose labour the world owes so much. Beautiful as all that will be on the 8th of May, more necessary for the students themselves and for the Cause are the brotherly feeling, the heart-radiance, the mind-fragrance, the recognition that Master's Hand is over all, and that through the most serious Movement of the age the redemption of the world is surely coming.

Students should use the next twenty-one days to examine how different and superior Theosophy has made them, not in the spirit of self-righteousness, but in that of righteousness which says, “the sin and shame of the world are my sin and shame.” The best way to see that the difference is real and not fancied is to judge ourselves by the aid of the great truths of practical Theosophy which disregards the talk of rights and advocates the performance of

duties. The Theosophist has no rights to claim ; he has only duties to discharge. Our race can be divided into three groups—the largest which is busy claiming its rights, the next composed of those who are placing duty before rights, and the smallest whose acts of duty are done as sacrifices for the benefit of the Orphan Humanity. It is of little use for the student to talk of sacrifice when duty is neglected or misunderstood. As long as rights are claimed, if not by our lips then by our blood, talk of sacrifice is almost blasphemy. When we feel hurt and wounded, fancying that our rights are trampled under foot by friends and kin, by colleagues and helpers, we are not ready to tread the Path of Sacrifice. When talk about our rights has ceased we see the real meaning of Duty—that which we have to do, under Karma ; that which is our business to mind ; that which, when neglected, produces dire consequences, not only for ourselves, but for all ; “the duty of another is full of danger” is perceived by the man who learns what duty is according to practical occultism. And when rights are left behind and the discharge of duties is undertaken with knowledge and responsibility we see the Path of Sacrifice stretching in front of us, the Path which was H.P. B.’s but which is not yet that of the student. Here is another application of her words—“Follow the path I show, the Masters that are behind—and do not follow me or my Path.” What is that Path?—“the first *duty* taught in Occultism is to do one’s duty unflinchingly *by every duty*”. Duties are Karma and they fall away when the karmic debt is paid, then only the Duty of Sacrifice—yearly, daily, hourly. Discharging duties we are preparing ourselves for Duty which is Sacrifice,—a reflection in the mundane world of the Great Sacrifice of the Heavenly Host.

How many of us have claimed if not with loud articulation at least in silence our “rights”? How many of us have performed the small, plain duties in sanctified silence doing what we *can* do for the Cause? Many have done not what they could do but what they liked to do, what came easy, what brought consolation within, praise from without.

But “look not behind”, says the *Voice of the Silence*.

What of the future?

How many will resolve to banish all thought of rights and to remember not what is due to us from others, but what is due to others from us? For in that remembrance are enshrined the opportunities which can take us near to the Path of Great Sacrifice, walked by H. P. B.—blessed Her Name, blessed Her Memory!

PSYCHICAL RESEARCH AT CAMBRIDGE

Of interest and significance is the announcement in *The Sunday Times* (London 11th February) of the establishment by Trinity College of Cambridge University of a studentship for psychical research. Established out of a bequest for that purpose by Mr. F. D. Perrot, it is a memorial to the late F. W. H. Myers, who was one of the founders of the Society for Psychical Research, and whose posthumous work, “*Human Personality and Its Survival of Bodily Death*”, made a tremendous impression on the public. The purpose of this studentship is “the investigation of mental or physical phenomena which seem *prima facie* to suggest (a) the existence of supernormal powers of cognition or action in human beings in their present life or (b) the persistence of the human mind after bodily death”. The attempt to introduce Occultism into a University was made as long ago as 1881 when an earnest but unsuccessful effort was made to induce the Senate of the Calcutta University to adopt Occult Science as a compulsory subject.

But while agreeing with *The Sunday Times* that it is “a definite landmark”, it being “probably the only studentship of its kind in any university”, Theosophy would take exception to the statement that psychical research is “a subject about which very little is known”. This is true of the West only, where the S.P.R., in spite of its painstaking and arduous labours from 1832 onwards, has succeeded only in recording and tabulating a variety of phenomena, without evolving any definite science of the Occult. Why? Because principles do not arise from phenomena any more than life originates from matter. In the Eastern Wisdom there are two factors which are not recognized by Western thought, *ie.*, that back of Occult science lies a complete and an all-embracing philosophy and that the authors of ancient wisdom have spoken from at least two whole planes of conscious experience beyond that of our everyday “sense-perception”. These factors have enabled the East to solve, ages ago, the problem of the invisible in man and in Nature. A complete science of metaphysics and a complete philosophy of science are not even conceived of as possible by the leaders of modern thought ; both exist, nevertheless, in the recorded message of H. P. B. Let the scientists, putting aside their scorn of ancient learning, turn to that invaluable mine of Occult lore, *Isis Unveiled*, and study supernormal phenomena in the light of its ten fundamental propositions of Oriental philosophy. Then alone will Western psychical research be elevated into an exact science commanding attention and respect.

SELF-EXAMINATION

I.—A ROAD TO KNOWLEDGE OF ONESELF

It is the custom among some good people to glance back at their life's path from the hillocks of time they annually surmount.—K. H.

Such people as naturally use the mode of reflection to which the Master makes reference must be named thoughtful, even though they use it in a very cursory fashion. Acting on human instinct they incline to working with the Law of Periodicity. Birthdays are implied; but for any one who has dedicated himself to the study of pure Occultism, every morn a birthday dawns. That new day will be coloured by the motives, the thoughts and the deeds of the previous day and days. Not to allow the process of that colouring to take place automatically; to make use of that natural process intelligently, *i.e.*, by understanding the laws under which it occurs;—the student is advised to review the day, to examine his actions, especially the real actions which are of the mind, and the motives which have ensouled them. Such an examination is a clearing-hour and reveals the extent to which the Personal Self has worked under the radiant influence of the Inner Ego, or has gone on its own, regardless of the latter.

The subject of self-examination is important. Without recourse to self-examination large numbers of men and women go astray, most often unconsciously to themselves, and suffer anguish of mind and of heart. People desire happiness and aspire to do the right but will not take up the study of the fundamental problems of existence—why they are here and what the meaning and the purpose of life are. The appropriate answer seems to frighten them—to understand the meaning of life is to take the road to knowledge of oneself. Self-knowledge implies knowledge about the animal nature, human nature and divine nature in man. While ordinary people find self-examination beyond them, the student, who recognizes that all life is probationary, finds it necessary though difficult and irksome.

Many developing devotees enquire as to how they should rise to the spiritual plane where the Masters are, how they should enter the Occult World, the Hall of Wisdom, where alone They are to be found. But before they can find the answer to that question they have to go through a preliminary examination of their own ideas and aspirations and determine for themselves the reasons why they desire to see the Masters.

The Way to the Occult World lies through probationary learning and that Way cannot be walked by

those whom H. P. B. calls nominal Theosophists. She has also said :

Many are interested in our doctrines and feel instinctively that they are truer than those of any dogmatic religion. Others have formed a fixed resolve to attain the highest ideal of man's duty.

What follows is of special interest to the "earnest reliable Theosophists" who are fixed in the resolve to attain the highest ideal of man's duty and who in some measure at least are "Theosophists by nature", to quote the expression of Mr. Robert Crosbie. Such do appreciate the institution of self-examination and try to use it for the acquisition of self-knowledge leading to self-improvement.

The highest ideal of man's duty may be described thus in the words of Robert Crosbie :—

We have no greater duty to perform than to make clear and clean our natures—to make them *true*, to make them in accord with the great object of all life, the evolution of soul.

This is the practical work which every probationer must undertake. Through it only will he become a Theosophist by nature. Day by day we should labour, and in the nightly self-examination register to what extent we have cleansed ourselves of weaknesses; to what extent we have shaped the lower on the model of the higher—for by that only will we make our nature *true*, *i.e.*, in accord with Great Nature or the Macrocosm.

In every man the demoniac and the divine commingle; similarly, there is a commingling in every Esotericist who is in part Theosophist by nature and in part Theosophist in name. Self-examination leads us more and more to become Theosophists by nature. Intellectual knowledge of the philosophy of Theosophy is "necessary to some extent, as an equipment for the sake of others", *i.e.*, for service by pen or by tongue. But, says Robert Crosbie :—

... those who seek self-knowledge, who will not be satisfied with anything else, go not by that road. Self-knowledge is the first desideratum; the other is incidental, and useless without the first.

Consider what is implicit in this piece of practical instruction. Heart doctrine, like the heart of the body, makes the exoteric work throb with life; eye-doctrine, like the eyes of the body, can only see

the world of illusion but cannot overcome it. When the earnest student of the good resolve transmutes himself and becomes a consecrated devotee who lives but to serve Theosophy by Heart-Power he has become "different". To conclude the quotation from *The Friendly Philosopher* :—

There are Theosophists in name and Theosophists by nature ; they are different.

Now the very first, most striking, fear-begetting and therefore depressing result of self-examination is our perception and consequent recognition that we are full of weaknesses, bad tendencies, objectionable habits. It is one thing to theorize and to admit that like all mortals oneself has blemishes ; it is another thing to note their quantity and their quality. And, in earlier stages, we are unaware of the depth and the breadth of our defects because our knowledge of the Esoteric Philosophy is limited. For example, how many students, even among the earnest, understand the far-reaching effects of their thoughts ; when the teaching on the subject is truly grasped the ill use of our thinking and imagination strikes terror into our hearts. In the outside world people dislike to be shown or to see for themselves their own weaknesses ; earnest students of to-day were but yesterday those very ordinary people and they carry into their new lives the old habit. Therefore even the practice of self-examination takes time, not infrequently, a long time, for the persistent student to come face to face with his blemishes. Just exactly as ordinary students, in the preparatory class of Occultism, know in theory what the dweller on the threshold is but encounter him in experience only at a later stage, so also with weaknesses ; all readers of Theosophical literature know that they have an animal nature but only in the process of time do they come face to face with their defects as self-examination continues and improves in quality because fresh knowledge is gained. At the early stage the esotericist goes through the routine of self-examination, notes an error here, a mistake there, and passes on. As he develops earnestness in scrutiny and is more thorough in making applications of the lessons of the Esoteric Philosophy he perceives clearly and recognizes fully what kind of a mortal he is. This is likely to depress him. We need not be depressed ; we should be glad that at long last we have become aware of our frailties, foibles and blemishes. Why does it take time for us to detect our defects even when we pursue self-examination ? Because we permit our mistakes to delude us ; we explain them away to ourselves instead of using our understanding to penetrate them. Only when real sincerity of heart and honesty of mind are sufficiently developed are we able to evaluate our

weaknesses. We have dwelt at some length on this phase of self-examination because so many among us allow time to go by, instead of quickening the process by making our nightly practice thorough. As said above, depression results when after the passage of time, for so many such a lengthy passage the student detects his blemishes for what they are but he need not be downcast. In a stimulating way we ought to ponder over these words of Robert Crosbie :—

No one who sees his mistakes can be a hopeless case. The moment we see that we are deluded, that moment we are no longer deluded, although we may be surrounded by the consequences of delusion and have to work through them. Any trouble and hindrance comes from self-identification with delusion and mistakes ; this is the delusion of delusions.

One of the developments following the recognition of our blemishes is a morbid tendency—really rooted in egotism—to fancy that we have more faults than others and that ours are very terrible faults. In the name of humility we indulge in morbidity and call our stupidities sins against the Holy Ghost. W. Q. Judge speaks of the unwisdom of "always analysing our faults and failures". The whole passage in *Letters That Have Helped Me* (pp. 137-38) needs to be studied and we have to learn to "regard every apparent failure after real effort as a success". In this passage is implicit an important truth—the interrelationship between the two aspects of our being. Just as knowledge is a purifier so is reliance on the Inner Ego as a part of the Great Spirit a strengthener. *Virya*, the real energy, comes from the Inner Ego. Theosophy tells us that all events are lessons of life ; but without *Virya*-energy of the Inner Ego we cannot fight our weaknesses. We are not to look at things as failures, and W. Q. Judge says, in the passage referred to, that "to regret is waste of energy" ; true repentance consists in the "real effort" which we should make to perceive the error in such a fashion that failure through it opens an avenue to success. Many make an effort to learn from errors, but only a few make the "real effort" to turn the evil to some beneficent purpose.

Sometimes the question is asked : why should not a teacher, an older and a more experienced esotericist, point out the blemishes and the errors of the younger and the less experienced ? That way could be readily employed by the Great Gurus at Their superior stage, but They do not adopt it in the case of Their own Chelas. We have to find out for ourselves those defects in us which act as stumbling blocks on our path. Our association with others, especially with co-students, helps us more

readily to this end because we consciously or unconsciously compare ourselves with those around us. But in this connection we should constantly remind ourselves that real growth is unconscious and we have to see the truth of the saying, "grow as the flower grows". If we are earnestly trying to keep right we will surely some day achieve. But what is that right way? What is the method whereby progress will be achieved without undue loss of time? It is true that time is required for real growth, but it is also true that many among the students are like Penelope—doing and undoing and allowing time to slip by. Overenthusiasm and rush are followed by neglect. What is needed is a practical programme which we can carry out in a steady manner. Advises W. Q. Judge :—

The Theosophist is bound to see that his arrangement of hours for sleep, work and recreation are properly arranged and adjusted, as he has no right to so live as to break himself down, and thus deprive the cause he works for of a useful and necessary instrument.

Planning out hours of work, sleep, recreation, etc., is the outer requirement while clean motives, right thought-feelings, assiduity in Theosophical application are the inner needs. Unless this dual requirement is fulfilled self-examination has no meaning. It is useless to purchase a ledger, if the entries to be made therein do not pertain to the real business of life.

PRANAYAMA

"Theosophy commands us to work for Humanity, one method whereof is to watch the steps of erring humanity and to erect signposts against certain pitfalls. . . ."

Teachers of humanity have always held their torches high to the one fact that Man is more than a mere bundle of bones, flesh, muscles and nerves, and consequently have given out their teachings as applicable to the Real Man and not to his visible vesture—the body. This is the primary reason why no teaching worthy of the name of religion yields its real import if only the key of the physical plane is applied to it. And knowers of the Truth, small though their number may have been in any given sphere, have always laid bare, to the gaze of those who could see, the esoteric meaning of such teachings by the application of the key of sanctified common sense, which is beyond a doubt metaphysical and occult. There is always the necessity for

caution, care and scrutiny of every serious statement which underlies the conventional practices that bear the stamp of religion and are being perpetuated by exoteric doctrines.

Of the many sacrifices, rituals and practices now in vogue "Pranayama" is on the lips of many. Having had in former times a serious occult bearing, this practice, once confined to the enlightened class of men, has by the passage of time now come to the degraded level of being regarded as a breathing exercise and a priestly prescription for the realization of God. This is a form of hatha yoga and the utmost that can come of it are some psychic powers of a trifling nature which most often are misused by unbalanced minds. The followers of the Inner Path have therefore eschewed this as dangerous and undesirable. Further, this practice being generally pursued with a certain regularity and resoluteness, the mind is bound to apprehend levels quite different from the physical plane, but the brain-consciousness of the practitioner, not being the natural efflorescence of spiritual culture based on nobility of thought and unselfishness of purpose, is absolutely incapable of anything but distortions. Such distortions seriously interfere with the direct perception of Truth. Is there any wonder therefore that this misadventure generally ends in theomania if not in insanity?

To comprehend completely the extent of the danger represented by this practice it is necessary to recognize that it is no longer confined to any particular caste or creed. It has caught the fancy of all who would take short cuts to progress, who will not think for themselves or "look in any direction with heart at peace and free from fear", and whose power of perception is so dimmed that they cannot listen to the exhortation in the *Gita* :—

Seek this wisdom by doing service, by strong search, by questions and by humility; the wise who see the truth will communicate it unto thee, and knowing which thou shalt never again fall into error.

In the Sevenfold Constitution of Man, Prana is the third principle of the lower quaternary and the Pranic currents circulate in the astral body which serves as the substratum and the model for the physical. That even the powers of the five senses through which the Inner Man contacts things objective are located in the "Linga Sarira" (the astral body) is common knowledge to students of right Philosophy. Just as there are in the astral body the five senses used for perception (the *jnanaindriyas*) for which exist in the physical body the corresponding five organs used for action (the *karmaindriyas*), so too, the Pranic currents in the astral body reveal themselves in the physical body as the incoming and the outgoing breath.

Prana has thus come to be familiarly associated with the physical breath. It is but natural, therefore, that an injunction in a spiritual text with this word in it should be understood by the man of superficial knowledge who has identified himself with his physical covering, as having something to do with the physical breath, the shadow of the real Pranic currents. Hence Pranayama to him consists of "Puraka", inspiration, "Rechaka", expiration, and "Kumbhaka" retention of the breath between these two movements. This physiological practice has been codified and has been given a place in the duties of a "Sadhaka", practitioner, and such control of the breath and the "vital airs" is being resorted to for liberation of the forces of freedom for the attainment of yoga!

The stages of cleansing and acquisition of strength, fortitude, steadiness and lightness formulated by the Givers of the Law have all been unfortunately taken to apply to the physical body, whereas in truth they are meant for the mind, to accomplish the transmutation of the Kama-Manas into Buddhi-Manas. One should therefore try to see in the implication of Pranayama the application of the second of the seven golden keys—"Shila, the key of Harmony in word and act, the key that counterbalances the cause and the effect, and leaves no further room for Karmic action."

"After all is said and done, the purely bodily functions are of far less importance than what a man *thinks* and *feels*, what desires he encourages in his mind, and allows to take root and grow there."

"Chelaship does not consist in any kind of eating or drinking, in any practices, observances, forms or rituals; it is an attitude of Mind".

Then if Pranayama means regulated breath, what could be its real significance to the aspirant if not the establishment of rhythm and harmony in the incarnated Ego who breathes out into its vehicles and breathes back into the Monadic Soul? And similarly, on a higher spiral, the Macrocosmic Powers breathe themselves into Microcosmic entities and retire; then the latter breathe out towards the manifested world and in towards the Powers. The great task of man, therefore, as the controller of all the forces of the macrocosm, reflected, though in miniature, in the microcosm over which he presides, is to fulfil the purpose of unfolding his divinity to a larger extent, in a greater measure, consciously and deliberately, and thereby elevating the "lives" around him which are dependent on him and are waiting to be raised higher.

It would mean also for the soul to find the middle path, poised as it is between the

outgoing breath of "Pravritti", helped by his objective contact through his senses, and the incoming breath of "Nivritti", symbolizing his turning inward and walking the Path towards the on Centre, enriched of course by his experience of the first movement. The object, therefore, is the tranquillization of the mental processes as defined by Patanjali and the attainment of the Equal Mindedness which is called Yoga.

A step further into the subject would bring us closer to the five kinds of "vital airs"—"Prana", "Apana", "Vyana", "Udana" and "Samana" and their functions, of which writes H. P. B. in *The Secret Doctrine* (Vol. II, pp. 566-7) :—

....Read the dialogue between the sages Narada and Davamata in the *Anugita**, the antiquity and importance of which MS. (an episode from the Mahabharata) one can learn in the "Sacred Books of the East", edited by Prof. Max Müller. Narada is discussing upon the breaths or the "life-winds", as they are called in the clumsy translations of such words as *Prâna*, *Apâna*, etc., whose full esoteric meaning and application to individual functions can hardly be rendered in English.

And referring to the adaptation of such a "fire of Wisdom" to exoteric ritualism for the profane we hear H. P. B. say :—

This is the chief concern of the Brahmins who were the first to set the example to other nations who thus anthropomorphised and carnalized the grandest metaphysical truths.

While, therefore, it is well-nigh impossible to bring to the consciousness of the undisciplined mind the abstruse metaphysical concept of this too common word, "Pranayama", it may definitely be said that in various places this symbolic expression has been used to hold in its treasure-chest varying shades of the truth, to be unfolded in proportion to the intuitional light brought to bear upon it by the student. This mystic practice is therefore not a play with the breath but has everything to do with the attempt to obtain esoteric knowledge or the wisdom of the Divine Self.

Breathing in the gentle breezes of Theosophia it should be possible to breathe out the balmy breezes of sacrifice, which would fit the practitioner to live entirely in terms of altruism and selflessness and thus to forge his link stronger than ever to the glorious chain of Brotherhood, the highest links of which are those Stainless Ones, serving as a Beacon to many a weak and weary pilgrim that he may see the Light and learn to walk the Path aright.

* The *Anugita* forms part of the Asvamedha Parvan of the *Mahabharata*.

PSYCHICAL RESEARCH— RETROSPECT AND PROSPECT

Psychical research is undoubtedly as old as thinking man. In modern times, the Theosophical Society, founded in 1875, had as one of its objects 'to investigate the hidden mysteries of Nature under every aspect possible, and the psychic and spiritual powers latent in man especially'. But organized inquiry along scientific lines into psychical happenings is generally taken as dating from the formation in 1882 of the Society for Psychical Research, still the best known of the quasi-scientific bodies in the field.

The studies made by that and other agencies are described in a long and dreary tone by Mr. Harry Price—Unfortunately not an unbiassed witness. A man who stares long enough at a black spot sees it reproduced wherever he turns his gaze; the writer of *Fifty Years of Psychical Research: A Critical Survey* has devoted himself so enthusiastically to the unmasking of fraudulent mediums that he sees trickery where there is none. In other words, he wields his winnowing flail so vigorously that he blows even the good grain away with the chaff.

At best the net results of the investigations reported are quite out of proportion to the energy expended. The S. P. R. blundered badly and lost a splendid opportunity to acquire authentic knowledge of psychic and spiritual science when it failed to take advantage of Mme. Blavatsky's generous offer of help and co-operation in the new society's investigation of "...the most important of all subjects of human study—PSYCHOLOGY". (*The Theosophist*, July 1882, Vol. III, p. 239)

The S. P. R. deputed its fledgling representative, Dr. Richard Hodgson, to investigate the phenomena which, with full understanding of their rationale, H. P. B. was producing in the hope of interesting men of science in a new and deeply interesting field of research. But truly, as she wrote in "What of Phenomena?" :—

An occultist can produce phenomena, but he cannot supply the world with brains, nor with the intelligence and good faith necessary to understand and appreciate them. (*Raja-Yoga*, p. 49)

Dr. Hodgson's biassed judgment, maligning H. P. B., is a standing reflection upon his fairness and ability.

The scepticism of the prejudiced observer confronted with facts which challenge his preconceptions is equalled only by his credulity when reports seem to bolster up his theories. Mr. Price finds Dr. Hodgson's judgment too congenial to

question and, though he admits that controversy over it is still raging, he accepts the verdict as proven, without mentioning or telling his readers what answer he has to make to the shattering arguments advanced against that *ex-parte* "report".

The student of genuine Theosophy will be energized by the revival of this contemptible calumny to redouble his efforts to live and promulgate the truths which H. P. B. taught. They are her best defence.

The S. P. R. has throughout consistently ignored the clues offered in the authentic texts of Eastern psychology, which H. P. B. has synthesized and made readily available. An overdue turn of the tide may, however, be augured from the Presidential Address of Prof. H. H. Price, a man of a quite different cast of mind from that of Mr. Harry Price, which appears in the *Proceedings* of the S. P. R. for December 1939. Professor Price dares to refer, albeit apologetically, to the Far East as perhaps able to "give us some help in framing a more adequate and genuinely scientific theory for ourselves".

I do not think that we should be too proud to take any hints we can get from the mystical and occult traditions of the Far East, particularly of India.

He vitiates the suggestion somewhat by explaining hastily that what he has in mind considering from "quarters which are accounted scientifically disreputable"[!] is their methods, *i.e.*, Yoga practices, but for the President of the S. P. R. to admit interest in Oriental psychology is certainly a step towards the overcoming of what he sees as one of the two main obstacles in the way of the progress of psychical research.

We need, and have not got, a *comprehensive hypothesis* which will bind together all our phenomena, or as many of them as possible, in one unified intellectual scheme.

Among the "reasonably well-established facts" of the psychical research field he includes telepathy, clairvoyance, haunting, poltergeist phenomena and "the *cognitive* phenomena of Mediumship" but "as to the explanation of them, we remain almost as much in the dark as the pioneers of our enquiry fifty years ago".

I am afraid that in spite of all the excellent work which has been done, it is still a scene of twilight and confusion, so far as the *understanding* of the phenomena is concerned.

The ancient East can not only furnish the needed synthesizing theory, but it can also point the way to the overcoming of the second obstacle which Professor Price names, "the lack of any reasonably certain method by which the phenomena may be obtained at will, and repeated, by anyone who takes the necessary trouble". But is the modern scientist

prepared to take the "necessary trouble"? To acquire such powers without risk of mental and moral ruin demands years of self-purification.

Professor Price's address is noteworthy also for the daringly heterodox hypotheses which he advances tentatively and which if taken up seriously for verification might lead psychical research out of the blind alley in which it finds itself. Though restricted in their scope they represent a distinct step in the direction of the Theosophical explanations, which restate those of the ancient Eastern psychic science. Thus he suggests that "mental images may persist in being apart from the mind of their author". He further posits that such mental images may be "endowed with a kind of 'force' of their own", which varies with the intensity of the emotion at the time they were generated, and that they may fade out in time.

In types of haunting in which there are no physical effects, Professor Price suggests, "the *immediate* agent is not a mind, but only an image: though the *ultimate* agent is the mind which originated and projected the image long ago". He claims incidentally that the fact that "something which is at least quasi-mental can exist in the absence of a brain and nervous system" weakens the most important argument of those who reject the possibility of survival after death.

He visualizes what Theosophical students will recognize as a not inaccurate description, as far as it goes, of the Astral Light. He calls it an ether of images...something intermediate between mind and matter as we *ordinarily* conceive of them...something which is not material in the ordinary sense, but somehow interpenetrates the walls or the furniture or whatever it may be...something which is like matter in being extended, and yet like mind in that it retains in itself the *residua* of past experiences.

If there is an all-embracing image-space, however, he believes

it will be a different *kind* of space from the one which we find within any one image or any one image field. It need not have three dimensions. And even if it had, there would be no detailed correspondence between it and the space of the Physical World.

This psychic ether hypothesis Professor Price develops further to suggest that there may be some truth in the theory of a "psychic atmosphere" surrounding the body of a living person, "composed of unconsciously projected images, or at any rate of image-like stuff but forming "a kind of secondary body, related to his mind in the same kind of way as the ordinary physical body is, though perhaps more intimately".

It would be a portion of this Psychic Ether localised in and around a certain place, the place where a living human body now is; just as a ghost is a portion of this

same Psychic Ether localised in a place where a living human being formerly *was*. And I suggest, though I do not quite know the meaning of what I say, that the "stuff" of which this psychic atmosphere is composed is the same as the "stuff" of which images are composed.

Professor Price might deny, and no doubt with perfect truth, that he has been consciously influenced in the formulation of these hypotheses by the Theosophical literature; if so, they bear witness to the extent to which the living ideas, set once more in motion by modern Theosophy, have been at work on the mind of the race.

In an article on "Strange Marriages: Ghosts United in Wedlock" which "P. N. N. R." contributes to *The Hindu* for 25th February, he reports the prevalence in South Kanara villages of an unwholesome engrossment with the ghosts of dead relatives. Spooks are demoralizing associates and mediumship is inevitably developed by the attempt to communicate with the decaying astral corpse, ensouled by the debased passions and desires which the real man has rejected; and that alone is invoked by necromantic practices, unless the entity attracted be the victim of suicide or accident or an elementary.

The arranging by the living of "marriages" between ghosts, as practised in South Kanara, is a ghastly farce, but it is far less dangerous than the "spirit marriages" of Western Spiritualism, one party to which is a living man or woman. H. P. B. warns in the strongest terms against this practice. The other party to such an unnatural union, unless it be a vampire, is not even the relic of a deceased human being. It is commonly an intelligent elemental of the airy kingdom, cunning and mischievous—the most powerful and malignant, in fact, of all the elemental forces. It has no form of its own.

The shape given to or assumed by any elemental is always subjective in its origin. It is produced by the person who sees, and who, in order to be more sensible of the elemental's presence, has unconsciously given it a form. Or it may be due to a collective impression of many individuals, resulting in the assumption of a definite shape which is the result of the combined impressions.

In THE THEOSOPHICAL MOVEMENT for June 1934 (pp. 124-5) appeared an account of the obsession of a young Indian by one of such *Pisâchas*. The student will find much of interest on the subject in H. P. B.'s "Thoughts on the Elementals", in *Raja-Yoga*.

A HINDU CHELA'S DIARY*

[The following article first appeared in four instalments in Mr. Judge's *Path*, Vol. I, for June, July, August and September 1886, pp. 65, 97, 131 and 169.—Eds.]

In the month of December he arrived at Benares, on what he hoped would be his last pilgrimage. As much as I am able to decipher of his curious manuscript, written in a mixture of Tamil—the South Indian language—with Mahratta, which, as you know, is entirely dissimilar, shows that he had made many pilgrimages to India's sacred places, whether by mere impulse or upon actual direction, I know not. If he had been only any ordinary religiously disposed Hindu we might be able to come to some judgment hereupon, for the pilgrimages might have been made in order to gain merit, but as he must long ago have risen above the flowery chains of even the Vedas, we cannot really tell for what reason these journeys were made. Although, as you know, I have long had possession of these papers, the time had not until now seemed ripe to give them out. He had, when I received them, already long passed away from these busy scenes to those far busier, and now I give you liberty to print the fragmentary tale without description of his person. These people are, you know, not disposed to have accurate descriptions of themselves floating about. They being real disciples, never like to say that they are, a manner quite contrary to that of those famed professors of occult science who opportunely or inopportunely declare their supposed chelaship from the house top.

*** "Twice before have I seen these silent temples standing by the rolling flood of sacred Ganges. They have not changed, but in me what changes have occurred! And yet that cannot be, for the I changeth not, but only the veil wrapped about, is either torn away or more closely and thickly folded round to the disguising of the reality. *** It is now seven months since I began to use the privilege of listening to Kunâla. Each time before, that I came to see him, implacable fate drove me back. It was Karma, the just law, which compels when we would not, that prevented me. Had I faltered then and returned to the life then even so far in the past, my fate in this incarnation would have been sealed—and he would have said nothing. Why? Happy was I that I knew the silence would have not indicated in him any loss of interest in my welfare, but only that the same Karma prevented interference. Very soon after first seeing him I felt that he was not what he appeared exter-

iorly to be. Then the feeling grew into a belief within a short time so strong that four or five times I thought of throwing myself at his feet and begging him to reveal himself to me. But I thought that was useless, as I knew that I was quite impure and could not be trusted with that secret. If I remained silent I thought that he would confide to me whenever he found me worthy of it. I thought he must be some great Hindu Adept who had assumed that illusionary form. But there this difficulty arose, for I knew that he received letters from various relatives in different parts, and this would compel him to practise the illusion all over the globe, for some of those relatives were in other countries, where he had been too. Various explanations suggested themselves to me. *** I was right in my original conception of Kunâla that he is some great Indian Adept. Of this subject I constantly talked with him since—although I fear I am not, and perhaps shall not be in this life worthy of their company. My inclination has always been in this direction. I always thought of retiring from this world and giving myself up to devotion. To Kunâla I often expressed this intention, so that I might study this philosophy, which alone can make man happy in this world. But then he usually asked me what I would do *there* alone? He said that instead of gaining my object I might perhaps become insane by being left alone in the jungles with no one to guide me; that I was foolish enough to think that by going into the jungles I could fall in with an adept; and that if I really wanted to gain my object I should have to work in the reform in and through which I had met so many good men and himself also, and when the Higher Ones, whom I dare not mention by any other names, were satisfied with me they themselves would call me away from the busy world and teach me in private. And when I foolishly asked him many times to give me the names and addresses of some of those Higher Ones he said once to me: 'One of our Brothers has told me that as you are so much after me I had better tell you once for all that I have no right to give you any information about them, but if you go on asking Hindus you meet what they know about the matter you might hear of them, and one of those Higher Ones may perhaps throw himself in your way without your knowing him, and will tell you what you should do.' These were orders, and I knew I must wait, and still I knew that through Kunâla only would I have my object fulfilled. ***

* The original MS. of this Diary as far as it goes is in our possession. The few introductory lines are by the friend who communicated the matter to us. [Ed.]

"I then asked one or two of my own countrymen, and one of them said he had seen two or three such men, but that they were not quite what he thought to be '*Raj Yogs*'. He also said he had heard of a man who had appeared several times in Benares, but that nobody knew where he lived. My disappointment grew more bitter, but I never lost the firm confidence that Adepts do live in India and can still be found among us. No doubt too there are a few in other countries, else why had Kunâla been to them. * * * In consequence of a letter from Vishnurama, who said that a certain X¹ lived in Benares, and that Swamiji K knew him. However, for certain reasons I could not address Swamiji K directly, and when I asked him if he knew X he replied: 'If there be such a man here at all he is not known.' Thus evasively on many occasions he answered me, and I saw that all my expectations in going to Benares were only airy castles. I thought I had gained only the consolation that I was doing a part of my duty. So I wrote again to Nilakant: 'As directed by you I have neither let him know what I know of him nor what my own intentions are. He seems to think that in this I am working to make money, and as yet I have kept him in the dark as regards myself, and am myself groping in the dark. Expecting enlightenment from you, etc.' * * * The other day Nilakant came suddenly here and I met Sw. K. and him together, when to my surprise K at once mentioned X, saying he knew him well and that he often came to see him, and then he offered to take us there. But just as we were going, arrived at the place an English officer who had done Kunâla a service in some past time. He had in some way heard of X and was permitted to come. Such are the complications of Karma. It was absolutely necessary that he should go too, although no doubt his European education would never permit him to more than half accept the doctrine of Karma, so interwoven backwards and forwards in our lives, both those now, that past and that to come. At the interview with X, I could gain nothing, and so we came away. The next day came X to see us. He never speaks of himself, but as 'this body'. He told me that he had first been in the body of a Fakir, who, upon having his hand disabled by a shot he received while he passed the fortress of Bhurtpore, had to change his body and choose another, the one he was now in. A child of about seven years of age was dying at that time, and so, before the complete physical death, this Fakir had entered the body

and afterwards used it as his own. He is, therefore, doubly not what he seems to be. As a Fakir he had studied Yoga science for 65 years, but that study having been arrested at the time he was disabled, leaving him unequal to the task he had to perform, he had to choose this other one. In his present body he is 53 years, and consequently the inner X is 118 years old. * * * In the night I heard him talking with Kunâla, and found that each had the same Guru, who himself is a very great Adept, whose age is 300 years, although in appearance he seems to be only 40.² He will in a few centuries enter the body of a *Kshatriya*,³ and do some great deeds for India, but the time has not yet come".

"Yesterday I went with Kunâla to look at the vast and curious temples left here by our forefathers. Some are in ruins, and others only showing the waste of time. What a difference between my appreciation of these buildings now with Kunâla to point out meanings I never saw, and that which I had when I saw them upon my first pilgrimage, made so many years ago with my father." * * * * *

A large portion of the MS. here, although written in the same characters as the rest, has evidently been altered in some way by the writer, so as to furnish clues meant for himself. It might be deciphered by a little effort, but I must respect his desire to keep those parts of it which are thus changed, inviolate. It seems that some matters are here jotted down relating to secret things, or at least, to things that he desired should not be understood at a glance. So I will write out what small portion of it as might be easily told without breaking any confidences.

It is apparent that he had often been before to the holy city of Benares, and had merely seen it as a place of pilgrimage for the religious. Then in his sight, those famous temples were only temples. But now he found, under the instruction of Kunâla, that every really ancient building in the whole collection had been constructed with the view to putting into imperishable stone, the symbols of a very ancient religion. Kunâla, he says, told him, that although the temples were made when no supposition of the ordinary people of those eras leaned toward the idea that nations could ever arise who would be ignorant of the truths then universally known, or that darkness would envelope the intellect of men, there were many Adepts then well known to the rulers and to the people. They were not yet driven by inexorable fate to places

¹ I find it impossible to decipher this name.

² There is a peculiarity in this, that all accounts of Cagliostro, St. Germain and other Adepts, give the apparent age as forty only.—[ED.]

³ The warrior caste of India.—[ED.]

remote from civilization, but lived in the temples, and while not holding temporal power, they exercised a moral sway which was far greater than any sovereignty of earth.¹ And they knew that the time would come when the heavy influence of the dark age would make men to have long forgotten even that such beings had existed, or that any doctrines other than the doctrine based on the material rights of *mine* and *thine*, had ever been held. If the teachings were left simply to either paper or papyrus or parchment, they would be easily lost, because of that decay which is natural to vegetable or animal membrane. But stone lasts, in an easy climate, for ages. So these Adepts, some of them here and there being really themselves Maha Rajahs,² caused the temples to be built in forms, and with such symbolic ornaments, that future races might decipher doctrines from them. In this, great wisdom, he says, is apparent, for to have carved them with sentences in the prevailing language would have defeated the object, since languages also change, and as great a muddle would have resulted as in the case of the Egyptian hieroglyphics, unless a key stone had also been prepared; but that itself might be lost, or in its own turn be unintelligible. The ideas underneath symbols do not alter, no matter what might be the language, and symbols are clear immortally, because they are founded in nature itself. In respect to this part of the matter, he writes down that Kunâla informed him that the language used then was not Sanskrit, but a far older one now altogether unknown in the world.

From a detached sentence in the MS., it is shadowed out that Kunâla referred to a curious building put up many years ago in another part of India and now visible, by which he illustrated the difference between an intelligent construction and an unintelligent one. This building was the product of the brain of a Chandala,³ who had been enriched through a curious freak. The Rajah had been told upon some event occurring, by his astrologers, that he must give an immense sum to the first person he saw next day, they intending to present themselves at an early hour. Next day, at

an unusually early season, the Rajah arose, looked out of the window, and beheld this Chandala. Calling his astrologers and council together and the poor sweeper into his presence, he presented him with lacs upon lacs of rupees, and with the money the Chandala built a granite building having immense monolithic chains hanging down from its four corners. Its only symbology was, the change of the chains of fate; from poor low caste to high rich low caste. Without the story the building tells us nothing.

But the symbols of the temple, not only those carved on them, but also their conjuncture, need no story nor knowledge of any historical events. Such is the substance of what he writes down as told him by Kunâla. He says also that this symbology extends not only to doctrines and cosmology, but also to laws of the human constitution, spiritual and material. The explanation of this portion, is contained in the altered and cryptic parts of the MS. He then goes on :

*** "Yesterday, just after sunset, while Kunâla and X were talking, Kunâla suddenly seemed to go into an unusual condition, and about ten minutes afterwards a large quantity of malwa flowers fell upon us from the ceiling.

"I must now go to—and do that piece of business which he ordered done. My duty is clear enough, but how am I to know if I shall perform it properly. *** When I was there and after I had finished my work and was preparing to return here, a wandering fakir met me and asked if he could find from me the proper road to Karli. I directed him, and he then put to me some questions that looked as if he knew what had been my business; he also had a very significant look upon his face, and several of his questions were apparently directed to getting me to tell him a few things Kunâla had told me just before leaving Benares with an injunction of secrecy. The questions did not on the face show that, but were in the nature of inquiries regarding such matters, that if I had not been careful, I would have violated the injunction. He then left me saying: 'you do not know me but we may see each other.' *** I got back last night and saw only X, to whom I related the incident with the fakir, and he said that, 'it was none other than Kunâla himself using that fakir's body who had said those things, and if you were to see that fakir again he would not remember you and would not be able to repeat his questions, as he was for the time being taken possession of for the purpose, by Kunâla, who often performs such things.' I then asked him if in that case Kunâla had really entered the fakir's body, as I have a strange reluctance toward asking Kunâla such ques-

¹ In the ancient Aztec civilization in Mexico, the Sacerdotal order was very numerous. At the head of the whole establishment were two high priests, elected from the order, solely for their qualifications, as shown by their previous conduct in a subordinate station. They were equal in dignity and inferior only to the sovereign, who rarely acted without their advice in weighty matters of private concern. (Sahagun, *Hist. de Nueva Espana*, lib. 2; lib. 3 cap. 9—*Torg. Mon Ind.* lib. 8 cap. 20; lib. 9, cap. 3, 56; cited by Prescott in *vol. I, Conq. Mex.* p. 66).—[ED.]

² King or Ruler.

³ A low caste man, e.g., a sweeper. Such a building can now be seen at Bijapur, India.—[ED.]

tions, and X replied that if I meant to ask if he had really and in fact entered the fakir's person, the answer was no, but that if I meant to ask if Kunâla had overcome that fakir's senses, substituting his own, the answer was, yes; leaving me to make my own conclusions. * * * I was fortunate enough yesterday to be shown the process pursued in either entering an empty body, or in using one which has its own occupant. I found that in both cases it was the same, and the information was also conveyed that a Bhut¹ goes through just the same road in taking command of the body or senses of those unfortunate women of my country who sometimes are possessed by them. And the Bhut also sometimes gets into possession of a part only of the obsessed person's body, such as an arm or a hand, and this they do by influencing that part of the brain that has relation with that arm or hand, in the same way with the tongue and other organs of speech. With any person but Kunâla I would not have allowed my own body to be made use of for the experiment. But I felt perfectly safe, that he would not only let me in again, but also that he would not permit any stranger, man or gandharba,² to come in after him. We went to—and he*** The feeling was that I had suddenly stepped out into freedom. He was beside me and at first I thought he had but begun. But he directed me to look, and there on the mat I saw my body, apparently unconscious. As I looked *** the body of myself, opened its eyes and arose. It was then superior to me, for Kunâla's informing power moved and directed it. It seemed to even speak to me. Around it, attracted to it by those magnetic influences, wavered and moved astral shapes, that vainly tried to whisper in the ear or to enter by the same road. In vain! They seemed to be pressed away by the air or surroundings of Kunâla. Turning to look at him, and expecting to see him in a state of samadhi, he was smiling as if nothing, or at the very most, but a part, of his power had been taken away *** another instant and I was again myself, the mat felt cool to my touch, the bhuts were gone, and Kunâla bade me rise.

He has told me to go to the mountains of—where—and—usually live, and that even if I were not to see anybody the first time, the magnetized air in which they live would do me much good. They do not generally stop in one place, but always shift from one place to another. They,

however, all meet together on certain days of the year in a certain place near Bhadrinath, in the northern part of India. He reminded me that all India's sons are becoming more and more wicked those adepts have gradually been retiring more and more toward the north, to the Himalaya mountains.

* * * Of what a great consequence is it for me to be always with Kunâla. And now X tells me the same thing that I have always felt. All along I have felt and do still feel strongly that I have been once his most obedient and humble disciple in a former existence. All my hopes and future plans are therefore centred in him. My journey therefore to up country has done me one good, that of strengthening my belief, which is the chief foundation on which the grand structure is to be built. * * * As I was walking past the end of Ramalinga's compound holding a small lamp of European make, and while there was no wind, the light there several times fell low. I could not account for it. Both Kunâla and X were far away. But in another moment, the light suddenly went out altogether, and as I stopped, the voice of revered Kunâla, who I supposed was many miles away, spoke to me, and I found him standing there. For one hour we talked; and he gave me good advice, although I had not asked it—thus it is always that when I go fearlessly forward and ask for nothing I get help at an actual critical moment—he then blessed me and went away. Nor could I dare to look in what direction. In that conversation, I spoke of the light going down and wanted an explanation, but he said I had nothing to do with it. I then said I wanted to know, as I could explain it in two ways *viz*: 1st, that he did it himself or 2d, that some one else did it for him. He replied, that even if it were done by somebody else, *no Yogee will do a thing unless he sees the desire in another Yogee's mind.*³ The significance of this drove out of my mind all wish to know *who* did it, whether himself, or an elemental or another person, for it is of more importance for me to know even a part of the laws governing such a thing, than it is to know who puts those laws into operation. Even some blind concatenation of nature might put such natural forces in effect in accordance with the same laws, so that a knowledge that nature did it would be no knowledge of any consequence.

"I have always felt and still feel strongly that I have already once studied this sacred philosophy

¹ An obsessing astral shell. The Hindus consider them to be the reliquæ of deceased persons.—[Ed.]

² Nature spirit or elemental.—[Ed.]

³ This sentence is of great importance. The Occidental mind delights much more in effects, personalities and authority, than in seeking for causes, just as many Theosophists have with persistency sought to know when and where Madame Blavatsky did some feat in magic, rather than in looking for causes or laws governing the production of phenomena. In this italicized sentence is the clue to many things, for those who can see.—[Ed.]

with Kunâla, and that I must have been, in a previous life, his most obedient and humble disciple. This must have been a fact, or else how to account for the feelings created in me when I first met him, although no special or remarkable circumstances were connected with that event. All my hopes and plans are centred in him, and nothing in the world can shake my confidence in him especially when several of my Brahmin acquaintances tell me the same things without previous consultation. * * *

"I went to the great festival of Durga yesterday, and spent nearly the whole day looking in the vast crowd of men, women, children and mendicants for some of Kunâla's friends, for he once told me to never be sure that they were not near me, but I found none who seemed to answer my ideas. As I stood by the ghaut at the river side thinking that perhaps I was left alone to try my patience, an old and apparently very decrepit Bairagee plucked my sleeve and said : 'Never expect to see any one, but always be ready to answer if they speak to you ; it is not wise to peer outside of yourself for the great followers of Vasudeva : look rather within.'

"This amazed me, as I was expecting him to beg or to ask me for information. Before my wits returned, he had with a few steps mingled with a group of people, and in vain searched I for him : he had disappeared. But the lesson is not lost.

"To-morrow I return to I——.

"Very wearying indeed in a bodily sense was the work of last week and especially of last evening, and upon laying down on my mat last night after continuing work far into the night I fell quickly sound asleep. I had been sleeping some hour or two when with a start I awoke to find myself in perfect solitude and only the horrid howling of the jackals in the jungle to disturb me. The moon was brightly shining and I walked over to the window of this European modeled house threw it open and looked out. Finding that sleep had departed, I began again on those palm leaves. Just after I had begun, a tap arrested my attention and I opened the door. Overjoyed was I then to see Kunâla standing there, once more unexpected.

"'Put on your turban and come with me', he said and turned away.

"Thrusting my feet into my sandals, and catching up my turban, I hurried after him, afraid that the master would get beyond me, and I remain unfortunate at losing some golden opportunity.

"He walked out into the jungle and turned into an unfrequented path. The jackals seemed to recede into the distance ; now and then in the mango trees overhead, the flying foxes rustled here and there, while I could distinctly hear the singular

creeping noise made by a startled snake as it drew itself hurriedly away over the leaves. Fear was not in my breast for master was in front. He at last came to a spot that seemed bare of trees, and bending down, seemed to press his hand into the grass. I then saw that a trap door or entrance to a stairway very curiously contrived, was there. Stairs went down into the earth. He went down and I could but follow. The door closed behind me, yet it was not dark. Plenty of light was there, but where it came from I cared not then nor can I now, tell. It reminded me of our old weird tales told us in youth of pilgrims going down to the land of the Devas where, although no sun was seen, there was plenty of light.

"At the bottom of the stairs was a passage. Here I saw people but they did not speak to me and appeared not to even see me although their eyes were directed at me. Kunâla said nothing but walked on to the end, where there was a room in which were many men looking as grand as he does but two more awful, one of whom sat at the extreme end.

(To be Concluded.)

ON GOETHE'S "FAUST" AND MAGIC

Two elements in the Faust story are of prime importance—the Agreement and Magic. The story consists of the experiences involved in a man's selling his Soul to the Devil, who becomes his servant-magician and gives him powers of magic and vast possessions in exchange for his Soul when he dies.

The story expresses the duality in man and in man's world. For the higher Soul resists being turned over to Evil and seeks help in powers of Good. But the lower Soul has such strong desires for its own immediate satisfactions that it is willing to risk future tortures for its other half and even to meet through its body future suffering for itself. The surrounding powers of Evil strongly reinforce the lower Soul. Hence in the traditional Faust story exist Evil Angels and Good Angels, Devil and God. Magic, with its powers and results, might work for the Good, but in the tradition it is an actual temptation and power of Evil. In every version of the story, Faust makes this Agreement or Sale. He then as a man becomes almost a plaything for the Devil to whom he is promised.

The Faust story is traced to the sixteenth-century necromancer Faustus about whom neither Cornelius Agrippa nor his friend and instructor Trithemius had any good word to say. The deve-

lopment of the Faust legend will interest the student of the history of Occultism in Europe; the hero's compact with the Devil is of still earlier origin, but through him the somewhat obscure idea took concrete verbal shape and public attention was focussed on magic, divine and devilish, even though the interpretations were invariably coloured by Christian theology. Lessing should have some credit for inspiring Goethe; not only did Lessing point to the great possibilities locked up in the Faust story, for some capable dramatist to handle, but actually he himself wrote a drama. Most of it was lost in Lessing's own lifetime, but Goethe must have been familiar with it, for he uses Lessing's points of view. But Goethe did not confine himself to Lessing's drama. He used all the material available.

In every way greatly heightening it, Goethe made it a lifelong pictorial symbol of his varied nature, his multifarious learning and experience. The interest he had in magic was evidently broad enough to lead him to some independent investigation, though the magical items in the traditional versions are abundantly repeated in Goethe's drama.

The subject of Magic was regarded by H. P. Blavatsky as of such importance that correct definitions of it and discrimination between the true and the false, or White Magic and Black, were a prime necessity. In the Preface to her first book she said:

It is the object of this work to correct the erroneous opinions concerning "magic".

At the close of that book she stated foundational principles of the philosophy she was expounding—the Wisdom Religion of India. Among these statements are the following devoted to Magic:

Magic, as a science, is the knowledge of these principles, and of the way by which the omniscience and omnipotence of the spirit and its control over nature's forces may be acquired by the individual while still in the body. Magic, as an art, is the application of this knowledge in practice.

Arcane knowledge misapplied, is sorcery; beneficently used, true magic or WISDOM.

Magic is spiritual WISDOM; nature, the material ally, pupil and servant of the magician. One common vital principle pervades all things, and this is controllable by the perfected human will.²

Historically, through unworthiness in its pursuits, the purity of the ancient Magic-Teaching was gradually lost. Magicians came to be distrusted because they "misapplied their arcane knowledge" and became mere sorcerers. The true magic, however, was only hidden away for future generations.

The Faust of tradition, including even

Marlowe's, knew only Black Magic. Goethe's Faust knew also—at first, and for a brief period—the other kind. But Goethe made no clear distinction, and after the Monologue scene he depicted only the Dark.

Goethe modified the chief persons of the story significantly, especially in the direction of scepticism. Faust in Goethe's drama makes the bargain but almost ridicules it. He also puts in a proviso by which in fact he remains master—that only if he is so pleased with some joy Mephistopheles brings that he cries to the moment to "linger, fly not yet"—only then will the bargain hold. Faust does not really believe that moment will ever come; and in fact it never does, but merely the expectation of it. Mephistopheles too is by no means the ordinary crass mediæval Devil. He is Doubt and Sneer incarnate. He calls himself the Spirit of Denial. On any impassioned outburst by Faust falls his Attendant's crisp indifference or lofty scorn.

In the Prologue, which occurs in Heaven, The LORD and Mephistopheles wager as to Faust's being dragged down into full evil. He is thus placed between the Generalissimo of Heaven, who confidingly leaves him to his own inherent goodness, and the Devil, who has full freedom to complete if he can his intended victim's undoing.

Immediately in Scene I Faust is found at his desk, restless, brooding over his attainments as scholar and his occupation as physician and teacher—all now seeming meaningless or untrue. He is swayed by those moods of self-belittlement and self-glorification that at times torment every striving soul. He has even lost the hope to instruct and elevate mankind, for he sees³ "with shame of heart, he has been teaching things of which he knows no part". Rising a little above his despair, he turns, as often before, to Magic, that he "might hear from some Spirit deeper Truths and see further into Nature's silent operations". To aid himself he opens a Book by Nostradamus, a Book containing White Magic and filled with "secret spells".

Led in this way to think of the "courses of the stars", of the great cosmic principles and planetary spirits, he realizes with fresh "light, power and fervour" that he is himself in the "planet hour of his own being". Pondering deeply over "spells and signs, symbolic letters, circles, lines", he cries to the "Spirits near him to answer". Going further into the Book, he "lights upon the sign of Macrocosmus"—that great Universal Whole of which man is the mirror in little. Now he rises to a very high consciousness: "New life

¹ *Isis Unveiled*, Vol. I, p. VII, footnote.

² *Ibid.*, Vol. II, pp. 588, 590.

³ Translation of *Faust*, Part I, by John Anster.

divine floods every sense"—"Was it a god who wrote these signs?"

In virtue of the magic lines,
The secret powers that Nature mould,
Their essence and their acts unfold.
How the spell before my sight
Brings nature's hidden ways to light :
All things with each other blending—
Each to all its being lending—
All on each in turn depending—
Heavenly ministers descending—
And again to heaven up-tending—
Floating, mingling, interweaving—
Rising, sinking, and receiving
Each from each, while each is giving
On to each, and each relieving
Each, the pails of gold, the living
Current through the air is heaving ;
Breathing blessings, see them bending,
Balanced worlds from change defending,
While everywhere diffused is harmony unending !

This is the consciousness, inexpressible in words, that comes with true Magic and makes of the experiencer a true Magician—a knower of the great Universal Principles in Nature, of the higher deific Beings, of the workings of planets and stars upon each other, upon the Universe and Man. Such consciousness is the result of reverent study and acceptance of the Universal. It is a state immeasurably exalted, in which the merely personal human existence is lost in oblivion. Man is known as blended with the Universal, all sense of separateness is gone, there is but Unity.

Yet Goethe, though he writes of this exalted contemplation of the Universal One, does not allow Faust to know himself as identical with that One, does not let him forget his "mortal sight" and "tumults of soul"; and just as he is to reach his highest height there flashes a doubt, "Is the glorious vision true?" Goethe himself, at least in intellectual imagination, must have touched the fringes of this consciousness; for one does not like to think of him as a mere copier of some other man's description. Possibly the whole passage is a record of his own experience in studying some great Magic-Books. If so, self-delusions prevented him from gaining proper instruction and further experience of true Magic.

Faust, held by the beatific, exclaims "Oh, what a vision!"—then, a *decisive* pause—"but a *vision only!*"¹ Passing out of the beatitude (perhaps like his creator), he follows the law of opposites, of duality. He cannot continue to "feel near that Illimitable Nature". His "withered heart" and "blighted soul" drag him down lower for his "solace" and his "food".

Impatiently he runs through the Book and finds the sign of the Spirit of the Earth. This

sign represents what is familiar. He utters the spell, feels the Spirit near—but shrinks with shuddering horror at the actual sight of it. Only when the Spirit taunts him, "poor writhing worm", with overweening foolhardy "pride in having thus defied the bounds which limit Man", is Faust able to cry, "I am Faust, thy Equal!" In rebuke the Spirit pictures its great deeds, as it "weaves the changes of life on Earth and works the living mantle of God". This rouses Faust to a sense of his own greatness and of kinship with that Spirit. But the Spirit then sharply derides him, "Man, thou art as the Spirit whom thou conceivest, not ME", and vanishes. Utterly confused at being "thus with savage scorn flung back upon the lot to mortals dealt and its uncertainties", Faust loses all faith in his higher self, in his great Vision, and even in the powers he has just exerted. Instead he thinks he is

Doomed for such dreams presumptuous to atone ;
All by one word of thunder overthrown !

He feels himself, "not (as he had thought) like the gods", but "the mean worm whose nature he resembles". "Everything fails him, the doors of Nature now bid defiance." With overwhelming power comes the wish to end his life. He has even placed the poison to his lips when the Easter Resurrection Hymn, sung outside, breaks upon his ear. "Boyhood's happy time" comes back; he feels again "deep meanings in the bells, old Remembrance twines around his heart, and thus EARTH has won her child again".

After that brief period of bliss and the shattering of it by doubt he becomes a mere victim of psychic moods, no spiritual understanding is operative, not even higher logical reason. An exacter picture of such a condition than the drama offers could hardly be found. This portion shows how little of a true magician Faust has been, how little, as H. P. Blavatsky indicates is necessary, he has "perfected his human will" and made it able to "control the one common vital principle that pervades all things". In fact, throughout even that high experience the Spirit of Denial has been with him as an invisible influence, pulling him away from any higher achievement. Accordingly he leaves his study to join in the Easter festivities. And this is the time when his future attendant-demon—that Spirit of Denial now visible—becomes in one or another form his companion, never again to leave him.

These Monologue passages where through the power of genuine Magic Faust beholds and shares in the Spiritual, but turns from IT as too remote and cold, to perceive the Earthly, at first with shiver-

¹ Italics not in the original.

ing terror, then with kindred self-glory, and last with humiliation as a very worm of the dust unfit to live—these parts, before he sees his demon at all, before he makes his Agreement, before the story as such exists—these portions a Theosophist may regard as the greatest in Goethe's drama. They are the drama in Faust's soul. The story merely unrolls afterwards, like a motion-picture film, from this Soul-Conflict. Here too, naturally, the essence of White Magic and of Black is apparent in this battle of good and evil inner forces.

Viewed from this standpoint of Soul-action, the outward story seems almost trivial. For the Soul as Striver is largely beaten in the conflict, its eyes are almost wholly fixed upon the Earth, and Faust as the human vehicle of that Soul lives, with only an occasional outrush of the higher man, largely the life of a worldly being, plunged in sense gratifications and sense sufferings. In the words of W. Q. Judge,¹ "That energy which should have strengthened the moral nature and fulfilled the aspirations after good, is drawn to the lower desires."

Magic as used by Mephistopheles is jugglery, sorcery, necromancy, witchcraft—all accepted by Faust as magic unquestioned, while the higher he has experienced is utterly forgotten. This magic lies and cheats, bewilders and betrays, for Faust's benefit. It makes him young, rich, powerful; the adored misleader of a simple German girl; the mysterious helper of an unlocated impoverished Emperor; the reviver in Rome and Greece of their past civilizations, their enchanters and enchantments; the ally of even the world-famous Helen, who is not too great to become for him a mystical Bride and Mother of a mystical Son.

Thus he runs a wide gamut of human experience. Thus he passes from youth to age; and at last, turns to altruism. Always he is regarded as a Master Magician. But in every case it is Mephistopheles who uses the magic, Faust merely expressing his desires and getting the results.

True Magic, "Spiritual WISDOM", Theosophy teaches, is for every man. Gradually it leads a loyal follower to the knowledge and practical use of his own latent powers. Such a follower works with his teacher, his occult books and customs, but he can never forget that his actual WISDOM comes from within. And his motive, if he succeeds in becoming a White Magician, must always be to put his acquirements to the service of his fellow-beings, to their spiritual benefit.

As for Faust, even in his last and noblest aspiration, his altruism, he is selfish, seeking his own glory. Ever delighting in the supposed impossible, he lays upon his demon-magician the task of redeeming a barren seashore and thus making for him a domain of his very own. In place of wave and sand, Faust will have gardens, homes, and a grateful free people, yet over them *he* will be lord. Through devil-magic even this is almost accomplished. But in everything Mephistopheles has done there is disregard of moral values; the Devil's might makes the master's right, even against at times that master's will. So too this altruistic effort, this "broad dwelling place for man",² is marred by violent seizure of property and by murder,—unintentional, declares Mephistopheles, yet actual and with results accepted by Faust. His hope is still before him to see himself as overlord "Upon free soil stand with a people free."

If, or when, this can happen, to that moment he might say, in the words of his initial proviso, "Linger awhile." "In the presentiment of such high bliss", he declares "the highest moment he enjoys in this." And "this" moment becomes his death moment. With such partial fulfilment of his Agreement, he sinks back surrounded by Lemures and Mephistopheles watching for his soul. Satans and Angels contend about the place, and to the astonishment of Mephistopheles, the Angels presently "rise bearing with them the immortal part of Faust". Then ensues an elaborate Beatification, simulating the actual Roman Catholic mode of recognition to a Saint. *And this is Faust's salvation!*

Why is the Faust story theosophically unsatisfying? Because it places Good and Evil outside of man, leaving him a mere sufferer or enjoyer, having a thing called Soul which these outside Forces fight to possess. Such a story is a natural outcome of any theology that pictures man as a passive recipient of his salvation, a believer, instead of an active worker of his own redemption through Self-Knowledge. The story is suited to puppets, not to men.

Why is the story famous? Because it represents with sharp distinction that duality with which man is ever struggling, and shows familiar difficulties in unfamiliar guise. Also (among other reasons) it is famous partly because, as seen even in its greatest version, the world has not yet outgrown the kind of theology that produced it.

¹ U. L. T. Pamphlet No. 6, p. 6.

² Translation of *Faust*, Part 2, by Anna Swanwick.

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