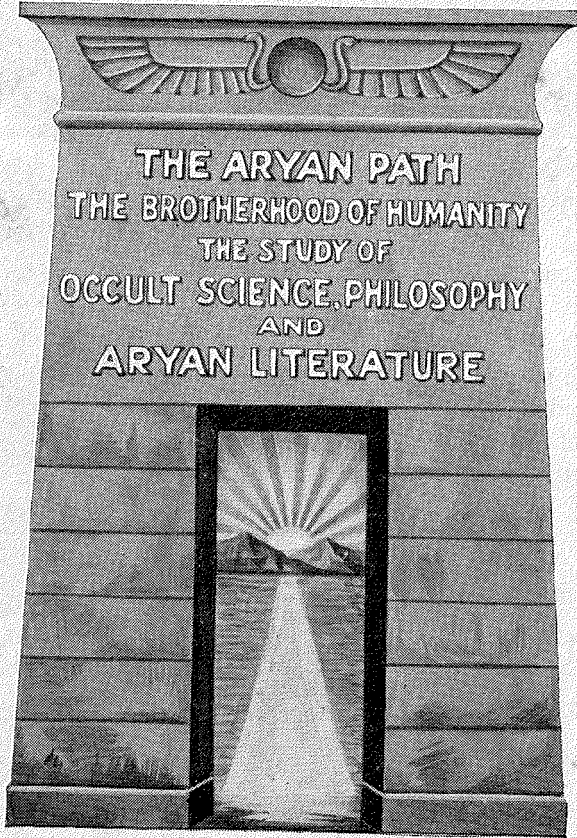




THE THEOSOPHICAL MOVEMENT

A MAGAZINE DEVOTED TO



THE ARYAN PATH
THE BROTHERHOOD OF HUMANITY
THE STUDY OF
OCCULT SCIENCE, PHILOSOPHY
AND
ARYAN LITERATURE

Vol. IX No. 2

December 17, 1938

Our knowledge will not pass away from the sight of man. It is the "gift of the Gods" and the most precious relic of all. The keepers of the sacred Light did not safely cross so many ages but to find themselves wrecked on the rocks of modern scepticism. Our pilots are too experienced sailors to allow us to fear any such disaster. We will always find volunteers to replace the tired sentries, and the world, bad as it is in its present state of transitory period, can yet furnish us with a few men now and then.

—MAHATMA 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 December, 1938

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“ACT FOR AND AS THE SELF”

In the task of self-preparation to work with the Law and help Nature the Theosophical student has no better friend in the entire body of the Teachings than the *mantram* phrase—Act for and as the Self. Simple in its wording the phrase is profound, needing more than one lifetime of meditation. It contains the key to the whole of the discipline of one who has undertaken to look upon life as probationary. The phrase shows the beginning of the way to the Higher Life, the end of which is the glorious realization of the phrase's full import.

W. Q. Judge, writing about the illusions of life, stated that they are difficult to surmount but that success can be attained by taking refuge in the Self. This is not done in an hour; even a mental perception of the truth requires time, and the realization of it in the sphere of Maya, wherein we live and act, comes after several lives. This should deject no one. For a score of lives and more we have taken Maya to our bosom as real, and it takes time to free ourselves from her tight hold of our being, because of the habit of thought and of psychic nature already established. Mr. Judge states that “those who with the eye of spiritual wisdom see that the Self is all, begin to reincarnate with that belief ingrained in them”. Among the Theosophical students are those who have hardly perceived, even with the mind, the significance of the truth that the Self is All, that there is but One Self. There are those who repeat with the lips while forgetting in the brain the memorized *mantram*. There are those who get caught up by the mighty magic of *prakriti* to such an extent that they recall their resolve to act as the Self and for the Self too late—after the mischief is done, if even then. But when an earnest practitioner has succeeded in stamping his own consciousness with the hall-mark of this truth and aspires to act out its implications he encounters the

most serious difficulty in discerning how the Self of Spirit or the One Self functions and in distinguishing the subtle, mysterious and cunning action of the Self of Matter or Maya.

Act for and as the Self: but there are aspects of the One Self in Nature, which includes our fellow-men, that puzzle us. It is not difficult for us to see the beauty of the One Self in a gorgeous sunrise, but when the sky is overcast, and the note of desolation is sounded by the siren of the hurricane, when death is busy and destruction stalks it is difficult to say—this is the Self, the Supreme Spirit. Much more is it easy to see Divinity in the sage and the saint, but what kind of divinity is there in the prostitute and the profligate? When the student endeavours to practise altruism the practical difficulties in the day-to-day contact with the mass of men and women are many and their nature is formidable.

The Self lives in masks; the Spirit robes itself in matter; the Soul is encased in a body. Personality is illusory—be it that of god or man or elemental. To pierce the mask anywhere so that the Self is glimpsed, we have to pierce first the mask which hides the Self within our selves, and hides it so thoroughly and so cunningly that we mistake the mask for the Self. The mask is a composite entity and is like the composite photograph. Behind that entity the Self shines, and until the mind which is the radiant ray of the Self is used to distinguish between the mask which imprisons it and the Self of which it is an emanation there is no hope for man.

Therefore the starting-point is the mind which has to be educated; we must make the mind perceive the truth, first as an abstraction, that there is but One Self. The myriad aspects of that Self are avenues to glimpse the Self and they should not be allowed to glamour us. An illustration will make

clear the point about the reality which is the Self and the glamour of aspects of the Self : a study of the human eyes and ears, of the organs of speech and of the creative function enable us to understand the nature of man ; but when they are mistaken for man, the Embodied Spirit, error ensues. The functioning of these organs helps us to trace the existence of the living actor behind them. The senses and the organs of a corpse do not bring us that knowledge, though we learn from it of another aspect of the One Life. Similarly, through the living organisms of Nature we can go to the God in Nature. Of all the living organisms, our own Spirit-Being is the window through which we see the Light of That which is the mystery of the Supreme. At the lower rung the Mind-Being is the window through which the Light of the Spirit-Being is glimpsed. When we make the thinking mind grasp this truth we begin to act up to it. We will fail and fall but the assurance is given to us :—

“The truth is obscured by that which is not true, and therefore all creatures are led astray. But in those for whom knowledge of the true Self has dispersed ignorance, the Supreme, as if lighted by the sun, is revealed. Those whose souls are in the Spirit, whose asylum is in it, who are intent on it and purified by knowledge from all sins, go to that place from which there is no return.”

SCENT PHOTOGRAPHY

An illustrated article, “The Camera Sees What the Nose Smells”, contributed by Mr. Waldemar Kaempffert to *The New York Times Magazine* for October 16, 1938, is of particular interest in connection with an illuminating “Note” appended to an article on Professor Yaeger’s work on smell and its basis which appeared in Volume IV of *The Theosophist*. Dr. Yaeger had convinced himself by experiment that the basis of scent in flowers and animals is inherent in the protoplasm which is the vital substance of living organisms. This inherent odoriferous element he had christened “odorigen”. On this *The Theosophist* comments :—

Dr. Yaeger’s “odorigen” is not perhaps *Jivatma* itself [the life principle], but is one of the links which connects it with the physical body ; it seems to be matter standing between *Sthula Sarira* [gross body] and *Jiva*.

Mr. Kaempffert describes the experiments of

a French scientist, Professor H. Devaux, who has devised a simple method of photographing scents. Using a pool of mercury on a tray and dusting its surface with talcum powder, the experimenter approaches to the mercury a glass plate to which the petal of a flower has been affixed with tape. A non-odorous substance has little or no effect but something from an odorous substance sweeps the powder aside and takes its place on the mercury as a dark deposit, forming a distinctive pattern. If the film of mercury is stirred, the characteristic scent of the petal can be detected, which is announced as establishing either that the scent “comes from material particles or that these particles are the scent itself”.

But, as pertinently remarked by a correspondent in *The Aryan Path*, November 1931, p. 816 :—

The mere fact of isolation or synthesis of perfumes and essences artificially in a chemical laboratory does not explain either the cause or nature of odours and least of all wherein they inhere in the substance.

The mystery of scent is a mystery still, as far as science is concerned. Even the fact that there is a flow of odorous particles from an odorous substance was recognized many years ago. See, for instance, Mr. Keely’s discussion of scent, quoted in *The Secret Doctrine* (I. 565), of which H.P.B. wrote that it is, “in all its fundamental principles, if not details, *Occultism pure and simple*” :—

As regards odour, we can only get some definite idea of its extreme and wondrous tenuity by taking into consideration that a large area of atmosphere can be impregnated for a long series of years from a single grain of musk ; which, if weighed after that long interval, will be found to be not appreciably diminished. The great paradox attending the flow of odorous particles is that they can be held under confinement in a glass vessel ! Here is a substance of much higher tenuity than the glass that holds it, and yet it cannot escape. It is as a sieve with its meshes large enough to pass marbles, and yet holding fine sand which cannot pass through ; in fact, a molecular vessel holding an atomic substance. This is a problem that would confound those who stop to recognize it.

Mr. Kaempffert utters an occult heresy when he declares that “we cannot liken scents to colours ; for colours reside as such not in objects, but in retinas and brains, which serve merely to transform waves of light into the red that we think is in a brick”, etc. Scent and colour are correlated, as are all the other qualitative results of the action of Fohat upon the One Element, but modern science knows naught of the “primordial Substance” of which H.P.B. writes (*The Secret Doctrine*, I. 330) :—

We touch and do not feel it ; we look at it without seeing it ; we breathe it and do not perceive it ; we hear and smell it without the smallest cognition that it is there.

PROGRESS AND CULTURE

[The following article is reprinted from *Lucifer*, Vol VI., p. 441, August 1890.—Eds.]

"Mated with a squalid savage—what to me were sun or clime?

I, the heir of all the ages, in the foremost files of time—

Not in vain the distance beacons. Forward,
forward let us range

Let the great world spin for ever down the
ringing grooves of change.

• Through the shadow of the globe we sweep into
the younger day

Better fifty years of Europe, than a cycle of
Cathay"

TENNYSON

We, of the century claiming itself as the XIXth of our era, are very proud of our Progress and Civilization—Church and Churchmen attributing both to the advent of Christianity—"Blot Christianity out of the pages of man's history", they say, "and what would his laws have been?—what his civilization?" Aye; "not a law which does not owe its truth and gentleness to Christianity, not a custom which cannot be traced in all its holy and healthful parts to the Gospel".

What an absurd boast, and how easily refuted!

To discredit such statements one has but to remember that our laws are based on those of Moses—life for life and tooth for tooth; to recall the laws of the *holy* Inquisition, *i.e.*, the burning of heretics and witches by the hecatomb, on the slightest provocation; the alleged right of the wealthiest and the strongest to sell their servants and fellow men into slavery, not to carry into effect the curse bestowed on Ham, but simply "to purchase the luxuries of Asia by supplying the slave market of the Saracens";¹ and finally the *Christian* laws upheld to this day in England, and called women's *disabilities*, social and political. Moreover, as in the blessed days of our forefathers' ignorance, we meet now with such choice bits of unblushing *blagua* as this, "We speak of our civiliz-

ation, our arts, our freedom, our laws, and forget entirely *how large a share of all is due to Christianity*" (Rose).

Just so! "our laws and our arts", but neither "our civilization" nor "our freedom". No one could contradict the statement that these were won in spite of the most terrible opposition by the Church during long centuries, and in the face of her repeated and loud anathemas against civilization and freedom and the defenders of both. And yet, notwithstanding fact and truth, it is being constantly urged that even the elevated position (?!) of the Christian woman as compared with her "heathen" sister, is entirely the work of Christianity! Were it true, this would at best be but a poor compliment to pay to a religion which claims to supersede all others. As it is not true, however—Lecky, among many other serious and trustworthy writers, having shown that "in the whole feudal legislation (of Christendom) women were placed in a *much lower legal position than in the Pagan Empire*"—the sooner and the oftener this fact is mentioned the better it will be for plain truth. Besides this, our ecclesiastical laws are honeycombed as has been said, with the Mosaic element. It is *Leviticus* not the Roman code, which is the creator and inspirer of legislation—in Protestant countries, at any rate.

Progress, says Carlyle, is "living movement". This is true; but it is so only on the condition that no dead weight, no corpse shall impede the freedom of that "living movement". Now in its uncompromising conservatism and unspirituality the Church is no better than a dead body. Therefore it did and still does impede true progress. Indeed, so long as the Church—the deadliest enemy of the ethics of Christ—was in power, there was hardly any progress at all. It was only after the French Revolution that real culture and civilization had a fair start.

Those ladies who claim day after day and night after night with such earnest and passionate eloquence, at "Woman's Franchise League" meetings, their legitimate share of rights as mothers, wives and citizens, and still attend "divine" service on Sundays—prosecute at best the unprofitable business of boring holes through sea-water. It is not the laws of the country that they should take to task, but the Church and chiefly themselves. It is the *Karma* of the women of our era. It was generated with Mary Magdalene, got into practical expression at the hands of the mother of Constantine, and found an ever renewed strength in every Queen and Empress "by the grace of God". Judean Christianity owes its life to a woman—*une sublime*

¹ *View of the State of Europe during the Middle Ages* by H. H. Hallam, LL.D., F.R.A.S., p. 614. The author adds: "This trade was not peculiar to Venice. In England, it was very common, even after the Conquest, to export slaves to Ireland; till in the reign of Henry II, the Irish came to a non-importation agreement which put a stop to the practice." And then, in a footnote: "William of Malmesbury accuses the Anglo-Saxon nobility of selling their female servants even when pregnant by them, as slaves to foreigners." This is the Christian mode of dealing as Abraham with Hagar with a vengeance!

hallucinée, as Renan puts it. Modern Protestantism and Roman Catholicism owe their illegitimate existence, again, to priest-ridden and church-going women; to the mother who teaches her son his first Bible lesson; to the wife or sister who forces her husband or brother to accompany her to church and chapel; to the emotional and hysterical spinster, the admirer of every popular preacher. And yet the predecessors of the latter have for fifteen centuries degraded women from every pulpit!

In *Lucifer* of October, 1889, in the article "The Women of Ceylon", we can read the opinion of Principal Donaldson, LL. D., of the University of St. Andrews, about the degradation of woman by the Christian Church. This is what he said openly in the *Contemporary Review*.

"It is a prevalent opinion that woman owes her present high position to Christianity. I used to believe in this opinion. But in the first three centuries I have not been able to see that Christianity had any favourable effect on the position of women, but, on the contrary, that it tended to lower their character and contract the range of their activity."

How very correct then, the remark of H. H. Gardener, that in the New Testament "the words sister, mother, daughter, and wife, are only names for degradation and dishonour"!

That the above is a fact may be seen in various works, and even in certain *Weeklies*. "Saladin" of the *Agnostic* gives in his last "At Random" eloquent proofs of the same by bringing forward dozens of quotations. Here are a few of these:—

"Mrs. Mary A. Livermore says: 'The early Church fathers denounced women as noxious animals, necessary evils, and domestic perils'."

"Lecky says: 'Fierce invectives against the sex form a conspicuous and grotesque portion of the writings of the fathers'."

"Mrs. Stanton says that holy books and the priesthood teach that 'woman is the author of sin, who [in collusion with the devil] effected the fall of man'."

"Gamble says that in the fourth century holy men gravely argued the question, 'Ought women to be called human beings?'"

"But let the Christian fathers speak for themselves. Tertullian, in the following flattering manner, addresses woman: 'You are the devil's gateway; the unsealer of the forbidden tree; the first deserter from the divine law. You are she who persuaded him whom the devil was not valiant enough to attack. You destroyed God's image—man'."

"Clement of Alexandria says: 'It brings shame to reflect of what nature woman is'."

"Gregory Thaumaturgus says: 'One man among a thousand may be pure; a woman, never'."

"'Woman is the organ of the devil.'—St. Bernard."

"'Her voice is the hissing of the serpent.'—St. Anthony."

"'Woman is the instrument which the devil uses to get possession of our souls.'—St. Cyprian."

"'Woman is a scorpion.'—St. Bonaventure."

"'The gate of the devil, the road of iniquity.'—St. Jerome."

"'Woman is a daughter of falsehood, a sentinel of hell, the enemy of peace.'—St. John Damascene."

"'Of all wild beasts the most dangerous is woman.'—St. John Chrysostom."

"'Woman has the poison of an asp, the malice of a dragon.'—St. Gregory the Great."

Is it surprising, with such instructions from the fathers, that the children of the Christian Church should *not* "look up to women, and consider them men's equals"?

Withal, it is emotional woman who, even at this hour of progress, remains as ever the chief supporter of the Church! Nay it is she again who is the sole cause, if we have to believe the Bible allegory, that there is any Christianity or Churches at all. For only imagine where would be both, had not our mother Eve listened to the tempting Serpent. First of all there would be no sin. Secondly, the Devil having been thwarted, there would be no need of any Redemption at all, nor of any woman to have "seed" in order that it should "bruise under its heel the serpent's head"; and thus there would be neither Church nor Satan. For as expressed by our old friend Cardinal Ventura de Raulica, Serpent-Satan is "one of the fundamental dogmas of the Church, and serves as a basis for Christianity". Take away that basis and the whole struggle topples overboard into the dark waters of oblivion.

Therefore, we pronounce the Church ungrateful to woman and the latter no worse than a willing martyr; for if her enfranchisement and freedom necessitated more than an average moral courage a century ago, it requires very little now; only a firm determination. Indeed, if the ancient and modern writers may be believed, in real culture, freedom, and self-dignity the woman of our century has placed herself far beneath the ancient Aryan mother, the Egyptian—of whom Wilkinson and Buckle say that she had the greatest influence and liberty, social, religious, and political among her countrymen—and even the Roman matron. The late Peary Chand Mitra has shown, "*Manu*" in hand, to what supremacy and honour the women of ancient Aryavarta had been elevated. The author of the "*Women of Ancient Egypt*" tells us that "from the earliest time of which we can catch a glimpse, the women of Egypt enjoyed a freedom and independence of which modern nations are only beginning to dream". To quote once more from "*At Random*":—

"Sir Henry Maine says: 'No society, which preserves any tincture of Christian institutions, is ever likely to restore to married women the personal liberty conferred on them by the Roman Law.'"

"The cause of 'Woman's Rights' was championed in Greece five centuries before Christ".

"Helen H. Gardener says: 'When the Pagan law recognised her [the wife] as the equal of her husband, the Church discarded that law'.

"Lecky says: 'In the legends of early Rome we have ample evidence both of the high moral estimate of women and of their prominence in Roman life. The tragedies of Lucretia and of Virginia display a delicacy of honour and a sense of the supreme excellence of unsullied purity which no Christian nation can surpass.'"

"Sir Henry Maine, in his 'Ancient Law' says that 'the inequality and oppression which related to women disappeared from Pagan laws', and adds: 'the consequence was that the situation of the Roman female became one of great personal and proprietary independence; but Christianity tended somewhat, from the very first, to narrow this remarkable liberty.' He further says that 'the juriconsults of the day contended for better laws for wives, but the Church prevailed in most instances, and established the most oppressive ones.'"

"Professor Draper, in his 'Intellectual Development of Europe', gives certain facts as to the outrageous treatment of women by Christian men' (the clergy included) which it would be exceedingly indelicate in me to repeat.

"Moncure D. Conway says: 'There is not a more cruel chapter in history than that which records the arrest, by Christianity, of the natural growth of European civilization regarding women.'"

"Neander, the Church historian, says: 'Christianity diminishes the influence of woman.'"

Thus, it is amply proved that instead of an "elevated" position, it is a *degraded* one to which Christianity (or rather "Churchianity") has brought woman. Apart from this, woman has nought to thank it for.

And now, a word of good advice to all the members of Leagues and other societies connected with Woman's Rights. In our days of culture and progress, now that it is shown that in *Union* alone lies strength, and that tyrants can be put down only by their own weapons; and that finally we find that nothing works better than a "strike"—let all the champions of women's rights strike, and pledge themselves not to set foot in church or chapel until their rights are re-established and their equality with men recognised by law. We prophesy that before six months are over every one of the Bishops in Parliament will work as jealously as themselves to bring in bills of reformation and pass them. Thus will Mosaic and Talmudic law be defeated to the glory of—WOMAN.

But what are really culture and civilization? Dickens' idea that our hearts have benefited as much by macadam as our boots, is more original from a literary, than an aphoristical, standpoint. It is not true in principle, and it is disproved in nature by the very fact that there are far more good-hearted and noble-minded men and women in muddy country villages than there are in macadamised

Paris or London. Real culture is spiritual. It proceeds from within outwards, and unless a person is naturally noble-minded and strives to progress on the spiritual before he does so on the physical or outward plane, such culture and civilization will be no better than whitened sepulchres full of dead men's bones and decay. And how can there be any true spiritual and intellectual culture when dogmatic creeds are the State religion and enforced under the penalty of the opprobrium of large communities of "believers". No dogmatic creed can be progressive. Unless a dogma is the expression of a universal and proven fact in nature, it is no better than mental and intellectual slavery. One who accepts dogmas easily ends by becoming a dogmatist himself. And, as Watts has well said: "A dogmatical spirit inclines a man to be censorious of his neighbours... He is tempted to disdain his correspondents as men of low and dark understandings because they do not believe what he does."

The above finds its demonstration daily in bigoted clergymen, in priests and Rabbis. Speaking of the latter and of the *Talmud* in connection with progress and culture, we note some extraordinary articles in *Les Archives Israelites*, the leading organ of the French Jews, at Paris. In these the stagnation of all progress through fanaticism is so evident, that after reading some papers signed by such well-known names of *men of culture* as F. Crémieux (*Clericalisme et Judaïsme*), A. Franck, a member of the Institute (*Les Juifs et L'Humanité*), and especially an article by Elie Aristide Astruc, "*Grand rabbin de Bayonne, grand rabbin honoraire de la Belgique*", etc.—("Pourquoi nous restons Juifs")—no one can detect the faintest trace of the progress of the age, or preserve the slightest hope of ever witnessing that which the Christians are pleased to call the moral regeneration of the Jews. This article (not to mention the others), written by a man who has an enormous reputation for learning and ability, bears on its face the proofs of what is intellectual culture, *minus* spirituality. The paper is addressed to the French Jews, considered as the most progressed of their race, and is full of the most ardent and passionate apology for Talmudic Judaism, soaked through and through with colossal religious self-opinionatedness. Nothing can approach its self-laudation. It precludes every moral progress and spiritual reformation in Judaism; it calls openly upon the race to exercise more than ever an uncompromising exclusiveness, and awakens the darkest and the most bigoted form of ignorant fanaticism. If such are the views of the leaders of the Jews settled in France, the hotbed of civilization and progress,

what hope is there left for their coreligionists of other countries?

The article, "Why we remain Jews", is curious. A. Astruc, the learned author thereof, notifies his readers solemnly that the Jews have to remain *nolens volens* Jews, as not one of the existing religions could "satisfy the genius of the nation". "Were we forced to break with Judaism", he argues, "where is that other creed which could guide our lives?" He speaks of the star that once arose in the East and led the Magi to Bethlehem, but asks, "could the East, the cradle of religions, give us now a true creed? Never!" Then he turns to an analysis of Islamism and Buddhism. The former he finds too dry in dogma and too ritualistic in form, and shows that it could never satisfy the Israelitish mind. Buddhism with its aspirations towards *Nirvana*, considered as the greatest realisation of bliss and "the most abstruse consciousness of non-being" (?) seems to him too negative and passive.

We will not stop to discuss this new phase of metaphysics, i.e., the phenomenon of *non-being* endowed with self-consciousness. Let us rather see the author's analysis of the two forms of Christianity—Roman Catholicism and Protestantism. The former with its Trinitarianism, and the dogmas of Divine Incarnation and Redemption, are incomprehensible "to the free mind of the Israelite"; the latter is too much scattered into innumerable sects to ever become the religion of the future. Neither of these two faiths "could satisfy a Jew", he says; therefore, the Rabbi implores his coreligionists to remain faithful to Judaism, or the Mosaic law, as this faith is *the best and the most saving of all*; it is, in short, as he puts it, "the ultimate as the highest expression of human religious thought".

This ultra-fanatical article has drawn the attention of several "Christian" papers. One of these takes its author to task severely for his fear of dogmas only because human reason is unable to comprehend them; as though, he adds, "any religious faith could ever be built upon reason"! This is well said, and would denote real progressive thought in the mind of the critic, had not his definition of belief in dogmas been a *bona fide* defence of them, which is far from showing philosophical progress. Then the Russian reviewer, we are happy to say, defends Buddhism against the Rabbi's assault.

"We would have our honourable friend understand that he is quite wrong in undervaluing Buddhism, or regarding it, as he does, as infinitely below Judaism. Buddhism with its spiritual aspiration heavenward, and its ascetic tendencies, is, with all its defects, most undeniably more spiritual and humanitarian than Judaism ever was; especially modern Judaism with its inimical exclusiveness, its dark and despotic *kahal*, its deaden-

ing talmudic ritualism, which is a Jewish substitute for religion, and its determined hatred of all progress" (*Nov. Vremya*).

This is good. It shows a beginning, at any rate, of spiritual culture in the journalism of a country regarded hitherto as only *semi-civilised*, while the press of the fully civilised nations generally breathes religious intolerance and prejudice, if not hatred, whenever speaking of a *pagan* philosophy.

And what, after all, does *our* civilization amount to in the face of the grandiose civilizations of the Past, now so remote and so forgotten, as to furnish our modern conceit with the comforting idea that there never were any true civilizations at all before the advent of Christianity? Europeans call the Asiatic races "inferior" because, among other things, they eat with their hands and use no pocket-handkerchiefs. But how long is it that we, of Christendom, have ceased eating with our thumb and fingers, and begun blowing our noses with cambric? From the beginnings of the nations and down to the end of the XVIIIth century Christendom has either remained ignorant of, or scorned the use of, the fork. And yet in the Rome of the Cæsars, civilization was at the height of its development; and we know that if at the feasts of Lucullus, famous for their gorgeous luxury and sumptuousness, each guest chose his succulent morsel by plunging his fingers into a dish of rare viands, the guests of the Kings of France did the same as late as the last century. Almost 2,000 years rolled away between Lucullus and the Pagan Cæsars on the one hand and the latest Bourbons on the other, yet the same personal habits prevailed; we find the same at the brilliant courts of Francois I, Henry II, Louis XIII, and Louis XIV. The French historian, Alfred Franklin, gives in his interesting volumes *La Vie privée d'autrefois du XII au XVIII siècles, les Repas*, etc., a mass of curious information, especially as to the etiquette and the laws of propriety which existed in those centuries. He who, instead of using daintily his three fingers, used the whole hand to fish a piece of food out of the dish, sinned as much against propriety in those days, as he who puts his knife to his mouth while eating, in our own day. Our forefathers had very strict rules on cleanliness: e.g., the three fingers being *de rigueur*, they could be neither licked, nor wiped on one's jacket, but had to be cleaned and dried after every course "on the table cloth". The VIth volume of the work named acquaints the reader with all the details of the sundry customs. The modern habit of washing one's hands before dinner—existing now in truth, only in England—was strictly *de rigueur*, not only at the courts of the French kings, but was a general custom, and had to be repeated before every course. The office was

performed at courts by chamberlains and pages, who holding in their left hand a gold or silver basin, poured with their right hand out of a similar jug, aromatic, tepid water, on to the hands of the diners. But this was in the reign of Henry III and IV. Two centuries later, in the face of progress and civilization, we see this custom disappearing, and preserved only at the courts and by the highest aristocracy. In the xvth century it began to fall into desuetude: and even Louis the XIV limited his ablutions to a wet napkin. In the midst of the *bourgeoisie* it had almost disappeared; and Napoleon I washed his hands only once before dinner. To-day no country save England has preserved this custom.

How much cleaner are the primitive people in eating than we are—the Hindus, for instance, and especially the Brahmans. These use no forks, but they take a full bath and change entirely their clothes before sitting down to dinner, during which they wash their hands repeatedly. No Brahman would eat with both his hands, or use his fingers for any other purpose while eating. But the Europeans of the eighteenth century had to be reminded, as we find in various works upon etiquette, of such simple rules as the following: "It is considered improper, and even indecent, to touch one's nose, especially when full of snuff, while eating one's dinner" (*loc. cit.*). Yet Brahmans are "pagans" and our forefathers Christians.

In China, native forks (chop-sticks) were used 1,000 years B.C., as they are now. And when was the fork adopted in Europe? This is what Franklin tells us:

Roasted meats were eaten with fingers as late as the beginning of this century. Montaigne remarks in his *Essais* that he more than once bit his fingers through his habitual precipitation in eating. The fork was known in the days of Henry III, but rarely used before the end of the last century. The wife of Charles le Bel (1324) and Clemence of Hungary had in their dowry each one fork only; and the Duchess of Tours had two. Charles V (1380) and Charles VI (1418) had in their table inventory only three golden forks—for fruit. Charlotte d'Albrey (1514) three likewise, which were, however, never used.

Germany and Italy adopted the fork at their meals a century earlier than did the French. Cornet, an Englishman, was much surprised, while travelling in Italy in 1609, to find "a strange-looking, clumsy, and dangerous weapon called a fork", used by the natives while eating. In 1651 we find Ann of Austria refusing to use this "weapon", and eating together with her son (Louis XIV) with her fingers. The fork came into general use only at the beginning of our own century.

Whither then shall we turn to find a corroboration of the mendacious claim, that we owe our civilization and culture, our arts, sciences, and all, to the elevating and benign influence of Christianity? We owe to it nothing—nothing at all, neither physically nor morally. The progress we have achieved, so far, relates in every case to purely physical appliances, to objects and things, not to the *inner* man. We have now every convenience and comfort of life, everything that panders to our senses and vanity, but not one atom of moral improvement do we find in Christendom since the establishment of the religion of Christ. As the cowl does not make the monk, so the renunciation of the old Gods has not made men any better than they were before, but only, perhaps, worse. At any rate, it has created a new form of hypocrisy—*cant*; nor has civilization spread as much as is claimed for it. London is civilized, but in truth—only in the West-end. As to the East-end with its squalid population, and its desolate wilderness of Whitechapel, Limehouse, Stepney, etc., it is as uncultured and almost as barbarous as Europe was in the early centuries of our era, and its denizens, moreover, have acquired a form of brutality quite unknown to those early ages, and never dreamt of by the worst savages of modern heathen nations. And it is the same in every Christian metropolis, in every town and city; outward polish, inward roughness and rotteness—a Dead Sea fruit indeed!

The simple truth is that the word "civilization" is a very vague and undefined term. Like good and evil, beauty and ugliness, etc., civilization and barbarism are relative terms. For that which to the Chinaman, the Hindu, and the Persian would appear the height of culture, would be regarded by the European as a shocking lack of manners, a terrible breach of Society etiquette. In India the traveller is disgusted whenever he sees the native using his fingers instead of a pocket-handkerchief. In China, the Celestial is profoundly sickened at perceiving a European storing carefully into his pocket the product of his mucous glands. In Bombay the Puritan English woman regards, suffused with blushes, the narrow space of bared waist, and the naked knees and legs of the native woman. Bring the Brahmanee into a modern ball-room—nay, the "Queen's Drawing-room"—and watch the effect produced on her. Several thousand years B.C. the Amazons danced the Circle Dance around the "Great Mother", at the Mysteries; the daughters of Shiloh, bare to the waist, and the prophets of Baal divested of their clothes, whirled and leaped likewise at the Sabeen festivals. This was simply symbolical of the motion of the planets around the Sun, but is now branded as a *phallic dance*. How then will future generations characterize our modern ball-room dances and

favourite *waltz*? What difference is there between the ancient priestesses of the God Pan, or the Bacchantes, with the rest of the sacred dancers, and the modern priestesses of Terpsichore? We really see very little. The latter, nude almost down to their waists, dance likewise their "circle dance", while whirling round the ball-room; the only distinction between them being, that the former performed their dance without mixing with the opposite sex, while the waltzers are clasped in turn in the arms of strangers, of men who are neither their husbands nor their brothers.

How unfathomable are thy mysteries, O sphinx of progress, called modern civilization!

H.P.B.

WHY THE CHURCHES HAVE FAILED

Writing on "Why Man Has Failed" (*Peace News*, 10th September 1938), Mr. Laurence Housman shows that the Christian sophistry that seeks to justify war is rooted in failure to share the courageous faith of Jesus "that out of the returning of good for evil good would come, that human nature would so respond". Lacking that faith, man has sought to rationalize and even to justify his antagonisms.

It is a strange commentary, not only on all human history, but also on the history of Christianity up to date, that probably far more harm has been done in the world, far more injustice, far more cruelty and oppression, with more far-reaching results of destruction and desolation and hindrance to the coming of God's kingdom on earth, by man's doing of things which he believed to be right (or at least of what he believed he had a right to do), than by doing what he knew to be wrong.

Yet the reason for that is perfectly simple; in spite of Christ's teaching to the contrary he has always believed—believes still—in the returning of evil for evil as the right cure for things that go wrong, as the true and ultimate expression of power.

Mr. Housman is profoundly right. It was inevitable that such a false premise should have led to the cruelty, the misery, the degradation in which modern civilization finds itself. The only way out is to preach and to practise the doctrines of right action which Jesus and every great spiritual Teacher have taught; right action is possible with the recognition of the fact of human solidarity, of Universal Brotherhood, which it is the first object of the Theosophical Movement to promote. The identity of all men's physical origin makes no appeal to the higher feelings, but the recognition of the identity of the Spirit in all men and women would lead mankind far along the road of real charity and brotherly good will. No man could uphold injustice or defend war who recognized that by

wronging another he wrongs himself and not himself alone but the whole of humanity in the long run. But to act correctly it is necessary to possess right knowledge.

Several articles in *The Aryan Path* for December are given to the consideration of the Christian church and wherein it has fallen short of what might have been expected of a body professing to follow the Nazarene Teacher.

In a striking essay, "Jesus versus the Church", Dr. Bharatan Kumarappa analyzes the failure of organized Christianity, with special reference to India—the church's negation of the teachings and the example of Jesus—in its doctrinal provincialism; in its insistence on mediators between man and Deity, on rites and ceremonies, and on formal prayers at fixed places and on set occasions, in its sanctioning of war; in its condoning of injustice and in its perpetuation of racial distinctions.

Mr. Jack Common's theme is "Christ in India" but his conclusion would be startling to Christian complacency. For he writes:—

With the appearance of Mr. Gandhi and his movement, one could say for the first time that Christianity began to exist in this great land... In the West Christianity is decaying, held too fast in dying churches that have long forgotten the simplicity and imperativeness of the creed they hold in closed fists. Europe does not know how to co-operate any longer... It has lost the secret of brotherhood, the immortal gesture by which man proclaims his unity with man... We'll have to learn to unite again, to make the peace on earth of the comers to the Kingdom. For Britain that lesson may well be learnt where she has never been able to teach it, in India, at the feet of Mr. Gandhi.

Still another article by Mrs. May Perry describes how she has tried both the Roman Catholic and the Protestant Churches in the West and has found them both wanting.

None of these writers, however, puts his finger on the basic reason why men have not even attempted seriously to put the precepts of Jesus into practice, i.e., that the rational basis of those precepts has not been grasped. As pointed out in the editorial in the December *Aryan Path*, absence of knowledge is the fundamental cause, and that knowledge is not available in the churches.

Practice of truths without some apprehension of their cosmic roots and their manifestation in Nature as Laws of Nature is not quite possible.

All religions without exception give ethical injunctions, but they do not make men see *why* they should be good. Theosophy provides the metaphysical basis, the seeds of right discrimination, without which the fruit of right action cannot be gathered. Only, as said, when human solidarity is recognized as a fact will the evil effects of its denial become self-evident and the very instinct of self-defence will range itself on the side of Wisdom Divine.

THE WORK ON OURSELVES

If thou art taught that sin is born of action and bliss of absolute inaction, then tell them that they err. Non-permanence of human action; deliverance of mind from thralldom by the cessation of sin and faults, are not for "Deva Egos". Thus saith the "Doctrine of the Heart".

—*The Voice of the Silence*

There is, first, our own work, in and on ourselves, each one. That has for its object the enlightenment of oneself for the good of others. If that is pursued selfishly some enlightenment comes, but not the amount needed for the whole work. We have to watch ourselves so as to make of each a centre from which, in our measure, may flow out the potentialities for good that from the adept come in large and affluent streams. The future then, for each, will come from each present moment. As we use the moment so we shift the future up or down for good or ill.

—*Letters That Have Helped Me*

There are two kinds of devotees of the Great Self: those who seek emancipation from the woes of birth and lose themselves in the Light of that Self; and then, those who voluntarily exile themselves from the World of Weal and, accepting the martyrdom of self-conscious existence, live to benefit mankind.

The Esoteric Philosophy recognizes the existence of the first path, that of the release of the Soul in its realization of the Supreme Spirit; but the Masters of that Philosophy teach Their disciples to walk the second path—by Self-Immolation. Through a prolonged training, extending over more than one life, those disciples learn the mystic meaning of Self-Immolation, through "long and bitter duty". Adaptability—Right Adaptability—to the world of mortals is the master-power of those who live as Impersonal Individualities, continuously helping humanity in the mass to rise higher. Their disciples, walking the way of duty leading to that supreme Self-Immolation, slowly unfold that power of adaptability whereby real soul-perception is gained and true soul-service rendered. The great moment of Choice looms far, far away, but that moment of Great Choice is made up of innumerable moments of small choices. In the performance of the plain duties of life with disinterestedness and with concentration we purify the motive and acquire the method and thereby learn the art of serving by living. This is preparation for the moment of Great Choice.

The student of the Esoteric Philosophy has to learn to control the senses, to make porous the brain, to purify his desires, and to acquire knowledge so that he may live on, helping humanity to cease to be merely a superior genus of animals. Those desiring emancipation also work on their senses, their brain, their emotions and their thoughts but, their motive being different, their method also becomes different.

The Esoteric Philosophy lays down three injunctions for its earnest practitioner:—

I. Become impermeable to the lower titanic forces which surround you.

II. Become invulnerable in your personality.

III. Become immortal in your individuality.

This cannot happen before every animal element is eliminated from your nature.

The first is related to our connection with the ocean of Life in which we live: in that ocean are lower elemental forces and the waves made up by them are moving towards the shore of matter, while we human beings are trying to move towards the other shore, *viz.*, that of spirit. Also, there is the Astral Light which is enlivened by man's use of those forces; to its influence also we have to become impermeable. We ourselves, however, each one of us, in the past, has given to that Light his own quota and through this he attracts to himself his Karmic affinities which make him permeable to the lower titanic forces. It is this quota which makes our second task so very difficult.

Achilles was invulnerable except in the heel, but that is where the arrow of Paris pierced him. Most students are vulnerable in numerous places, and one by one these have to be so cleansed and so strengthened that we become *wholly* invulnerable. Let us not make the mistake of allowing some Thetis to dip us in the Styx, but let us plunge into it ourselves, and emerge not from it till every part of the personality, from head to heel, becomes invulnerable! To become invulnerable the personality must lose its own existence as a quasi-living entity and become but a crystal lamp through which the glory and the grace of the Soul streams forth. Personality is the red flower proud of its beauty which grows out of the dung-heap of egotism. The world of matter and of mortals prizes it as something fine; to the Soul its only worth is in the possibility of its becoming a channel and an instrument for its own work. To become impersonal does not imply the loss of personality but its transmutation into a beneficent vehicle for the impersonal forces of God in Nature, just as that Deity Itself is but

an impersonal reflection of the unfathomable Absolute.

To become immortal in our individuality is a high enterprise. The nature of the God in us, the character of the Divinity which we are, will not be known to us till we have succeeded in observing the two previous injunctions in some measure. But while we are holding the mind and the senses against the attacks of the titanic forces, while we are watching the machinations of the personality, we should steadfastly endeavour to perceive that the Great Self is there in our own heart. If we follow the lines of our determination we shall gain the active guidance of the Self within. Not until it is admitted that the Self eternally persists and is always unmodified, will any real knowledge be acquired by us. Patanjali's aphorism gives us the starting exercise: "The modifications of the mental state are always known, because the presiding Spirit is not modified." When the ever-modifying mind catches the gleam of the Unmodifiable Spirit the way to immortality has opened.

SYMBOLISM

Mr. Claude Houghton reviewed in *The Aryan Path* for October *Symbolism and Belief* (Allen and Unwin, London. 15s.) Dr. Edwyn Bevan, whose Gifford Lectures of 1933 and 1934 are presented in this volume, was ostensibly under the restriction laid down in Lord Gifford's will that speakers on his foundation must rest what they affirm solely upon grounds of reason, without appeal to scripture or dogma. Any impartial student of comparative religions, however, must deplore with Mr. Houghton the lecturer's pro-Christian bias, which comes out repeatedly in the distinction which he draws between the Hebraic religions (with which he groups Zoroastrianism) and the Oriental religions to the disparagement of the latter. This betrays him into such indefensible statements, for example, as that the Hebraic view of God was the view of Jesus! It is not candid to brush aside in a slighting phrase the basic Hindu concept of Brahma and to assert that:—

If we leave out of account the peculiar development of pantheistic mysticism in India, seen already in the Upanishads, which are perhaps older than Amos and Hosea (8th century B.C.), it cannot be denied that the idea of God in the Old Testament, as we have it, is less anthropomorphic than the idea of God in any other religion of the ancient world, till we come to the philosophical transformation of the religious tradition in Greece.

But quite aside from the learned lecturer's bias, it is most difficult to present a thesis on symbolism on such a basis as the foundation prescribes.

Since the symbolic formula attempts to characterise that which is above scientific reasoning, and as often far beyond our intellects, it must needs go beyond that intellect in some shape or other, or else it will fade out from human remembrance. (*The Secret Doctrine* I. 473)

To any one who has gained even an inkling of the breadth and depth of the significance of the subject, as suggested in *The Secret Doctrine*, Dr. Bevan's treatment of symbolism must seem disappointingly superficial and inadequate. He confines his study largely to more or less abstract mental concepts and emotional feelings and their connotations, e.g., height, time, light, the feeling of the beautiful, etc., leaving out of account all concrete symbols, geometrical, numerical and other, such as the point in the circle, the cross, the Pythagorean triangle, the serpent, the tree, the egg, the lotus, the wealth of meaning of all of which *The Secret Doctrine* illuminatingly suggests. There much evidence is assembled for H.P.B.'s statement:

There are no ancient symbols, without a deep and philosophical meaning attached to them; their importance and significance increasing with their antiquity. (*The Secret Doctrine*, I. 379)

Dr. Bevan defines a symbol very loosely as "something presented to the senses or the imagination—usually to the senses—which stands for "something else". He makes an arbitrary division between "visible objects or sounds which stand for something of which we already have direct knowledge" and symbols which "purport to give information about the things they symbolize". This division would not apply in the case of a true symbol, which may well fill both rôles, for the ancient symbols were not adopted haphazardly but combined the conception of the Divine Invisible with the earthly and visible on the lines of analogy. "As above, so below."

"Every symbol", H.P.B. declared, "must yield three fundamental truths and four implied ones, otherwise the symbol is false."

Every religious and philosophical symbol had seven meanings attached to it, each pertaining to its legitimate plane of thought, i.e., either purely metaphysical or astronomical; psychic or physiological, etc., etc. These seven meanings and their applications are hard enough to learn when taken by themselves; but the interpretation and the right comprehension of them become tenfold more puzzling, when, instead of being correlated, or made to flow consecutively out of and to follow each other, each, or any one of these meanings is accepted as the one and sole explanation of the whole symbolical idea. (*The Secret Doctrine*, II. 538)

What is the source of true symbols? The Ancients, who were in possession of the true teachings, knew that nothing could be preserved in human memory without some outward symbol.

From the very beginning of Æons—in time and space in our Round and Globe—the Mysteries of Nature (at any rate those which it is lawful for our

ances to know) were recorded by the pupils of those same now invisible "heavenly men", in geometrical figures and symbols. The keys thereto passed from one generation of "wise men" to the other. (*The Secret Doctrine*, I. 612)

The keys to the Universal Symbolism are still in the keeping of the Initiates, so how is it to be expected that a merely profane thinker, however great his erudition in the dead letter of orthodox symbolism, should be able to penetrate into the underlying meaning, particularly if he ignores the suggestive clues given in the Theosophical teachings? The average modern thinker, blinded by sectarian bias, or by ignorant materialistic disbelief in the Occult, fails to see the plain implications of even his own partial observations.

Thus Dr. Bevan, referring to the allegedly universal association of the idea of the Divine with height, picks up, only to lay it down again, the clue that could guide his steps to the temple of true Symbolism. He writes:—

Although it is, perhaps, not impossible that all races of mankind everywhere might by an accident have lighted upon one and the same fancy which was wholly baseless, it would certainly be very odd.

It would, indeed! It is the universal agreement of the ancient symbols, when read esoterically, testifying as it does to the underlying unity of concepts in widely separated parts of the world, which furnishes one of the best proofs of the once universal diffusion of the primitive Wisdom Religion and of its Mystery language, which is now called symbolism.

Every symbol—in every national religion—may be read esoterically, and the proof furnished for its being correctly read by transliterating it into its corresponding numerals and geometrical forms—by the extraordinary agreement of all—however much the glyphs and symbols may vary among themselves. For in the origin those symbols were all identical. (*The Secret Doctrine*, I. 443).

"The pictorial expression of an idea or a thought. Primordial writing had at first no characters, but a symbol generally stood for a whole phrase or sentence. A symbol is thus a recorded parable, and a parable a spoken symbol. The Chinese written language is nothing more than symbolical writing, each of its several thousand letters being a symbol".

WHERE THE RISHIS WERE

[The following is reprinted from *The Path*, Vol. V p. 301 for January 1891 where it appeared over the signature of Bryan Kinnavan, one of the pen-names of Mr. Judge.—Eds.]

The Rishis were the sacred Bards, the Saints, the great Adepts known to the Hindus, who gave great spiritual impulses in the past and are said to sometimes reincarnate, and who at one time lived on the earth among men.

"The world is made of seas and islands. For continents are only great lands water-encircled. Men must ever live upon sea or land, then, unless they abide in air, and if they live in the air they are not men as we know them." Thus I thought as the great ship steamed slowly into the port of a small island, and before the anchor fell the whole scene seemed to change and the dazzling light of the past blotted out the dark pictures of modern civilization. Instead of an English ship I was standing on an ancient vehicle propelled by force unknown to-day, until the loud noises of disembarkation roused me once again.

But landed now and standing on the hill overlooking the town and bay, the strange light, the curious vehicle again obtained mastery over sense and eye, while the whole majesty of forgotten years rolled in from the Ocean. Vainly did modern education struggle and soar: I let the curtain drop upon the miserable present.

Now softly sings the water as it rolls against the shore, with the sun but one hour old shining upon its surface. But far off, what is that spot against the sky coming nearer from the West, followed by another and another until over the horizon rise hundreds, and now some are so near that they are plainly seen? The same strange vehicles as that I saw at first. Like birds they fly through the air. They come slowly now, and some have been brought still on the land. They light on the earth with a softness that seems nearly human, with a skill that is marvellous, without any shock or rebound. From them there alight men of noble mien who address me as friends, and one more noble than the others seems to say, "Wouldst thou know of all this? Then come", as he turns again to his vehicle that stands there like a bird in wait to be off.

"Yes, I will go"; and I felt that the past and present were but one, and knew what I should see, yet could not remember it but with a vagueness that blotted out all the details.

We entered the swift, intelligently-moving vehicle, and then it rose up on the air's wide-spreading arms and flew again fast to the west whence it had come. It passed many more flying east to the Island, where the water was still softly singing to the beams of the sun. The horizon slowly rose and the Island behind us was hidden by sea from our sight. And still as onward we flew to the occident, many more birds made by man like that we were in flew by us as if in haste for the soft-singing water lapping the shore of that peak of the sea mountain we had left in the Orient. Flying too high at first we heard no sound from the sea, but soon a damp vapour that blew in my face from the salt deep showed that we were descending, and then spoke my friend.

"Look below and around and before you!"

Down there were the roar and the rush of mad billows that reached toward the sky, vast hollows that sucked in a world. Black clouds shut out the great sun, and I saw that the crust of the earth was drawn in to her own subterranean depths. Turning now to the master, I saw that he heard my unuttered question. He said,

"A cycle has ended. The great bars that kept back the sea have broken down by their weight. From these we have come and are coming."

Then faster sailed our bird, and I saw that a great Island was perishing. What was left of the shore still crumbled, still entered the mouth of the sea. And there were cars of the air just the same as that I was in, only dark and unshining, vainly trying to rise with their captains; rising slowly, then falling, and then swallowed up.

But here we have rushed further in where the water has not overflowed, and now we see that few are the bright cars of air that are waiting about while their captains are entering and spoiling the mighty dark cars of the men whose clothing is red and whose bodies, so huge and amazing, are sleeping as if from the fumes of a drug.

As these great red men are slumbering, the light-stepping captains with sun-coloured cloaks are finishing the work of destruction. And now, swiftly though we came, the waters have rushed on behind us, the salt breath of the all-devouring deep sweeps over us. The sun-coloured captains enter their light air-cars and rise with a sweep that soon leaves the sleepers, now waking, behind them. The huge

red-coated giants hear the roar of the waters and feel the cold waves roll about them. They enter their cars, but only to find all their efforts are wasted. Soon the crumbling earth no longer supports them, and all by an intruding wave are engulfed, drawn in to the mouth of the sea, and the treacherous ocean with roars as of pleasure in conquest has claimed the last trace of the Island.

But one escaped of all the red giants, and slowly but surely his car sailed up, up, as if to elude the sun-coloured men who were spoilers.

Then loud, clear, and thrilling swelled out a note of marvellous power from my captain, and back came a hundred of those brilliant, fast cars that were speeding off eastward. Now they pursue the heavy, vast, slow-moving car of the giants, surround it, and seem to avoid its attacks. Then again swells that note from my master as our car hung still on its wings. It was a signal, obeyed in an instant.

One brilliant, small, sharp-pointed car is directed full at the red giant's vehicle. Propelled by a force that exceeds the swift bullet, it pierces the other, itself too is broken and falls on the waves with its victim. Trembling I gazed down below, but my captain said kindly,

"He is safe, for he entered another bright car at the signal. All those red-coated men are now gone, and that last was the worst and the greatest."

Back eastward once more through the salt spray and the mist until soon the bright light shone again and the Island rose over the sea with the soft-singing water murmuring back to the sun. We alighted, and then, as I turned, the whole fleet of swift sailing cars disappeared, and out in the sky there flashed a bright streak of sun-coloured light that formed into letters which read

"This is where the Rishis were before the chalk cliffs of Albion rose out of the wave. They were but are not."

And loud, clear, and thrilling rose that note I had heard in the car of swift pinions. It thrilled me with sadness, for the past was the glory and naught for the future was left but a destiny.

BRYAN KINNAVAN

WHO HAS SEEN THE WIND?

The wind had blown all night. The rain had fallen, blurring the glass doors into the garden so that the expanse of green lawn reeled into the swaying branches of the cedar of Lebanon, beneath which the wagtail perked his way. The windows had rattled and banged in the gusts. The cedar had waved back and forth, swinging a calabash hung from a low branch where five monkey-nuts had been placed to tempt squirrels, who would need wings to fly within reach of the nuts. Up and down, the cedar had moved in the blast.

I found myself murmuring,

"Who has seen the Wind
Neither I, nor you.
But when the trees bow down their heads,
The wind is passing through."

I looked out from the wet window at the swaying branches, and the evidence of things not seen came through the blurred window; one of those rare moments when, as Blake said, through "this life's five windows of the soul"—we see "*with*, not through the eye".

I called to mind how Immanuel Kant, that stargazer, saw *with* his eyes, how he confessed:—

I am much inclined to assert the existence of immortal beings in this world, and to class my soul itself in the catalogue of these beings. . . . Also in this life the human soul stands in an indissoluble communion with all the immaterial beings of the spiritual world.

Then I remembered: when I was a student in Northampton a certain December evening when the frost was intense. The winter night closed in suddenly. The wind swept down Main Street where Bannister's bookshop twinkled, its windows winking at me invitingly. I walked in breathlessly and asked Mr. Bannister himself if the Jowett's *Plato*, which I had ordered, had arrived. Then he put four olive-green volumes into my hands, with as much solemnity as though they were a wedding ring and he performing the marriage ceremony. In truth, it was the beginning of an holy alliance that from the first has seemed apart from all others. Then Mr. Bannister, warm and rosy, escorted me to the door. "*Pax vobiscum*", said he.

On that cold winter night I carried the four volumes tucked triumphantly under my arms. The Christmas star was shining. There were many errands to be done, for we were having a Christmas tree in the Hatfield House. I darted here and there gathering together tinsel ornaments, cornucopias of sweets, net stockings bulging with treasures, until I

could carry no more. I had no hands to arrange the scarf at my throat when the wind blew it open.

I was dashing along the icy path which had been strewn with ashes to keep pedestrians from slipping. On either side, the snow had been shoveled off to clear the way so that one walked through walls of gleaming whiteness.

The street was thronged with holiday shoppers, a steady procession between the white walls of snow. They crushed and bumped into me in passing, so that at first I scarcely noticed a tug at my coat. When I looked down, there stood a little child, a boy of some six years. He reached up in an endeavour to fasten my loosened muffler.

"You must keep warm", said he. He took my hand, full of bundles as it was, and led the way along Main Street. It seemed quite natural, not a bit out of the ordinary. We walked along the frosty road together, hand in hand, the child leading the way.

When we came to the incline rising to the campus at the juncture where the roads turned, the child said good-bye and held up its face for a kiss. I kissed both the round rosy cheeks, and the child darted across the road and disappeared down a side street, into the darkness.

As I climbed up the hill under the elm trees, the tower of College Hall loomed dark against the sky, beneath the Star which blazed and twinkled with Christmas splendour. A serene joy suffused my senses as I moved through the quiet whiteness of the campus.

It was not until I opened the door of the Hatfield House on to the babel of cheery young voices and saw the balsam tree bedecked with popcorn, glass balls and barley-sugar animals, that my mood changed.

As I removed my coat I felt quite convinced that some child from the slums had come to me hoping for one of the cornucopias or Christmas stockings tucked in my arms. How stupid of me not to have thought of giving him one!

But when I opened the window before going to bed that night, when the lights were out at ten o'clock, the Star-of-Bethlehem was shining serenely. By that starlight could I have been seeing *with* my eyes a fleeting vision? "In this life the human soul stands in an indissoluble communion with all the immaterial beings." So said Kant.

JEWISH ETHICS

A COMPARATIVE STUDY WITH BUDDHIST PARAMITAS

II

[Last month we compared extracts from Jewish ethical writings with the first of the Buddhist Paramitas of perfection. Quotations illustrative of the second of the "Golden Keys" are given in this article.]

II. 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.

"Who shall ascend into the mountain of the Lord? Or who shall stand in His holy place?"

"He that hath clean hands and a pure heart." (Psalm 24. 3-4)

The Panchasila of the Prophet Moses :—

- I. "Thou shalt not kill.
- II. "Thou shalt not commit adultery.
- III. "Thou shalt not steal.
- IV. "Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbour.
- V. "Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's house... thy neighbour's wife, nor his man-servant, nor his maid-servant, nor his ox nor his ass, nor anything that is thy neighbour's." (Ex. 20. 13-17)

I. *Thou shalt not kill.*

"Thou shalt not avenge, nor bear any grudge against the children of thy people, but thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself." (Lev. 19. 18)

"To do justice and judgment is more acceptable to the Lord than sacrifice (of animals)." (Prov. 21. 3)

"When thou buildest a new house, then thou shalt make a battlement for thy roof, that thou bring not blood upon thine house, if any man fall from thence." (Deut. 22. 8)

"He who hateth his neighbour, is as though he shed blood." (Talmud).

II. *Thou shalt not commit adultery.*

"Ye shall be holy." (Lev. 19. 2)

"Whoso committeth adultery with a woman lacketh understanding; he that doeth it destroyeth his own soul." (Prov. 6. 32)

"Keep thee from the evil woman, from the flattery of the tongue of a strange woman.

"Lust not after her beauty in thine heart; neither let her take thee with her eyelids." (Prov. 6. 24-25)

"A virtuous woman is a crown to her husband." (Prov. 12. 4)

III. *Thou shalt not steal.*

"Thou shalt not defraud thy neighbour, neither rob him: the wages of him that is hired shall not abide with thee all night until the morning." (Lev. 19. 13)

"Thou shalt not have in thine house diverse measures, a great and a small." (Deut. 25. 14)

"Ye shall do no unrighteousness in judgment, in meteyard, in weight, or in measure." (Lev. 19. 35)

IV. *Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbour.*

"Lord, who shall abide in Thy tabernacle? Who shall dwell in Thy holy hill? He that... speaketh the truth in his heart. He that backbiteth not with his tongue... nor taketh up a reproach against his neighbour." (Psalm 15. 1-3)

"Thou shalt not raise a false report: put not thine hand with the wicked to be an unrighteous witness." (Ex. 23. 1)

"Ye shall not... lie one to another." (Lev. 19. 11)

"Thou shalt not go up and down as a tale-bearer among thy people." (Lev. 19. 16)

"Let the honour of thy neighbour be as dear to thee as thine own." (Rabbi Eliezer)

V. *Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's house... thy neighbour's wife, nor his man-servant, nor his maid-servant, nor his ox, nor his ass nor anything that is thy neighbour's*

"If thou sell ought unto thy neighbour, or buyest ought of thy neighbour's hand, ye shall not oppress one another." (Lev. 25. 14)

"Better is a little with righteousness than great revenues without right." (Prov. 16. 8)

"Wilt thou set thine eyes upon that which is not? For riches certainly make themselves wings; they fly away." (Prov. 23. 5)

IN THE LIGHT OF THEOSOPHY

The 17th of November will have an added significance henceforth for the Theosophical students in Bombay, for on that day of this year of 1938 the earthly remains of Brother Theodore Leslie Crombie were offered to the quickly consuming but fully purifying Element of Fire. For over a quarter of a century Brother Crombie lived as a seeker of the Truth and an ardent practitioner of what he understood of it; he passed through many ups and downs to which every aspirant is heir, but to the last he toiled for the cause of human friendship and of Universal Brotherhood. After a short four days of illness of the body he passed out of it. According to his wish his body was cremated: he was a lover of the poor of India and so it was fitting that the cremation took place (as the sun was reaching its meridian, on Thursday the 17th) in the public burning-ground, used by the poorest of the city and from which no dead body, not even that of the lowest of pariahs is barred. The United Lodge of Theosophists has lost an Associate who while embodied gave all that he could in time, money and work for the Cause and who in his passing has left a sweet fragrance of memory for all who knew him.

A significant note in *The Lancet* (6th August) indicates a growing perception on the part of psychotherapists of the relation between philosophy of life and mental health, and of the fact that man is something more than a thinking animal.

At the International Medical Congress for Psychotherapy, held last week at Oxford, it emerged that... more and more of those whose life-work is the attempt to adjust mental and emotional disturbances are coming back to the idea that religious consciousness is indispensable to a large number of patients, especially in later life. The task of the psychotherapist is, to a large extent, that of an intermediary, an interpreter of an experience in which the patient adjusts himself to the claims of something within himself, quite distinct from his own ego, that leads him to appreciate the real values behind social and natural laws. As he proceeds with this adjustment, his individuality grows outside the narrow bounds of the self into a creative relationship with the whole of life. Dr. William Brown... said bluntly that the medical psychologist could no longer do without philosophy.

The recognition by medical men of something within a man higher than his brain consciousness and transcending the narrow personality is a long step in the right direction. The psychology of the ancient East, restated in modern Theosophy, offers a factual basis for this hypothesis in its precise classification of the constitution of man. But soul service is the most difficult of arts. The successful phy-

sician to sick souls must have grasped and himself applied the principles of soul health and must be able to lead his patients to the life-giving knowledge of the spiritual nature of man and of his aim and destiny.

The Presidential Address of Prof. Leroy Waterman of the University of Michigan at the last Annual Meeting of the American Oriental Society, reported in its September *Journal*, points to the fulfilment of the prophecy in *The Theosophist* (I. p. 221).

Yet a little longer, and the sublime utterances of Aryan seers and the philosophic expositions of Aryan sages, will be eagerly read by a West that is already tired of its blind guides in theology and science.

Professor Waterman's remarks are of great interest also in connection with the second object of the Theosophical Movement which is, in the words of H.P.B. in *The Key to Theosophy*:—"To promote the study of Aryan and other Scriptures, of the World's religion and sciences, and to vindicate the importance of old Asiatic literature, namely, of the Brahmanical, Buddhist, and Zoroastrian philosophies". Prof. Waterman laid the blame for the present threatening turmoil of the world directly at the door of "confused and self-contradictory mental concepts, and without clarity of thought in the highest realm of the spirit there can henceforth be no assured salvation in human affairs".

Responsibility for this problem in a peculiar sense lies within the domain of Oriental studies, since within that realm are to be found the highest spiritual contributions of the race... We may be derelict in linguistic acumen, historical precision, or chronological accuracy, and no one living be the worse for it and few the wiser, but if we fail to clarify, wherever possible, the spiritual thought inheritance within our field as it applies to the most pressing problems of human life on this planet, we may well be responsible for irretrievable loss in which all men will unwittingly be forced to share... Thus the most significant experience of the race shall at last become an assured and unequivocal asset in building an orderly, neighbourly, and enduring humanity of the future.

Even if the present turmoil and confusion cannot be stayed from producing sweeping disaster, Oriental studies have every right to be zealously cherished as one sound hope of a better day.

The widespread outpouring of spiritual influence roughly twenty-five hundred years ago is historical, but the inadequacy of the materialistic

approach is apparent when a modern scientist attempts to explain that phenomenon on pragmatic lines. The *Bulletin of the John Rylands Library, Manchester*, for October contains a long article by Dr. H. J. Fleure, Professor of Geography in the University of Manchester: "Ritual and Ethic: A Study of a Change in Ancient Religions about 800-500 B.C." Professor Fleure writes:—

It is one of the most remarkable facts of the world's life that in the course of a few centuries, not far from two thousand five hundred years ago, there appeared, in many old-settled lands from China to the Mediterranean, teachers whose message was mainly ethical and whose voices apparently echoed even among the barbarians around the fringes of civilisation. Lao Tzu, Confucius, Indian teachers leading up to Gautama Buddha, Zoroaster, Hebrew prophets, early Greek philosophers, all had their influence about that time and there seems every reason to think that many of these efforts, not all of course, were independent of one another... While ... in all the regions concerned, the trend was *away from* ancient ritual valued for its supposed magical potency, but valuable more for maintenance of social tone, and *towards* the enunciation of an ethic linking men in peaceful co-operation and order, the form the development took in different environments differed according to the character of the environment and the experience of the people concerned.

He visualizes the problem as less one of the nearly simultaneous rise of great teachers in that age than of what the conditions were which gave power of expansion to their teaching. It is no explanation of the emergence of those Teachers to produce evidence that the movements concerned "have grown from deep-rooted social life wherein contacts of diverse schemes of thought and ritual were giving rise to objective thought transcending the diversities".

The phenomenon is satisfactorily explained only by Theosophy, which points to the mutual consistency of the message of so many contemporary but apparently isolated Teachers as proof positive of a common body of Truth and of the existence of the great Fraternity of the Knowers of that Truth, from whose ranks come out from time to time, under cyclic law, Their representatives to restate as much of that unchanging Truth as humanity is capable of receiving. From the Avatar of Krishna, with His message for all men, to the diffused promulgation by many noble Teachers in the period in question was about 2,500 years. From this period to our own day, when H. P. B. gave the same Teachings once again for all men under the name of Theosophy, was about 2,500 years. Reflection on this aspect of the law of cycles will deepen the intuitive student's conviction of the significance of the Theosophical Movement of the present day.

Prof. B. E. Meland, writing on "Religious Awareness and Knowledge" (*The Review of Religion*, November 1938) analyses the nature and the conditioning factors of religious awareness. He makes several important points; first, that what men see differs widely by reason of their focus of vision. The focus of attention, in turn, "goes back to the sensitivity of the organism, and the structure of mind and impulse resulting from habituated activity".

Awareness of God depends upon a kind of sensitivity which opens the organism to that area of data in which the "divine" reality functions... the divine designating that operating reality, that developing order of relations that comes into visible or experienceable form to those whose order of living has the sensitivity of the pure in heart...

There is a way of viewing the world of relation and of events which brings into focus the operations that constitute the religious quality of existence... the religious vision is a particular form of attention disclosing a distinctive pattern of relations.

Religion is essentially that; in its widest meaning it is the one bond of unity which is so universal and all-embracing that no man, as no speck—from gods and mortals down to animals, the blade of grass and the atom—can be outside its light.

Professor Meland defines the character of relations that becomes peculiarly apparent in the religious vision to "the qualitative form of unity in life designated by the word 'good'". To use the word "good" in its ethical sense would make the definition unacceptable to the Theosophist, who admits no separateness from any one or anything in the universe, good or evil, but no exception can be taken if goodness is defined as "an operating unity" and the religious vision as "achieving the capacity to discern and to respond to this growth of connections that makes for mutual value in the world".

The writer includes in verifiable religious knowledge "the knowledge of God arising from observations of the growing cohesions and loyalties of corporate life, wherein society and individuals achieve a relationship of mutuality". But while laying wholesome emphasis on such verifiable knowledge, he insists also on the Eternal Mystery beyond it, and, between the two, an "area of certitude" not verifiable, but which yet "provides a kind of knowledge". To that area of certitude, of "'felt' insights", would belong what Theosophy would call the spiritual *sensing* of the Divine Thought in the manifestations of Cosmic Substance, or those rare moments of ecstatic bliss known in contemplation, in which the higher Spiritual Self mingles with the universal essence and *knows* the universal Unity.

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The United Lodge of Theosophists

DECLARATION

THE policy of this Lodge is independent devotion to the cause of Theosophy, without professing attachment to any Theosophical organization. It is loyal to the great founders of the Theosophical Movement, but does not concern itself with dissensions or differences of individual opinion.

The work it has on hand and the end it keeps in view are too absorbing and too lofty to leave it the time or inclination to take part in side issues. That work and that end is the dissemination of the Fundamental Principles of the philosophy of Theosophy, and the exemplification in practice of those principles, through a truer realization of the SELF; a profounder conviction of Universal Brotherhood.

It holds that the unassailable *Basis for Union* among Theosophists, wherever and however situated, is "*similarity of aim, purpose and teaching*", and therefore has neither Constitution, By-Laws nor Officers, the sole bond between its Associates being that *basis*. And it aims to disseminate this idea among Theosophists in the furtherance of Unity.

It regards as Theosophists all who are engaged in the true service of Humanity, without distinction of race, creed, sex, condition or organization, and

It welcomes to its association all those who are in accord with its declared purposes and who desire to fit themselves, by study and otherwise, to be the better able to help and teach others.

*"The true Theosophist belongs to no cult
or sect, yet belongs to each and all."*

Being in sympathy with the purposes of this Lodge as set forth in its "Declaration", I hereby record my desire to be enrolled as an Associate; it being understood that such association calls for no obligation on my part other than that which I, myself, determine.

The foregoing is the Form signed by Associates of the United Lodge of Theosophists. Inquiries are invited from all persons to whom this Movement may appeal. Cards for signature will be sent upon request, and every possible assistance furnished to Associates in their studies and in efforts to form local Lodges. There are no fees of any kind, and no formalities to be complied with.

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