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We are in the Winter Solstice, the period at which the Sun entering the sign of Capricornus has already, since December 21st, ceased to advance in the Southern Hemisphere, and, cancer or crab-like, begins to move back. It is at this particular time that, every year, he is born, and December 25th was the day of the birth of the Sun for those who inhabited the Northern Hemisphere. It is also on December the 25th, Christmas, the day with the Christians on which the "Saviour of the World" was born, that were born, ages before him, the Persian Mithra, the Egyptian Osiris, the Greek Bacchus, the Phoenician Adonis, the Phrygian Athis. And, while at Memphis the people were shown the image of the god *Day*, taken out of his cradle, the Romans marked December 25th in their calendar as the day *natalis solis invicti*.

—H. P. BLAVATSKY

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- (a) To form the nucleus of a Universal Brotherhood of Humanity, without distinction of race, creed, sex, caste, or colour ;
- (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 1942.

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AUM

THE THEOSOPHICAL MOVEMENT

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SEIZE THE OPPORTUNITY!

The climatic peculiarities of the seasons correspond to psychical and spiritual tendencies of humanity; seasons are reflections on earth of cosmic processes in the invisible. Therefore the spiritual instructors of old fixed the celebration of certain sacred festivals to coincide with the seasons—the spring and autumn equinoxes and the winter and summer solstices.

Christmas is one such festival; it is not the festival of the birth of the prophet of Christendom, but of the Birth of the Sun-God under many names. Christmas is the festival of the Winter Solstice and was celebrated for ages before the birth of Jesus Christ. The churches borrowed it from the Pagan world. Theosophy repeats an old teaching when it asserts this:—

Let no one imagine that it is a mere fancy, the attaching of importance to the birth of the year. The earth passes through its definite phases and man with it; and as a day can be coloured so can a year. The astral life of the earth is young and strong between Christmas and Easter. Those who form their wishes now will have added strength to fulfil them consistently.

Christmas and Easter are modern words which stand for age-old truths. The latter are not known to many, and even in Asiatic lands people err in regarding Christmas as the Natal Day of Jesus. It is a festival of Nature and has its invisible aspects, to which a pointed reference is made in the above quotation. Students of Theosophy will do well to popularize this teaching—the universal and immemorial aspect of the Festival of the Winter Solstice. Their attention may be drawn to two pamphlets in the U. L. T. Series—Nos. 23 and 28.

The chief reason, however, for our writing this is to remind the earnest students of Theosophy to take good advantage of the occasion. To form right wishes, to make good resolves and to persevere in holding on to them according to a correct understanding of Theosophical principles would benefit not only themselves but everyone whom they contact. In formulating the wish and the resolve students should take into account their self-imposed obligations to the U. L. T. There ought to be the desire to improve the quality of their service to the Lodge, to increase its quantity. In proportion as the student puts the Lodge as of primary importance in his life, as his most cherished possession, he will find his personal Karmas becoming suitable channels for rapid progress, every day of the year. And his wish for his friends and kin, for his community and nation, for humanity at large, will become more and more elevated. In his persevering effort to keep his resolve alive he will, of a surety, find nourishment at every meeting of the Lodge. More attention to the life-work of the U. L. T., not only of the mind but also of the heart, will bring him added strength to carry out his resolve by deepening his perception. Our pure motive needs the aid of correct method to free us from the bonds of personal Karmas, so that the Ego's one consuming desire emerges—to serve all human souls according to the ways of the Great Servants of the race. Whatever our noble wish, whatever our soul-resolve, we will be strengthened in our task, if we strive to accept the aid which flows in and from the Work of the U. L. T.—our Spiritual Home.

SHAKESPEARE

"Shakespeare's deep and accurate science in mental philosophy" (Coleridge) has proved more beneficent to the true philosopher in the study of the human heart—therefore, in the promotion of truth—than the more accurate, but certainly less deep, science of any Fellow of the Royal Institution.

These words appear in the editorial entitled "What's in a Name?" which opens Volume I of *Lucifer*. In them we glimpse the Occult World's estimate of the message of Shakespeare. This remark should be placed side by side with another in *The Secret Doctrine* (II. 419) which runs:—

Æschylus, like Shakespeare, was and will ever remain the intellectual "Sphinx" of the ages.

These two statements will be more fully comprehended and their implications more clearly seen by the Theosophical student aware of these words of W. Q. Judge:—

The Adepts assert that Shakespeare was, unconsciously to himself, inspired by one of their own number.

The student who brings the light of his great philosophy to bear on the works of Shakespeare will not find it an easy task to unravel the mystery locked up in allegory, symbol and character portrayal of the great plays. The very medium of poetic drama used is indicative of the fact that the teachings which the Adepts planned to give were not to be imparted in a direct manner. Their intention must have been to provoke thought, to relieve heart perplexities purposefully engendered, by pointing to moral verities—all by a correct use of Suggestion; thus to clarify and to elevate human perception, and so to raise the moral sense of the masses, and prepare individuals for a more direct contact in the future with the truths of Occult psychology. Again, the very fact that Shakespeare remained unconscious of the Nirmanakayic influence which his genius attracted shows that we must not expect the unadulterated expression of Divine Wisdom in all he created.

There is no doubt that Literature has been one of the major channels used by the Great Fraternity to instruct the human race; at one time it appears to have been the most direct method used to change the Manas and Buddhi of the race. In later ages epics and dramas, ballads and fables were used indirectly to impart knowledge of the Eternal Verities. Theosophy instructs the human-

ity of our cycle by direct presentation, as is clearly evident from the message recorded by H. P. B. and explained by W. Q. Judge. And today, perhaps, more use is made by the Adepts of the avenue of Science than of that of Literature. Such a passage as the following from *Light on the Path* hints at this:—

I hold that scientific men are the pioneers of modern thought. The days of literature and of art, when poets and sculptors saw the divine light, and put it into their own great language—these days lie buried in the long past with the ante-Phidian sculptors and the pre-Homeric poets. The mysteries no longer rule the world of thought and beauty; human life is the governing power, not that which lies beyond it. But the scientific workers are progressing, not so much by their own will as by sheer force of circumstances, towards the far line which divides things interpretable from things uninterpretable. Every fresh discovery drives them a step onward. Therefore do I very highly esteem the knowledge obtained by work and experiment.

But intuitive knowledge is an entirely different thing. It is not acquired in any way, but is, so to speak, a faculty of the soul; not the animal soul, that which becomes a ghost after death, when lust or liking or the memory of ill-deeds holds it to the neighbourhood of human beings, but the divine soul which animates all the external forms of the individualized being.

For this reason, most likely, H. P. B. gave so much space in her great books to a consideration of the faults and the foibles of Science, at the same time pointing out the turns which the physiologist and the psychologist, the physicist and the chemist, should take on the path of research to make real progress. But, at the same time, in more than one place both H. P. B. and Mr. Judge stressed the value of literature in transforming the mind of the race and the influence of Theosophy on modern literature. And more; Mahatma K. H. in one place refers to "the Adept who writes stories with H. P. B." In the light of such a remark *Nightmare Tales*, *The Idyll of the White Lotus*, *The Dream of Ravan*, and the stories by Bryan Kinnavan become endowed with a definite purpose. Such

are more than literature which entertains.

And so, the Theosophical student of the present generation may well be advised to look at the firmament of Literature from another point of view—to imbibe the Adept influence which radiates therefrom. In that firmament are the Zodiac and also stars of various magnitudes, and among the latter is Shakespeare—a veritable Sirius.

It is with pleasure therefore that we begin to publish a series on Shakespeare prepared by a Theosophical student in the U. S. A. who is also a Shakespearian scholar. The writer has selected five great plays, *Hamlet*, *Julius Cæsar*, *Othello*, *King Lear* and *Macbeth* for examination with the help of Theosophical ideas. These studies are not exhaustive and each of them deals with but some particular phases. The third and the fourth are studies in human character and psychology, they deal with problems which remain unsolved by modern psychology, and will so remain till its votaries adopt the knowledge enshrined in Asiatic psychology. The remaining three are excellent studies in abnormal psychical phenomena: insanity, soothsaying and witchery as they influence individuals and, through them, the course of public events; but the careful reader will find in each something more than that.

These five studies bring out also another fact which has its lesson for the Theosophical server. An Adept has written with approval of Shakespeare's method of handling old legends, etc. Once the Master K. H. wrote:—

There is not a book but is the shadow of some other book, the concrete image, very often, of the *astral body* of it in some other work upon the same or approximate subject. I agree entirely with Dr. Cromwell when he says that "true talent will become original in the very act of engaging itself with the ideas of others"; nay, will often *convert the dross* of previous authors into the golden ore that shines forth to the world as its own peculiar creation. "From a series of extravagant and weak Italian romances, Shakespeare took the plots, the characters, and the major part of the incidents of those dramatic works which have exalted his name, as an *original* writer, above that of every other in the annals of literature."

It would be worth his while for the Theosophical student to note the nature of the sources. Dr. Cromwell's quotation names Italian *novella*; these may look to us somewhat unimportant and as

pertaining to a day of small beginnings; but let us not overlook that we have had a Shakespeare to transform them; in the fourteenth century they served their purpose, and not a negligible one. Among the writers of the *novella* were Boccaccio, Baudello and Cinthico. While Shakespeare went to this source chiefly for creating his comedies, we must not overlook that no less a drama than *Othello* is indebted to Giraldi Cinthico, who was a Professor of Philosophy at Ferrara and whose *Hecatommithi* (Hundred Tales) contains the story of the Moor of Venice. A comparison between the story and the drama will reveal to the student of Occultism not only how great a genius was Shakespeare, but will also show part of the technique used by the Adepts in influencing Shakespeare.

But Italian *novella* were only one of three main sources. The second was history. In our series *Macbeth* and *Julius Cæsar* are examples thereof. The second of these affords a good opportunity to the Theosophical student to learn of the power of transforming historical and biographical facts into drama, romance, epic. It is well known that Shakespeare used Plutarch's *Lives* and in creating his plays used the biographies of Cæsar, Anthony and Brutus. The *Lives* themselves form an important tome of priceless value in understanding human character as well as in building one's own. To the reader of these three lives who is familiar also with the plays of Shakespeare the question recurs: Can we do without the *Lives* even with Shakespeare's plays well preserved?

The third source to which Shakespeare went were the old legends and myths, especially the Scandinavian. In our series *Hamlet* and *King Lear* are examples. In Scandinavian literature there survives the legend of Amleth, and (this is of special interest to the Theosophical student) it had been worked up through the centuries, and Shakespeare made use not only of the original legend but also of the stories and even the plays based on it, the last of which was contemporary with Shakespeare's *Hamlet*. We have good reason to deduce that this seed legend must carry truths important to humanity for it to have been worked and reworked and finally to have been used by the Adept who influenced Shakespeare. Can it be

that it contains the basic truth about the conjoint action of the weak will, Spiritistic influence and insanity in human consciousness? A careful study of the evolution of Shakespeare's *Hamlet* from the Scandinavian legend of Amleth might prove not only fascinating but useful to the student of the Occult, especially in learning about the ways the Adepts work. Also, it would make an instructive chapter in the history of European literature. Exactly similar is the way the legend of *Lir*, the Celtic Neptune, and his two cruel daughters, the rough Winds, and the third, the gentle Zephyr, became *King Lear* by the hand of Shakespeare; here again, between the folk-tale and the drama of Shakespeare there exist numerous versions of the story.

The magnificence of the creative genius of Shakespeare assigns to originality a new meaning. Emerson begins his essay on Shakespeare with words which relate to this subject and which need some reflection. He says—"Great men are more distinguished by range and extent, than by originality." Are we not encountering here the same idea which *The Voice of the Silence* brings out, distinguishing between "Behold I know" and "Thus have I heard"? Notice the range and the extent of Shakespeare's knowledge. His use of legal terminology was such (*e. g.*, *Hamlet*, V. I) that some have conjectured that in his youth Shakespeare had been employed in an attorney's office! But his medical knowledge was great too (See *King Lear*), though no one has suggested that he had intended to practise as a physician! Again, are we to suppose that Shakespeare was a mighty hunter because he uses the correct technical terms of sport, especially of falconry, favourite among the Elizabethans, of hawking, of stag-hunting and of angling? And if we are not to assume that his knowledge of law, of medicine, of sport, was obtained by study and

practice of these pastimes (!) what are we to assume about his knowledge of sorcery and ghostlore, and above all about his profound insight into human nature?

To the student of Occultism Shakespeare's knowledge of the superphysical must look amazing: think not only of the ghosts of *Hamlet*, *Julius Cæsar*, *Macbeth*, *Richard III*, but also of the world of elementals, of fairies and elves of *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, and of the background of *The Tempest*. No, the "range and extent" of Shakespeare's knowledge, to which Emerson makes pointed reference, gives us a very definite clue to Adept influence. A real genius—possessor of that type of genius which is described by H. P. B. as true and innate, in contradistinction to "an abnormal expansion of our human intellect"—cuts a deep canal and he is a specialist of his type; but when a genius comes under Nirmanakayic influence there is the phenomenon of a consciousness that becomes myriad-minded. Is it not that quality which made the giant Dr. Johnson write this of Shakespeare?

Each change of many-coloured life he drew,
Exhausted worlds, and then imagined new:
Existence saw him spurn her bounded reign,
And panting Time toil'd after him in vain.

We hope some at least among our readers will avail themselves of this opportunity and read or re-read during each month at their leisure that play of Shakespeare on which the current article of our series is based. But let them go to the drama not only with mental enthusiasm but also with the spirit of grace about which Charles Lamb, to whom students of Shakespeare owe not a little, wrote in his essay on "Grace before Meat":—

Why have we none [no grace] for books, those
spiritual repasts—a grace before Milton—a grace before
Shakespeare—a devotional exercise before reading the
Faerie Queene?

SHAKESPEARE AND THE ADEPTS

"The Adepts assert that Shakespeare was, unconsciously to himself, inspired by one of their own number."

Echoes from the Orient, WM. Q. JUDGE.

The quoted statement may naturally raise questions of why such Aid was given to Shakespeare, and what evidences of it appear in his work. Theosophical teaching declares that every activity humanizing enough to shed a little brightness is brought by its own light under the direct observation of Higher Minds. No surprise, therefore, need be aroused by the remark that Shakespeare received help from the Adepts who were guiding the Theosophical Movement in the West. For certainly such a literary and dramatic efflorescence as that of the Elizabethan period in England would attract some special attention to the individuals creating it. Those Adepts would see in the dramatic growths of the time a means, free from sermonizing, of clarifying many men's judgment on their own life-problems, by viewing similar ones and the outcomes of them as presented in the theatres.

Shakespeare's pre-eminence was indeed not fully known by his contemporaries; but Vaster Souls would clearly perceive that though he handled the same mixture of good and evil material as other writers, and by no means minced the evil, yet by putting less emphasis on that, he in fact sent out more of an upward call to the low, as to the high, in his theatre audiences, and in general he reached a more humane breadth in his plays than was to be found in others. Even his Sonnets, more than those of other sonneteers, showed flashes of the divine discontent that draws men to the Beyond; while here and there throughout his early works were drops "o' the milk of human kindness" which gave their own proof of the generosity of the soul that scattered them. Thus from the first Shakespeare unconsciously exhibited such largeness of mind as is necessary to receive, and to work under, Adept Influence.

Evidences of this Inspiration as found in the works are of an internal kind, since the field of higher dramatic action is fundamentally in the mind and soul. Indeed, the inwardness of Shake-

peare's plays has always compelled study from this stand-point—which of itself is one of the evidences sought. *Hence a student of Theosophy does not presumptuously expect to reach conclusions greatly different from those usually held, but only occasionally to perceive for them deeper reasons and foundations.* Nor is Shakespeare to be regarded as one of the rare beings who are under special Adept observation from childhood. Like other and more ordinary men, Shakespeare had to win his help; and when it began, he did not fully know its nature or its origin, but felt it to be, as in fact it was, a broader, keener alertness of his own higher mind. The superior possibilities embedded within himself were what Adept Inspiration spurred into stronger activity.

Greater influxes of perception then came, truer visions in mind and soul revealing springs of character hitherto half-hidden from him. Remoter causes, results, and unexpected complications became clearer. Secret relationships were felt, or subtle impulsions between being and being. Ignorances or intuitions were detected that betray or deliver. These perceptions he strove intensely to embody in his personages. Hence this man's creative character-work began to be much deepened and broadened by his glimpses unawares into the Eastern Psychology—Soul-Knowledge—which must in truth have constituted the very essence of the Higher Influence sent upon him, and which led to those manifestations of the Life-Verities recognized by men as operative in that world known as Shakespeare's greater plays.

The Inculcators of the Ancient Wisdom could not in that age appear openly as Adepts. They worked as philosophers, and also through other individuals or groups whose nature or activities permitted. Their continuous purpose was precisely to spread through all possible channels Their Wisdom or Psycho-Spiritual Knowledge; which in the parts concerning men may most fittingly be called Psychology, and which was later to be known as Theosophy. Hence for Adepts to shed a particular light on drama as a presentment of human action and its Soul-source, and to give particular aid to a noble-minded dramatist who had obtained a large following, were only natural expressions of Their purpose.

A great creator of fictional characters is great because he is able to embody with truth in persons called imaginary the experience actual people have had, either in their present or in their past lives. More especially, he is great because within the soul-memory of his own egoic past are the qualities and effects of a very wide range of Life-Stuff, and because this mental wealth lies near enough to his present consciousness to permit him to draw from it in order to re-incarnate, or *in semblance* put into flesh once more, phases of his very own former lives and personalities. Moreover, that wealth of his past, like similar wealth of his present, resulted from a fusion of his actual individual experiences with keen observation and understanding of the lives of other men. Thus, knowingly or not, such a character-portrayer possesses and constantly uses a large intuitive power which he has gained through ages of varied experience and contemplation.

These statements may give a hint of why Shakespeare, Sophocles, and others of the finest portrayers of character have not used as a basis for their pictures the supposedly ideal, the notional, or the desired. They have not been satisfied to present the necessarily slighter images offered by their fancy, or the plot-structure formed by the logic of their intellect. Instead, they have chosen veritable personages and actual incidents,—a cross-section of life as it has been lived. By a genuine visional apprehension they have entered into the real gist, colour and stability of Life-Fact. Of the vast Life-Record, they have literally relived that portion considered by them, have bound it into their very selves, and have thus experienced quite naturally a larger encompassing of life and a surer guidance of their artistic embodying or expressing power. For the Life-Record when thus again revived mentally into present actuality, inevitably carries into fictional portrayals an undeniable convincingness.

The reason is that the Image-making Power possessed by man—his “King-faculty,” Theosophy teaches—is working with living Substance even when producing fictional portrayals. The same great Power—Imagination—is active, whether it brings forth a live human being or a vivified picture of one, though of course it operates on

different planes of Nature and by different laws. At some time, Imagination co-operating with Desire and Will produced the living being. Later, Imagination, still co-operating with its two necessary aides, brings into another phase of Life a mentalized copy or version of that same being. In each case genuine Akasic substance is the basis of the Imaginative operation. Both the living being and the fictional portrayal are the offspring of a desire to create, a desire to energize life-atoms through Will and in accordance with the Image before Thought or Mind.

The Image-making Power manifests in two great degrees, ordinarily known as imagination and fancy. The discrimination between them, as commonly stated, is not so fundamental and sharp as is the distinction made by Theosophy. In the Adept Psychology the difference is deeply inherent in man's inner constitution, and corresponds to the difference between his upper principles and the lower aspects or reflections of these. Of the two, Imagination is the Originative Power. Fancy is technically the imitative or reflected power,—a smaller, weaker, or even vitiated reflection of the higher. Both make Images, both mould Life-Stuff into other forms of Life. But Fancy is less “Kingly” in its modes and results. Fancy works with grosser material, denser matter, lower in evolution, matter less plastic; and therefore its results are often more distorted into unreality. Again, Fancy works frequently with less noble purposes, and always it works with much less of the dynamic Fire of Life.

Therefore fictional art that mainly embodies Fancy (technically regarded) really does possess less of Life. It is thinner-blooded, remoter, and cannot touch so intimately the life in its observers. This is the true reason why great character-portrayers choose for their pictures actual beings and real stories. In the activity, however, and outward production of minds like Shakespeare's, the results of the lower Imaging power are shot through like shimmering silk with the lights of the higher. For the breadth of Soul-Life in such minds causes the offspring of their Fancy to share richly in the vital Fire that burns in the higher Power.

Readers or observers of fictional art have felt, far within, this basic Theosophical distinction, and hence have praised the character-portrayals derived from Imagination as "living"; while, however pleasing or otherwise the Fancy-portraits, they have recognized these as slighter or merely temporary. For example, *A Midsummer Night's Dream* and *The Tempest* are both surpassing instances of charming Fancy. But *The Tempest* is something more,—it is also a broader, deeper embodiment of qualities drawn from the higher planes of man's being in which Imagination rules.

Now it must be remembered that Mahatmic Influence is directed not to the physical but to the inner and especially the upper planes of man's nature. Thus a man "inspired by an Adept" would certainly experience added Imaging power, particularly the higher phases of it. This explains the appearance in Shakespeare's work of the transcendent dramatic imagination critics ascribe to him by general agreement, though they have been puzzled to account for it. They have noted too, with wonder, the great expansion in creative power, in intuitive perceptivity, and in dramatic skill shown by the productions of his middle period as compared with his efforts earlier. Many critics have regarded the expansion as sudden, and as especially connected with the tragedies, declaring in explanation that Shakespeare must have been enlightened by some tragic experience of his own.

To these propositions a Theosophist may reply that the expansion was the effect—as well as the "evidence"—of the Adept Inspiration, and may suggest that it was proceeding for some years before the time of the tragedies. In most cases such inspiration does not come suddenly. It is like a dawn; and its progress or increase depends on how worthy the recipient continues to prove. These replies do not at all negative the statement that Shakespeare must have had himself some far-reaching unhappy experience. Most likely he had, and his Adept Helpers made use of it. For Adepts work by natural means and turn to a man's advantage the greater receptivity of Soul that may come with suffering.

Preceding the period of Mahatmic Influence were the early Chronicles, which included both

comic and tragic material, and the early comedies. These indicated loosely and faintly the general lines of Shakespeare's interests and abilities. An early effect on him of the Inspiration may be represented by *Romeo and Juliet*, that supreme tragedy of blind, childish wilful impulse, in both the older and the younger. The strong emphasis on the foolishness of family feuds seems to indicate such Guidance. Some of the more vitalized Chronicles and the comedies associated with them, in which vice meets its just deserts yet with true charity, may also express that Inspiration. The story-material and characters in these plays were on the level of large groups in the theatre audiences, and the results in them were so just and so free from tiresome moralizing, that they must have caused many minds to see more clearly that what ye sow ye shall reap. It would seem therefore that in these plays too the higher Imagination and the higher Influence were at work. And in both comedies and tragedies dated by critics near 1600, the operation of each phase of the Imaging Power is richly unfolded. A noteworthy degree is exhibited in the finer comedies, *As You Like It*, *Much Ado About Nothing*, and *Twelfth Night*. These belong within that period of Influence not only for the pure clean fun they contain—and for the example given by this—but also for the gems of philosophic wisdom in them, uttered at some time by nearly every personage. These comedies are perennial delights, full of a sunshine that is contrasted only with shadows more suppositional than real. *The Merchant of Venice* is indeed nobler, the shadows deepen, the struggle and effort intensify, and the tragedy for Shylock is for one supreme moment de-personalized into the tragedy of a race. Here was surely a bit of direct transmission of the Influence. For in spite of all the evil selfish revenge in Shylock, who that has a spark of genuine humanity can utterly fail to hear the Adept basic teaching of Brotherhood in that cry: "Hath not a Jew eyes? Hath not a Jew hands, organs, senses, affections, passions?" The immediacy of the response to this in us is truly another evidence of the Influence.

Many admirers of Shakespeare have been much puzzled to account for some of his portrayals of

women. Where did he find beings like Cordelia, Imogen, Hermione; very quintessence of loyalty they are, under conditions most difficult and tragic. How did he think of Miranda and Perdita, sweet and retiring as lilies of the valley? What of Viola delicately self-effacing and well rewarded; and the saucy-patch young sister of all these, Rosalind, with her rival in comedy-making, Beatrice? Chief of all, perhaps, how could he create Portia! Excellent materials of study for some of these he could find in the two Roman stories he himself reworked and wherein he portrayed the noble wife of Brutus, and the equally noble mother of Coriolanus.

But if there is cause for wonder concerning the women, why not concerning the men? Does one not see, whatever their rank, as many of "nature's noblemen" among them too? There are Kent and Edgar, Horatio and Banquo, quiet staunch upholders of the right and of their particular words, like the supporting timbers of a building. There are the heart-winning elders, Duke Senior, Polixenes and Gonzalo. That fine old student of life and of magic, Prospero, is unique. So too is Antonio, at least in his parent-like sacrifice for his young friend. Close to them are the romantic younglings, Ferdinand and Florizel, by no means weak, yet as fine as the flower-like girls they love. Brothers to these are Benedict and Orlando, older and more worldly-wise, but not beyond being teased and satirized by their mischievous mates. A trifle larger in conception is Sebastian, and superior still is Bassanio, both being chosen more than choosers in their wedlock, yet worthy of the choices. Also the philosophic Brutus and Hamlet, tragic labourers with duties they cannot make their own. And as a fine contrast to these last two, Henry the Fifth, reformed madcap Prince Hal, wholly changed by awakening to his responsibilities, and marching confidently into duties that are emphatically his own,—more loved in memory than any English King.

Through the big fabric of the Shakespearian world these beings move; and not one of them "too pure and good for human nature's daily food." It is surely not too much to say that for three centuries these men and women have been

ideals and moulds, though perhaps unrecognized, of the thought-life of many young people.

If models for them are insisted on, some may easily be found in contemporary English life. Even Italy too, in spite of all the evil existing there, produced individuals notably generous and high-minded.

Besides, it must not be forgotten that there are always such beings. They do not entirely disappear even in low periods. Spontaneously and unconsciously, they are the levers that lift mankind a little further up in its evolution, and are the carriers and users of the traditional truths of humanity and Nature. They are scattered through all ranks and conditions, and there would be small hope for the advancement of the world without them. All akin they are, too; for the greatness in each is of the kind that belongs to the higher egoic nature of man.

With one or two exceptions, these personages of Shakespeare all exhibit or struggle with the middle range of passions and conditions, are played upon constantly by good and evil forces that are in opposition but not entirely out of balance. Theatre audiences found their own likenesses in these characters. The large number of them, their convincing vitality, and their relative importance in the world of Shakespeare, may furnish another evidence of Adept assistance. The mental life—the psychology—he depicted in this middle range of humanity, is by everybody recognized as permanently true, as genuinely human under whatever conditions. Just as true, however, is the mental life exhibited by the two great extremes—the weaklings in general, such as the low women and the drivelling men, including some of the clowns; and on the other hand those characters who embodied such force of will and power of intellect that necessarily, when their strength was turned downward into selfishness and evil, they became the great tragic heroes and heroines. Other Elizabethans made their low and vicious mostly disgusting, and their towering tragic figures are less humanized than Shakespeare's are, while the backgrounds of secondary characters are less rounded and vital. The Aid given to Shakespeare may well have resulted in this extraordinary humanization of his persons. This inference is

indicated also by the wide difference in the degree of humanness between the later plays of Shakespeare himself and his earlier—those rather mechanical first comedies and histories. Yet even these are regarded as better than the corresponding early work of other writers. He who best held up the mirror to a large portion of nature, thereby giving Adepts the broadest field of operation, was for Them the best instrument.

There is, moreover, another special reason why those women and men of the middle range in character were a particularly fruitful field for Shakespeare's Helpers. For centuries the conditions of Europe, either war-filled or monastic, nearly destroyed all forms of middle-range life. The religious, political and social systems were all cut from the same cloth of personalisms and their opposites, *i. e.*, religious infallibles, religious know-nothings; political tyrants, political imbeciles; social Eminences pinnaced too high to see their own base, social slugs ever leaving behind the trail of their slime. Those conditions were the mirror of the contemporary theology, under which Mind and Soul were either manacled or swamped. Virtues of the home existed, but were shut up in fortresses. Citizen and community characteristics were deflected so as to become either duties owed by vassals or the place-proud behaviour of overlords.

In that civilization women were far too much regarded by their fathers as valuable pawns in making princely marriages for the expansion of domains; and by their husbands as social centres important to retain the homage of large followings of knights and squires. Below these of highest position were numerous attendants,—imitative ladies-in-waiting; much lower still were the slavish houseworkers, unnoticed, mere ciphers, useful only to increase the number of serfs.

Say the *Laws of Manu* concerning women and married life: "Where women are honoured,

there verily the Devas rejoice; where they are not honoured, there indeed all rites are fruitless." But the honour indicated by Manu was not that paid to the chatelaines; its root was not economic. It was an honour paid in spirit, an expression of true understanding of women's spiritual functions in the great whole of existence. Again in speaking of the connubial life—which is surely best exemplified by the middle range of conditions and persons, and in which men bear equal share with women—the *Laws of Manu* state clearly the foundational service rendered to humanity by family relationships: "As all creatures live supported by air, so the other Orders (of society) exist supported by the Householder." "As all streams and rivers flow to rest in the ocean, so all the Orders flow to rest in the householder."

The great Leaders sending to the West those Impartations of Eastern Wisdom that were to aid in human evolution, would encourage and strengthen in Shakespeare's mind his natural pleasure in creating those middle-range characters,—natural because he himself had sprung from that kind of family life and continued to experience it. Superlative tragic figures are extremely impressive to men's minds, and are much praised; partly because of the opportunity afforded to actors' egotistic ambition. But such displays of purely personal powers, directed to the re-creation of the evil in mankind, may well have been less interesting to Adepts, whose chief concern was for a general uplift of all humanity. They would wish to increase Shakespeare's inherent perception of the dramatic values of those middle-range characters that were his finest models of true, natural, evenly developed womanhood and manhood. The mystery of where he found such beings is solved by perceiving that wide unperverted Nature contains them in fraternal union, and he who works along with Nature learns how to see and depict them.

DEVACHAN

The following article is reprinted from *The Path*, Vol. V, p. 190, for September 1890.—Eds.]

A letter to the editor from Holland upon this subject deserves reply, as it must give utterance to the questions of many other students.

The complaint in this letter is that when one goes to Devachan much time is lost away from earth life, where otherwise unselfish work for others might be continued by instantly returning to it after death. The reason given is that Devachan is an illusion, while the so-called illusions of earthly existence are in such a sense real that they are preferable to those of Devachan. In illustration of this, the supposed case is given of a parent in Devachan imagining that the beloved child is also there, when, in fact, the child not yet physically dead remains on earth perhaps in misery or leading a life of vice. This is the root of the objection—the supposed illusionary character of Devachan as compared to earth-life.

Now these feelings are always due to the thirst for life in the form which presently is most known to us,—that is, in a physical body. We cannot argue Devachan away any more than we can the necessity of incarnation upon this earth; the one is as philosophically necessary as is the other. A very easy way out of the difficulty—which arises almost wholly from our feelings—would be to calmly accept the law as it stands, being willing to take whatever may be our fate, whether that be in Devachan or in this earth-life. Our likes and dislikes can have no effect on the course of nature, but they may have an effect on ourselves which will be far from beneficial. For the dwelling upon pleasure or the constant desire to fly from “pain not yet come” will inevitably create Karmic causes which we would wish to avoid.

But perhaps there are some considerations on the subject of Devachan which may be of use. In the first place, I have never believed that the period given by Mr. Sinnett in *Esoteric Buddhism* of fifteen hundred years for the stay in that state was a fixed fact in nature. It might be fifteen minutes as well as fifteen hundred years. But it is quite likely that for the majority of those who so constantly wish for a release and

for an enjoyment of heaven, the period would be more than fifteen hundred years. Indeed, the Hindu Scriptures give many special ceremonies for the attainment of heaven, or the regions of Indra, which is Devachan; and those ceremonies or practices are said to cause a stay in Indraloka “for years of infinite number.”

The first question, however, must be “What is the cause for passing into Devachan?” Some have said that it is good Karma or good acts that take us and keep us there, but this is a very incomplete reply. Of course, in the sense that it is happiness to go into that state, it may be called good Karma. But it does not follow that the man whose life is good, passed in constant unselfish work for others without repining, and free from desire to have somewhere his reward, will go to Devachan. Yet his Karma must be good; it must act on him, however, in other lives, for the earth life is the place where such Karma has its operation. But if at the same time that he is thus working for others he wishes for release or for some place or time when and where he may have rest, then, of course, he must go to Devachan for a period which will be in proportion to the intensity of those desires.

Again, it should not be forgotten that the soul must have some rest. Were it, before becoming bright as the diamond, hard as adamant, and strong as steel, to go on working, working through earth-life after earth-life without a break between, it must at last succumb to the strain and come to nothing. Nature therefore has provided for it a place of rest—in Devachan; and that we should thankfully accept if it falls to our lot.

But does Devachan suffer in the comparison made between it and this life on earth? To me it seems not. Human life is as great an illusion as any. To the sage Ribhu, Vishnu said it was the longest-lived reign of fancy. To say that it is a terrible thing to think of a mother in Devachan enjoying its bliss while the child is suffering on earth, is to prefer one illusion over another, to hug a philosophical error to the breast. Both states are out of the true, while the Ego, who is the real witness, sees the lower personality struggling with these phantoms while it, whether the body be living or its other parts be in Devachan, enjoys eternal felicity. It sits on high unmoved, immov-

able. The great verse in the Isa-Upanishad settles this matter for me in these words: "What room is there for sorrow and what for doubt in him who knows that all spiritual beings are the same in kind, though differing in degree." Therefore if I believe this, I must also know that, no matter whether I and my best beloved are in Devachan or on earth, they and I must forever partake of the highest development attained by the greatest of sages, for, as they and I are spiritual beings, we must have communion forever on the higher planes of our being.

Then, again, the fact seems to be lost sight of that each night we go into a sort of Devachan—the dream state or sleep without dream. The loving mother, no matter how unfortunate or evil her child, must sleep, and in that state she may have dreams of her loved ones around her in just the very condition of mind and body she would have them enjoy. If Devachan be objectionable, why not also rebel against our necessary sleep which acts on our physical frame to give it rest, as Devachan does upon our more ethereal parts?

Lying unnoticed at the foot of this matter is the question of time. It goes to the very root of the objection, for the aversion to the stay in Devachan is based upon the conception of a *period of time*. This period—given or supposed as 1,500 years—is another great illusion which can be easily proved to be so. What we call time, measured by our seconds and minutes and hours, is not necessarily actual time itself. It is not the ultimate precedence and succession of moments in the abstract. For us, it depends on and flows from the revolutions of our solar orb, and even with that standard it can be shown that we do not apprehend it correctly. We speak of seconds, but those are such as our watchmakers give us in the watch. They might be made longer or shorter. They are arrived at through a division of a diurnal solar revolution, the observation of which is not necessarily mathematically accurate. If we lived on Mercury—where we must believe intelligent beings live—our conception of time would be different. From our childhood's experience we know that even in this life our appreciation of the passage of time rises and falls, for in early youth the 12 months from one Christmas to another seemed very, very long,

while now they pass all too quickly. And from watching the mental processes in dreams we know that, in the space of time taken for a bell to drop from the table to the floor, one may dream through a whole lifetime, with all the incidents of each day and hour packed into such a limited period. Who can tell but that in a Devachanic state of three months the person may go through experiences that seem to cover thousands of years? If so, why not say for him—since time as we know it is an illusion—that he was in Devachan for those thousands?

Devachan, however, is not a meaningless or useless state. In it we are rested; that part of us which could not bloom under the chilling skies of earth-life bursts forth into flower and goes back with us to another life stronger and more a part of our nature than before; our strength is revived for another journey between deaths. Why shall we repine that nature kindly aids us in the interminable struggle; why thus ever keep the mind revolving about this petty personality and its good or evil fortune?

W. Q. J.

PSYCHICAL RESEARCH

The student of Theosophy will be particularly interested in some points made by Dr. Robert H. Thouless in his Presidential Address to the Society for Psychical Research (*Proceedings*, July 1942). His own investigations have been in the field of what he calls "the psi phenomena" or "extra sensory-perception," refusing the more familiar "extra-sensory perception" as prematurely ascribing results to perception of some kind. All that is now known, he claims, is that they are *not* due to sensory perception.

He believes that understanding the psi phenomena may demand a modification of "the system of scientific expectations based on the necessity for physical continuity in chains of cause and effect." That system has proved trustworthy in explaining phenomena in a very large field but there may be fields, he suggests, in which it is not. Science, he writes, illuminating for the student the first of the Ten Items of *Isis Unveiled* (Vol. II, p. 587):—

has claimed to be a method of deciding what kinds of things can happen and what can not. That is how the advance of science during the last few hundred years has eliminated belief in magic, in astrology, and all the other things commonly classed as superstitions, not by disproving their reality separately by experimental investigation, but by building up an experimentally based system of expectations which has led men to feel convinced that these are the kind of things that do not happen.

Dr. Thouless's own confidence that these are "superstitions without rational foundations" survives unshaken, though he concedes that to deny the universal applicability of scientific expectations does seem to open the door to those and other discarded beliefs. But "the only change is that our reasons for rejecting them are somewhat different than they were before"!

A fact baffling to the psychical researcher but suggestive to the student in the light of the Seventh Item is the tendency to temporal dislocation in the card-guessing tests, chiefly in the direction of guessing ahead, *i. e.*, naming correctly not the card turned up but the card one or two ahead of it in the series. The untrained seer, reading in the astral light, might most naturally be unable to distinguish between a present event and one in the immediate future, the causes for which were already determined.

Dr. Thouless suggests that psychical researchers give up trying to prove again and again that the psi effect really exists and devote themselves instead to finding out everything possible about it. He deplores undue caution in speculation. Experiment will show if the speculation is wrong. What is of great importance, he insists, is fruitful hypotheses. It is due to the lack of such hypotheses, he believes, that "much of the research in the psi phenomena has been undirected and unfruitful."

Theosophy could furnish many such and it is, in fact, one of its teachings which Dr. Thouless advances as a tentative hypothesis:—

Suppose that psi is the primitive way by which organisms oriented themselves to the outside world and that the evolution of the sense organs and of sensory perception was a later acquired means, of greater biological usefulness because more limited.

What H. P. B. gives in *The Secret Doctrine* about the "third eye" confirms this.

In the animal, whose form was as ethereal (astrally) as that of man, before the bodies of both began... to evolve from *within without* the thick coating of physical substance or matter with its internal physiological mechanism—the third eye was primarily, as in man, the only seeing organ. The two physical front eyes developed later on....[But] while the 'Cyclopean' eye was, and still is, in man the organ of *spiritual* sight, in the animal it was that of objective vision.

Again she writes that

our present normal physical senses were (from our present point of view) abnormal in those days.... There was a day when all that which in our modern times is regarded as phenomena, so puzzling to the physiologists now compelled to believe in them—such as thought transference, clairvoyance, clairaudience, etc.; in short all that which is now "wonderful and abnormal"—all that and much more belonged to the senses and faculties common to all humanity.... Having lost in spirituality that which we acquired in physical development...we (mankind) are as gradually and imperceptibly losing now all that we regain once more in the spiritual *re*-evolution.

Dr. Thouless finds that the expectations his hypothesis raises seem to be fulfilled.

If psi is a more primitive function, normally suppressed by the higher mental activities of perception and reasoning, we should expect, on the whole, that conditions favourable to the higher mental activities would be unfavourable to psi and vice versa.

Alcohol, inattention induced by muscular relaxation, absence of effort, all unfavourable to the higher mental functions, he finds favourable to psi, proof, if proof were needed, that the psi phenomena under investigation are the results of psychic, not of true spiritual vision, which requires not only purity but also a most positive virile attitude.

IN THE LIGHT OF THEOSOPHY

The stream of thought and queries regarding the U. L. T. grows ever larger; those who desire some account of its origin, history, work and purpose will find the record in the pamphlet *The United Lodge of Theosophists—Its Mission and Its Future*.

“Fabian Letter No. 7” is Mr. Sidney Dark’s *Letter to a Country Clergyman*. Mr. Dark urges his social responsibility upon the clergyman. The latter, ranged both by traditional social status and by self-interest on the side of the privileged minority, is in an awkward position. Especially if he has a social conscience and recognises, with the Malvern Conference, the injustice of extreme inequalities in possessions and opportunities. He does have a responsibility. We all have, that of pulling our weight for justice and fair dealing.

What one of the Masters wrote has a direct bearing on economic and social reform:—

The problem of true Theosophy and its great mission are, first, the working out of clear unequivocal conceptions of ethic ideas and duties, such as shall best and most fully satisfy the right and altruistic feelings in men; and second, the modelling of these conceptions for their adaptation into such forms of daily life, as shall offer a field where they may be applied with most equitableness. (*U. L. T. Pamphlet No. 22*)

Mr. Dark writes:—

The old pietistic belief was that, if you convert the slum dweller, the slum will disappear. The social gospel is that, if you destroy the slum, the slum dweller will have an infinitely greater chance of living the good life and even the slum landlord (as by a miracle) may be saved.

There is no doubt of the benefit to the slum landlord. And H. P. B. in *The Key to Theosophy* urges, for all, such social conditions as shall not hamper mental and spiritual development. But there is something to be said also for the other position, if by “conversion” we understand inner regeneration. No amount of outer change can bring permanent amelioration, for the outer circumstances must mirror sooner or later the inner environment. There may be a time lag, so a man’s present inner state cannot be safely judged by his outer circumstances. Many prosperous today are building slums for their future dwellings.

But it is certain that if the slums of the mind and the emotions are cleared, the outer environment will fall into line in the course of time.

The student will find light on this subject in two articles in *THE THEOSOPHICAL MOVEMENT*: “Slum Clearance” (Vol. IV, p. 107) and “Environment” (Vol. IX, p. 52)

Prof. John Murphy writes in *Philosophy* (July 1942) on “The Development of the Civilized Mind in the Ancient Civilizations.” He develops the popular preconception of the rise of culture from barbarism. This theory is demonstrably false.

The primitive-origin hypothesis implies a straight line advance, and cultural evolution shows cyclic rise and fall. The later cultural strata do not always represent an advance over the earlier. Professor Murphy recognises a retrogression from the loftiest hymns of the *Rigveda* to the ritualism of the later Brahman priesthood. He calls it “a reversion to Tribalism.” Show us the tribalism that lay behind the Vedic Rishis! Do “‘the change from a food-gathering to a food-producing economy’ and ‘the establishment of urban civilization based upon industry and commerce’” account for Them?

The wide-spread [cyclic] spiritual outpouring between the ninth and the fourth centuries B. C. Professor Murphy calls a “remarkable efflorescence of genius.” In that period, he claims, the “emergence of the civilized mind from the primitive” reached its height. There emerged then

a mind essentially one in character, with natural variations, in the Greek thinkers, the Hebrew prophets, the early Hindu mystical philosophers and the Buddha in India and the ethical teachers of China of the Confucian School.

But it is startling to be told that this type of mind has “become the modern mind for the world of culture of today”! How different the world would be if it had!

The most important influence in the “tribal mind” Professor Murphy calls “the sense of mysterious power, that is, the ascription of power to things not understood.” Does modern science claim to *understand* the forces to which it ascribes

power? Professor Murphy considers the power of abstract or conceptual thought the chief quality of the Civilized Mind. Does the frame fit the picture of the practical modern man? Professor Murphy recognises the civilized mind in Akhenaton, in the early men of India, with their *Rigveda*, and in Zarathushtra. But he insists on a development from concrete metaphors to abstract ideas. Would it not be more logical to recognise in metaphor, in myth and allegory, efforts to bring abstract truths within the grasp of ordinary men? The many gods of the ancients are no proof of their inability to conceive of abstractions. All the philosophies of the East, "whether Pantheistic or Deistic, proclaim the ONE an infinite abstraction, an absolute Something which utterly transcends the conception of the finite."

And how can it be maintained that the idea of the soul was a gradual development? Is it not found in the oldest surviving scriptures? Professor Murphy claims that the modern Chinese, like the ancient Egyptians, have never attained to a unified concept but believe in a plurality of souls. Let the student turn to *Isis Unveiled*, II. 367-8, and to "Chinese Spirits" in *Raja-Yoga* and judge for himself.

The social responsibilities of science are emphasised by Dr. Charles E. Kellogg, Principal Soil Scientist in the U. S. Department of Agriculture, in a significant article on "Scientists and Machinery of the State" (*The Scientific Monthly*, July 1942). Science without liberalism, of which he calls democracy the institutional expression,

leads to efficiency conceived in narrow, materialistic terms—but an efficiency coldly silent about human values and ultimate goals for either the individual or society.

"The enormous social implication of science in a modern state" underlies the importance of symmetry in scientific planning. The microscopic vision is necessary in the laboratory but problems must be viewed first in the large and in relation to other problems. The relevancy of the truth sought has to be considered.

Scientists have a large responsibility to help bring together the principles of science and those of democracy—to revitalize democracy as a dynamic pattern of social organization within which all may find opportunity and justice.

Dr. Kellogg does not stop at national boundaries in his concept of such revitalized democracy. He rightly sees the welfare of the citizens in one state as dependent upon the well-being of those in other states. The recognition of human interdependence is one approach to Universal Brotherhood.

He brings out also the no less true converse—the need of liberalism for the scientific attitude.

Liberalism, like science, must be symmetrical for effectiveness. A burning heart, filled with emotional sympathy for troubled people, is not enough.... Liberalism without science becomes a sloppy sentimentalism.... Science without liberalism would lead us quickly to disaster, while liberalism without science might bring us more slowly to decay.

Mission schools are reproached in an address reproduced in *The Guardian* (Madras) for 8th October. It was delivered in August by a Dr. Ahrens, at the Landour Missionary Conference. He asks dramatically whether "the winning of India for Christ" is "still our supreme, yes, let us say it, our exclusive aim?" The evangelistic motive of the mission school is usually kept discreetly in the background. Fewer Indian parents otherwise would send their children to such a school. We wish that those who do so would read Dr. Ahrens's address and realise what it implies.

Dr. Ahrens suggests that "intellectual standards, cultural ideals, and educational personnel and equipment" occupy too much of the thought of the Board of Directors. He complains that "far too large a number of the teaching and office staff consist of non-Christians." He asks if it is surprising, therefore, that "non-Christian students get the idea that our colleges are not evangelistic centres, but that they are merely educational institutions." But is not that exactly the impression which many if not all of these institutions seek to convey?

He suggests that the following may seem to be the position of the mission schools "caricatured here for the sake of emphasis":—

...We no longer believe that Christ is the only Mediator between man and God, but we preach the God whom Jesus worshipped....

Dr. Ahrens objects to the mission schools' no longer presenting Christ as the atonement for sin. Instead, "we talk about Jesus and extol him as the supreme example of self-forgetting service." He objects to preaching Christ as one prophet among many, or even as the chief of the prophets, insisting on his unique Sonship. And he urges:—

Let every Mission school and college be committed to the supremely worthwhile task of bringing to bear upon the life of each student the divine power of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, in such a manner that not a single one will leave at the end of school life without having felt this transforming and recreative power.

Indian parents should be grateful to Dr. Ahrens for his frankness. They may well appreciate, more than the mission schools are likely to, the revealing of the evangelistic lasso normally concealed inside the academic sleeve.

The alleged results of proselytizing activities in the Roman Catholic Sophia College for Women have aroused an agitation that is natural but hardly reasonable. What else can Indian parents expect if they send their children to missionary institutions? Why are the missionaries sent to India? Obviously not to impart secular instruction!

This particular college, founded not long ago by nuns of the Sacred Heart Order, is affiliated to the University of Bombay. The eminent economist Prof. K. T. Shah, a member of the University Senate, sounded the alarm in a letter published in *The Bombay Chronicle* of 28th October under the caption "Proselytizing in Sophia College." The *Chronicle* takes up the cry with an editorial, "Stop the Evil."

Professor Shah, balked in his demand for an official investigation by the University, made his own inquiries. He found that one Parsi girl had been formally converted on the day she reached eighteen and had been removed to Panchgani and kept in a convent there. Another Parsi girl discovered to be contemplating apostasy was reported to have told her distressed parents that children owed no consideration to their parents "when the matter at issue concerned their immortal soul"! Professor Shah writes:—

Another, said to be a Muslim, is also converted or about to be; a Sikh, ditto; and four or five others on

the waiting list....

He charges the missionaries with breach of trust, morally if not technically, against the parents of the children converted or contemplating conversion.

In a wider sense, it is also a breach of faith *vis-a-vis* the University, which, by affiliation, gave them standing and importance. It is also a breach of faith against the country as a whole, which gives them hospitality.

The menace, Professor Shah points out, does not begin and end with the University, but is nation-wide. He urges the arousing of public opinion through the Press, the All-India Women's Conference etc. "against such insidious attacks on the faith, the culture, and the family life of the people."

"A Bandra Diary" by "Recluse" in the weekly *Indian Social Reformer* presents the Theosophical point of view on many occasions. Thus, in the issue of 21st November, what he says about Christian missionaries and European civilization:—

Compulsory Bible-teaching in Mission schools brings Christianity into ridicule and for that reason alone should be stopped without any direction from the University or Government.

Foreign Christian Missions have become out of date. To begin with, the post-war world will have more urgent uses for money than propaganda to make good Hindus and Muslims, indifferent Christians. Then, the greatest lesson of the war or wars is that the Churches have hopelessly failed and their sending missions is like the blind leading the blind. The illusion that the wealthy nations of Europe and America owed their power and prosperity to Christianity is gone for ever. Parodying Kipling's verses in his Recessional on the Diamond Jubilee of Queen Victoria, William Watson wrote:—

Best by remembering God say some
We keep our high imperial lot;
Fortune I fear has oftenest come
When we forgot, when we forgot.

Most important of all, ideas of true religion have spread widely throughout the world, to some extent through the study of Hindu teachings in the Bhagavad Gita and the Upanishads. One can hardly open a book on religion or philosophy nowadays without coming on references to Hindu teachings. The old slogan that all non-Christian religions are the work of the Devil has become obsolete along with the Devil himself. Hell of which Dante has given such an intimate account, is

now a synonym for the condition of Europe. All or most of the old stock-in-trade of proselytising missions has ceased to be even reputable. The more sensitive minds among missionaries themselves realise that they can help India and China and other Asiatic countries more effectively and with greater appreciation by the people, than by getting them to give up the religion of their forefathers and become Methodists, Baptists and Seventh Day Adventists, none of which have any significance for them.

W. Q. Judge was a great pioneer in popularizing the *Gita* and other Hindu texts in the West, especially in the U. S. A. He published his *Yoga Aphorisms of Patanjali* in 1889 and his *Bhagavad Gita* in 1890. He wrote even before that date:—

Inquirers ought to read the *Bhagavad-Gita*. It will give them food for centuries if they read with spiritual eyes at all. Underneath its shell is the living spirit that will light us all. I read it ten times before I saw things that I did not see at first. In the night the ideas contained in it are digested and returned partly next day to the mind. It is the study of adepts.

And again :—

True occultism is clearly set forth in the *Bhagavad Gita* and *Light on the Path*, where sufficient stress is laid upon practical occultism, but after all, Krishna says, the kingly science and the kingly mystery is devotion to and study of the light which comes from within. The very first step in true mysticism and true occultism is to try and apprehend the meaning of Universal Brotherhood, without which the very highest progress in the practice of magic turns to ashes in the mouth.

A canvass of views on the immortality of the soul reported recently in *The New Statesman and Nation* indicated that only about one in three of those approached believed that the soul would live forever. "Y. Y.," himself a believer in immortality though sometimes a reluctant one, comments on this finding in the July 4th issue of that journal. It seems to him that the uniqueness of man among the animals may lie chiefly in his

possession of an immortal soul.

Masses today, however, take non-survival for granted, he says, in much the same way as their grand-parents took immortality for granted. Science has not spoken authoritatively either way, "Y. Y." points out, so "the unbeliever as well as the believer lives by faith."

If he is dogmatically certain of the death of the soul, he is intellectually in the same boat as the man who is dogmatically certain of its immortality.

"Intellectually" should be underlined. The immortality of the soul is not, as "Y. Y." suggests, one of the "magnificent conjectures" which have so often turned out to be true. It is one of the ideas burned into the consciousness of humanity in its infancy and now innate in man, when not stifled by education which "enthrones scepticism but imprisons spirituality." "Y. Y." is not far from the Theosophical position on Revelation in the true sense when he writes :—

The most valid reason for believing in immortality—apart from religious faith—seems to me to be that so many good men—seers with the profoundest insight—have believed in it.

But fortunately "man cannot rest satisfied with bare negation." The yearning after proofs of immortality will not be stilled. "Y. Y." sees the possibility of a swing back to majority belief in life beyond life. "It would be interesting to return to earth thirty years hence and find out."

In the face of this wide-spread agnosticism, must not the student of Theosophy feel his responsibility? For he is a custodian, in the measure of his own perception, of the universal scientifico-religious philosophy which alone can furnish humanity with an impregnable basis on which to reconstruct its crumbling faiths. Is he doing all in his power to spread it broadcast, in words and by life?

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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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