

The very first step towards being positive and self-centred is in the cheerful performance of duty. Try to take pleasure in doing what is your duty, and especially in the *little* duties of life. When doing any duty put your whole heart into it. There is much in this life that is bright if we would open our eyes to it. If we recognize this then we can bear the troubles that come to us calmly and patiently, for we know that they will pass away. You can solidify your character by attending to small things. By attacking small faults, and on every small occasion, one by one. This will arouse the inner attitude of attention and caution. The small faults and small occasions being conquered, the character grows strong.—W. Q. JUDGE

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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 1945.

VOL. XVI. No. 2.

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AUM THE THEOSOPHICAL MOVEMENT

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CHRISTMAS-THE BIRTH

Centuries before Jesus was born, the 25th of December was celebrated as the festival of the Winter Solstice. In Rome exoteric Mithraism was already a distorted religion when the early Christ-adorers began to gather for secret worship. Esotericism connected with the Iranian Mithra, "Ruler of the Year," and of the Chaldean Iao, was corrupted out of recognition by the Roman and other sectarians. St. Chrysostom, who lived about 390 A. D., wrote of the 25th December :---

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

Here we are not concerned with the fascinating story of how the Christmas of modern Christendom came to be what it is—a little understood festival of mixed notions, and which passes off as the birth day of Jesus of Nazareth. Theosophy bids us go to the pristine pure ideas of the psycho-spiritual atmosphere of the ancient festival of the Winter Solstice. The day on which the sunlight first begins to lengthen is called the Birth Day of the Sun. The day on which a Great Soul sacrifices itself and incarnates on earth for humanity is called the Birth Day of the Spiritual Sun. The day on which the Divinity waiting in the Heart-shrine comes forth and acts in the cerebrum of man is the spiritual birth-day of the individual.

The Day and the Sun are the symbols of awakening, and Christmas is the festival of awakening.

Innumerable are the awakenings in human consciousness. They are all cyclic. Just as the rotation of the Earth causes the diurnal awakening of the human body to active labour, so the revolution of the Earth round the Sun creates the yearly festival of the Winter Solstice, which is made to symbolize soul-awakening. Every awakening in consciousness is a birth. Most of these are taken as common-places because they relate to the routine of life and so we often miss out their purpose and meaning, which means the value of experience itself. Nature's actions are reflected in human actions, as our deeds cast their shadows on the screen of Time. We recognize that we affect Nature as Nature affects us. But the wide scope and the profound depths of the inter-relationship are not recognized, even by Theosophical students, as fully as they should be.

Knowing what we have learnt from Theosophy, what shall we do in these coming days? Shall we not sincerely attempt to examine ourselves, note the cobwebs of prejudices, doubts and suspicions and trace them to the creature whose name is Egotism, and who has woven them into the lower mind? Shall we not say with Newman "Pride ruled my will," and take to heart his advice and appeal to the God within: "Remember not past years!"

But merely to note our psychic cobwebs and their author will not bring to us a new awakening. Self-examination prepares us, but it is not enough. The pain of the psyche must be felt in the consciousness. As long as we remain satisfied with the achievements of our egotism, new awakening is impossible. When our pride pains us, when we see the utter ugliness of our Ahankaric-soul, then a glimpse is caught of the Sublime and the Beautiful. But even this will not necessarily lead to fresh awakening, for the glimpse passes and the drab remains to thrive. If we can remember the Gleam of the Sublime and the Beautiful and use our experience to colour the next words to be spoken or the next deed to be done, then only will we realize a new awakening. Between the Spirit that is Man, and its distorted shadow, egotism, there is a misunderstanding. The Sublime and the Beautiful belong to the Spirit, their shadows are taken to be realities by the proud and egotistic self so that frustrations result, and thus, on the verge of a fresh awakening, we are again entrapped by the devil of pride.

Theosophy advises us to take advantage of the psycho-spiritual aspects of this season and resolve to colour the coming year with the golden gleam of the Sublime and the Beautiful. So, neither waiting for special opportunities nor creating them; neither looking for special events nor planning to perform special deeds, let us learn to use the daily round and the common task and draw out from them their hidden golden sheen of sublimity and beauty. Every deed, which under Karma is ours to perform, can be transmuted and thus made to yield these grand qualities. We miss out because the personal self and its machinations intervene. We look behind and we are lost. We look before and pine for what is not; while, by a little dispassion, some ingenuity and confident attempt, we could transform the rigid into the mellow, the dull into the bright.

Just as the great Moment of Choice is made up of many many moments of small choices, so the real inner awakening follows numerous small awakenings, which result from deliberate effort. These small awakenings are like days—each of

which is a manvantara in itself-every morning we are born to a new life. If we would but induce in ourselves the mood of soul-freshness at dawn and sustain it in thought and feeling and by word and deed throughout the day we should soon experience the vision of the Dawn of the Soul. But there is another method. We are slaves of hours and days and die as such. When we work in a higher dimension, and not in the three-dimensional time-past, present, future-we learn to make each event a link in the chain of the Eternal Now. It is thus we live on through all changes including the change called death. How many psychological dawns there are for us in a single day! But most of us sleep through them because heedless of the Soul within we remain heedless to the soul of those dawns. Beauty and sublimity repose in each event, but we need Charity and Harmony and Patience and Dispassion and Endurance to feel and to perceive them. The Divine Virtues, the Paramitas, can and should be applied-one, or several, or all of them-to the sweeping of the floor, to the cleaning of the desk, to the keeping of the accounts, to the wishing of good-day to friends and acquaintances as well as to the study and the promulgation of Theosophy.

> God blesses still the generous thought, And still the fitting word He speeds, And Truth, at His requiring taught, He quickens into deeds.

Let us all reflect upon the truth that "a day can be coloured so can a year. The Astral life of the earth is young and strong between Christmas and Easter."

THEIR FIRST CHRISTMAS

[Reprinted from The Path Vol. V, p. 265, for December 1890.-EDS.]

The sparkling Christmas morning of 1889 saw a strange and early commotion in a suburban corner of the city of X. During the night a heavy snow had fallen as though to obliterate the dark traces of sin from the earth, freshly preparing for a new life, a new light, a nobler day. But man had already frustrated the purpose of nature; the black tracks crossing in every direction seemed like highways of crime. In one instance, at least, they were so, if the whispers of groups gathered

about the villa of Joseph Hollister were to be believed. These groups were composed of all species of humanity, from the squalid undersized girl bearing an oversized baby with big, pasty face, to the tramps furtively watching the knot of prominent citizens discussing the revelations of the night. Two policemen paced to and fro at the front and side of the villa. Inside its open door a third officer could be seen, submissively listening to an authoritative soldierly man in plain clothes. Grave gentlemen conversed in the dining room. Maids with scared faces flitted up and down the stairs. When distant doors were softly opened the deep sobbing of a woman could be momentarily heard, and a strange, laboured sound, as if some fine mechanism were slowly running down. Both were sounds to make men shudder.

Two hours earlier, the authority in plain clothes, hastily summoned, had gathered these facts. Joseph Hollister, a respected merchant, had been wakened in the night by unusual sounds outside his door. Springing up to investigate, he found the gas brightly burning in the entry, some figures going, catlike, down the stairs, and a masked man confronting him, covering the retreat of others with their booty. Towards this man Hollister sprang, unarmed. In the tussle which ensued the burglar lost his mask. Freeing an arm, he shot his antagonist in the side. As Hollister fell, a second shot was sent to ensure his silence, but he still lived, though the moments of his life were briefly numbered, to the regret of every one who knew the upright, honourable gentleman. The only fault found with him in this practical age was thus expressed by his close friend, Dr. Grant. "Hollister is a grain too fine for rough use, but what can you expect of a theosophist who believes that even brutes-and human brutes-have souls ? "

Dr. Grant presently came downstairs with that exaggerated creaking which attends the efforts of well-meaning persons to walk with unwonted quiet. To him Captain Scofield of the detective force addressed himself.

" How is he, Doctor ? "

"Sinking fast."

" Conscious ? "

"Yes. Mind clear as a bell."

"Good!" Scofield twirled his hat with satisfaction.

" Why ? "

"I think we've got one of the crowd."

" The man who shot him ? "

" Perhaps."

"In God's name be quick then. Hollister could still identify him."

"He's here. Prepare your man." With a

complacent sense of being beforehand with the Doctor, Scofield pointed towards the walk. Two detectives with a hand-cuffed man between them had alighted from a close carriage and were coming towards the house, accompanied by the noise of the eager crowd and the taps of their fellow officers' clubs upon too obtrusive bodies. "It's Jim Hogan; I suspected his gang and found Jim at his lodgings, quiet enough, but a bit too sleepy for a professional thief abed in wet boots. That mask about fits him and the job was worked in his style, but Mr. Hollister can settle the question."

"Of course, " said the Doctor. "You've done sharp work, Scofield. I'd better be as quick with mine." He retraced his steps. It was a melancholy scene which met his eyes on opening a bedroom door. Accustomed as he was to such, he was sharply impressed by the opened windows courting every breath of the cold heavens for labouring lungs; the heavy stagnant odors of drugs, liniments, and dried blood ; the injured man propped high on pillows, ghastly, drained of life, but meeting his questioning look with eyes as steady as his own. The deep gentleness, the calm serenity of those eyes, the firmness of lips drawn by pain, the hand lovingly laid upon the head of a young and beautiful woman who knelt by the bedside in all the abandonment of grief, were all so many witnesses, to Hollister's friend, of the magnitude of the coming loss. At the foot of the bed a woman held a fresh, cooing babe in her arms. The little one gurgled at its father, reached out and struggled to go to him. A second child, a splendid boy of four, his eyes still heavy with sleep, broke from the nurse's restraining hand and ran to the bedside.

"It smells nasty here, Papa," he said, clambering up. "Why's mamma crying? Didn't Santa Claus bring her anything?" Impressed by the silence, his eyes grew big with a sudden idea. "Didn't Santa Claus come *at all*?" he said, with quivering lips. "Didn't *anything* come in the night?"

At the recollection of what had come in the night the mother's form trembled convulsively. Hollister stopped his little son with a warning gesture, a faint smile. "Go, my son," whispered he, "to the play room, and see if Santa Claus has forgotten a good boy. Stop! Kiss father first; and, Robbie, remember this." He looked impressively into the radiant face of his son. "Be good; try always for that." Smiling at the child's haste to be gone, he kissed him again, motioned the nurse to bring the lively baby to his last embrace, then firmly signed them from the room. As they went, without one backward glance, their mother's heart hardened to them for an instant. Hollister saw it in her face. "Let them be glad while they can, Dear," he whispered.

The Doctor spoke. "You are exerting yourself too much, Hollister."

"What can it matter now?" replied the sick man with patient gentleness. "But you Doctors will be obeyed till the last."

"It does matter, my dear fellow. Mrs. Hollister, I want your husband to save his strength. Will you not leave him to me for a time?"

She sprang to her feet. "Oh, Doctor! Doctor! You have hope?" she cried. The two men exchanged glances of pity. She paused, then bent her head in acceptance of the Doctor's silence. "Then why should I leave him?"

"Will you not do so for a few moments?" "A few moments? Now." A change, a grey veil creeping up Hollister's face emphasised her words. "What can you be going to do?"

The Doctor too saw there was no time to lose. He felt the patient's pulse and gave him a reviving drink. "Scofield wants to speak to him," he said rapidly.

"He can do so in my presence." The Doctor hesitated. "You are hiding something from me." At her feverish vehemence Hollister unclosed his eyes and took her hand. She kissed his, holding it in both her own.

"Tell her," the husband whispered to his friend.

The latter obeyed him. "Scofield has a man who he thinks_____"

The wife sprang up as if a bullet had struck her. "It is the man who shot my husband," she cried.

"It is a man who may have been one of the gang and — "

"Bring him; bring him quick. Don't lose a moment. Joe can identify the wretch, can't you.

my Darling? Oh, hurry; hurry!" She made as if to push the Doctor from the room.

Hollister too was energized by the news. The grey veil slipped away from mouth and chin. A commanding gesture stopped both wife and Doctor. Clearly, his low voice said :

"Do not bring him here."

Dismayed, the wife ejaculated :

"My dearest one ! You are able. For my sake, try. The wretch must not escape. He shall not." She stepped towards the door, an eager messenger of Fate.

"Kate! Come here." She flew to him. He laid his chill hand again in hers. "I wish to die at peace with all the world," he said.

"No! No! Do not sacrifice me. When you are gone my only comfort will be in——" sobs choked her throat.

"In revenge, dear Love?" he questioned.

"In Justice. Oh! Call it what you will, but send for him. You are not fit to judge now." She felt the deep reproach, the pain of his look. "Husband, forgive me. But send for him. Could I breathe with your murderer at large? Send quickly." She encircled the sick man with her glowing arms. She pillowed his head upon the loved fragrance of her breast. Large with entreaty, lustrous with determination, her eyes fastened upon his to draw consent from them. All her rich beauty came about the dying man. She pressed him closer. The husband to whom her wishes had been a delight yielded now, at the repetition of the formula of her will. He gave a sign of assent. The Doctor left the room. A few moments were consecrated to their love and grief. Then quick steps were heard in the hall. The wife, erect, listening, watching the door as if to snatch something from it, forgot him who observed her with pitying, pardoning gaze. Hogan, entering between two constables, met the blazing passion of her face and dropped his hardened eyes.

"It is the man. I know it," she exclaimed. She advanced one step, as if to tear him from his keepers, to thrust him beneath the eyes of his accuser.

"Can you swear to him, Madame?" asked Scofield.

"No. I hardly saw him as he ran downstairs.

But Mr. Hollister will know. Doctor, raise all the blinds. Bring the man nearer. Now "—as the bright light poured full upon the prisoner— "look at him, Joe; do you recognize him? And you "—to Hogan, "look at Mr. Hollister."

All obeyed as if they were the automata of her will. Even Hogan, stealing looks about the room, made an effort, and met those eyes fast growing dim upon the blood-streaked pillow. He sought his death warrant upon that ghastly face. His guilty heart questioned it savagely for recognition. He saw mild eyes beneath a brow that was calm, unfurrowed, but damp with the death agony, the crowning shadow of the hair above, the wistful, patient lips of one who bore his cross, and a look he had never seen before on human face and could not therefore know for a look of love. The wife's passion blinded her to it. The Doctor, trained to nice observation, saw and understood it, with an oath caught under his breath. For one full minute Hollister studied Hogan; then he spoke.

"Turn his face a little more to the light." The constables moved their man. Everyone seemed to stop breathing. Hogan, encircled by eyes of hatred and scorn, deliberately returned that hate to each and all with slowly-travelling glance, then returned it to the implacably gentle face of his victim, who at that instant said distinctly, slowly. "I do not recognize this man."

Hogan flung him a scathing look and said in his heart, "Curse him for a fool." A hissing sound as of pent-up breath escaping came from each person in the room. Kate Hollister broke into a hoarse and baffled cry.

"Look again, Dear. Look once more. Can't we have more light? Doctor, you see he doesn't know what he is saying. I am sure it is the man. Oh, my Darling! Look again, again."

He did look again. Then he visited every face in the room with that look of majesty, reassuring them all.

"Hush, Kate. I do not recognize the man." He helped out his hand to Hogan, dissipating the doubts of every looker-on except one. She tried to intervene, then fell fainting against the Doctor.

"Shake hands, man. There's no ill will between us." The constables pushed Hogan towards him. Their hands met. Instantly a something, a change, swept over Hogan's face, mastered by the steady warning of peaceful eyes.

"Try to do some good with your life, lad. When a man lies *here*, he wishes he'd made better use of his time." His grasp relaxed; Hogan walked from the room with clenched hands, pursued by a long rattle, a gasp, a woman's shriek—and silence.

Down on the river bank, amid ooze and mists and all the deadly miasms of swamp lands and sluggish water, stood a reeking, shattered tenement house full to the maw with shattered lives. Hogan climbed its stairs to the roof, savagely cursing constables, crowd, associates, all who had shrunk from him as he shambled away. He flung himself upon a filthy bed, burying his head in his arm, his hand clenched. Out of one end of the bed, like a disturbed rat, scurried a weazened child who sought the next darkest corner of the room. A slatternly woman, her face bruised and swollen, came and stared at Hogan. "He won't hurt ye," she called to the child; then to Hogan; "the brat's just hiding here a bit from his boss. But I didn't look to see ye back here, Jim, curs't if I did." There was a rough tenderness in her tone.

He made no reply. She clattered about, shut the door, then returned to the bed with a rasping whisper of—"How'd ye get off?" Still no answer. She drew his arm away; his sleeve was wet. She gaped in recognition of this unlookedfor fact. "I never saw Jim Hogan cryin' drunk afore."

"An' I aint now," said he gruffly. "Curse ye, can't ye let a_fellow be?"

Relieved, she muttered :

"That's more like himself." Then aloud. "Tell me how ye got off."

"The old-the man did'nt recognise me."

"He didn't; the bloke. Wasn't he himself, then?"

Hogan sat up, bristling with anger. "Yes, he was. Look here, Moll, don't you say a word agin him. D'ye hear?" He shook his clenched hand in her face. "I seen he knowed me. I heared the gallows creakin' above me. An then says he, 'I don't know the man,' says he, quiet as a lord." "D'ye think he was feared on ye?"

"Feared? Him? Why, he was a lookin' straight at death. What was I to be 'feared on? That cuss shook hands with me,—d-n him." A volley of oaths in a meditative tone followed here.

"Must a been stunned, then."

"Stunned? You, Moll, look ahear. When us shook hands, he give me this." He opened his clinched hand, displaying a button attached to a bit of cloth torn from the coat he had on.

The woman gasped.

"He gin up th' evidence to ye? Was he a crank, Jim, or what?"

"An' says he to me: 'Try to do some good with your life, lad.' He was goin' fast, Moll, an' says he, holdin' *that* into my hand, an' his woman burnin' to tear my heart out, 'Shake hands, man,' says he, 'there's no ill-will atween us.' Strike me dead but it made a babby of me, Moll. 'When a man comes to lie here, 'says he, 'he wishes he'd made better use' why Moll, what ails ye? I aint seed ye cry since *it* died."

"Never you mind me, Jim. I'm a d-d fool. It's because I thought you was done for, sure. I thought you'd swing this time."

"' Try to do some good with you're life, '" the man repeated. "See here, Moll; you can say what you're a mind to, but you bet I'm goin' to do it."

"To do what, then?"

"Try to do some good, like he said, cuss him. I look like it, don't I? But it seems owin' to him. He'll hant me, mebby, if I don't. Anyhow— I'm in for a try. But it's a d-d hard thing to know how to try."

"Say, Jim." She moved uneasily, hesitated, then broke out. "If you was to begin with me." Woman-like, she had quickly grasped the situation.

"How?" He stared at her. With downcast look she mumbled, ashamed of being ashamed.

"With me—to make me—if I was more honester like—if you—" She cleared her throat; no more would come.

"Hold on, Moll. D'ye mean, to marry ye?" She nodded. "Lord, but ye're changed all to onct!" "So are you, Jim."

"That's so. Well, of course I'll do it, soon as we kin. Here's my hand on't."

She flung her arms about his neck. Transfigured by a new humanity, it became evident that both were young and not ill-looking. Standing upright, with hope in their faces, did so much for them. They looked like blind people straining for a promised vision.

The weazened child crept out to their feet.

"Say, be you goin' som'eres? Ye might take me with ye. Th' boss'll kill me soon. He's swore it."

"Yes. You kin come if you're a mind to. But I say, Moll, we're fools. Where kin we go to? Who'll have us?"

"Jim! Jim! Don't ye go back on it. Don't gin it up."

"It's goin' back on me. What can I do? But, I'll try; if we starve, I'll try."

"And I will help you," said a new comer. "Put down your fists, Jim Hogan. The first thing you've got to learn is not to get ready to hit every decent man that speaks to you." Dr. Grant walked up and laid a hand on his shoulder, not unkindly. "I've known Joseph Hollister twenty years; better to-day than ever. If there's a way out into a better life for you and I believe there is—I'll help you to find it—as a Christmas gift to Hollister."

The starveling on the floor tugged at the Doctor's coat. "Say; I know what Christmas means, now. It's gettin' a pappy an' a mammy."

Jim Hogan lifted him to his shoulder.

"First Christmas ever I see an' I ain't sayin' as I like it so much, neither, but it's owin' to him, Doc an-well-you bet I'll try."

Thus it came about that the faith of the dead Hollister was justified. That the State gained three honest citizens in place of one. That Kate Hollister learned a lesson of peace, and Dr. Grant that a living germ lies hidden in every heart. Finally, that to the Hogan family, working its way slowly but surely up from the slough of humanity, Christmas became a sacred institution and dated first from 1889.

J. CAMPBELL VER PLANCK

QUESTIONS ANSWERED

"Let us compare all things, and, putting aside emotionalism as unworthy of the logician and the experimentalist, hold fast only to that which passes the ordeal of ultimate analysis."—H. P. B.

चित्रं वटतरोर्मूले बृद्धाः शिष्या गुरुर्युवा। गुरोस्तु मोनं ब्याख्यानं शिष्यास्तु च्छिन्नसंशयाः॥

"Ah! the wonder of the Banyan Tree. There sits the Guru Deva, a youth, and the disciples are elders; the teaching is silence, and still the disciples' doubts are dispelled."

Q.—How can one help being discouraged when one notes the condition of the world and knows how few Theosophists there are to preach and practise the philosophy which is the hope of the world?

Ans.-From a materialistic standpoint the situation is indeed discouraging, but we Theosophists have no reason to be down-hearted. Our success does not depend on numbers, and the result of our work is never immediately visible. In fact what we achieve may not penetrate to the physical plane until many, many years have passed. As Gandhiji once wrote: "If the evolution of form takes aeons, why should we expect wonders in the evolution of thought and conduct? And yet the age of miracles is not gone. As with individuals, so with nations. I hold it to be perfectly possible for masses to be suddenly converted and uplifted. Suddenness is only seeming. For no one can say how far the leaven has worked. The most potent forces are unseen, even unfelt for long. But they are working none the less surely. Religion to me is a living faith in the supreme unseen Force. That Force has confounded mankind before, and it is bound to confound us again."

It may even happen that what we have actually accomplished on the outer plane—little though it be—is destroyed. But the soul of what has disappeared from sight is immortal and will some time seek and find physical expression again. So why be discouraged? That which is accumulating on the inner planes as the result of the efforts of a few will triumph in the long run and burst forth like the sun after a storm and illumine the earth. We are filling a reservoir which will supply refreshment to many, perhaps when those who helped to fill it are dead and gone.

It is not easy always to realise the truth of all this. We wish for results that can be observed by the physical senses. Yet all down the ages men have proclaimed the power of thought and of the invisible. A beautiful expression of this conviction is found in the Bible in a little passage from Ecclesiastes: "There was a little city, and few men within it; and there came a great king against it : Now there was in it a poor wise man, and he by his wisdom delivered the city; yet no one remembered that same poor man. Then I said: Wisdom is better than strength. Nevertheless the poor man's wisdom is despised and his words are not heard. The words of wise men are heard in quiet more than the cry of him that rules among fools."

We are sowing seeds and "those who know" are confident that in the course of time they will produce a tremendous harvest. To encourage those of us who, like the questioner, are inclined to waver in our faith, one of the Masters once wrote: "Ah, if your eyes were opened, you might see such a vista of potential blessings to yourselves and mankind lying in the germ of the hour's effort, as would fire with joy and zeal your souls!"

Q.—We are told that if we could only make our brains porous to the influence of the Higher Self, wisdom and inspiration from that aspect of our being would flow in upon us. Especially would this be the case in the morning on waking, as we should then be able to impress on our waking consciousness results of what we have experienced in sushupti. Does this mean that our problems will be solved during sleep?

Ans.—Presumably the questioner refers to the practical problems of everyday life. If so, he will find a passage in H. P. B.'s article on "The Dual Aspect of Wisdom" which may help him to understand the situation. There we read (U. L. T. Pamphlet, No. 32, p. 5):"...divine wisdom being diffused throughout the infinite universe, and our impersonal Higher Self being an integral part of it, the atmic light of the latter can be centred only in that which, though eternal, is still individualised—that is, the noetic Principle of every rational human being, or our Higher Manas, at one with Buddhi. It is this collective light which is the "Wisdom from above" and which, whenever it descends upon the personal ego is found

'pure, peaceable, gentle.'" This influence, then, is universal. Does it solve practical problems? Yes and no. It does not solve them directly, making plain to us in detail what to do and what not to do. "The Lord accepts no man's deeds." It has no concern with personal details. It is like light, the mere presence of which shining on an object does not make the thing it illumines comprehensible to the man who sees it; nor does the pure radiance of spiritual influence from the Higher Self unravel the tangles of our earthly lives, even if we have got to the point where the personal ego is able to impress the brain with the results of its experience in sushupti. It is the business of that Ego when it again takes up the thread of waking life to apply the inspiration-"frayed out in time and space"-to its own particular problems. The Great Ones are said to renew the earth-and us in so far as we have become porous to their influence-like the coming of spring. So the Wisdom from above revives the faculties of the personal man and strengthens his hold on the author thereof. If all is well with us, we should on waking feel peaceful and happy and eager for life and this will mean that we are better able to meet and face our problems as a result of the night's experience in deep sleep of the body.

Q.—What personal satisfaction do I get from all this effort at study and self-improvement? Shall I be the happier because of it?

Ans.—This is a question many people ask themselves and even Theosophical students of long standing are apt to relapse from time to time into the mood which gives rise to it. Many people wish to persuade themselves that they will become healthy and wealthy as well as wise by studying Theosophy—and also "protected," safe. But no justification can be found in the teachings for an effort to acquire these prizes, and the desired harvest of satisfaction is more likely to fall to the lot of the aspirant if he faces, once and for all, the fact that Theosophy promises no one the gifts of fortune as a reward for trying to live the spiritual life. It is true that "even a little attention given to occultism delivers a man from great danger," but this is not physical danger, but the danger of wasting his life from the point of view of the ego. As a matter of fact for the earnest seeker after wisdom difficulties abound. The past awakens and presents its bill, and the man who is endeavouring to settle his affairs with life finds that many accounts have never yet been closed. This is apt to make his life anything but smooth.

Not that he is necessarily unhappy. Not all that is due him from the past brings trials and sadness. Furthermore, as he strives to impersonalise his feelings and thoughts, he will note in time that he has begun to tap an unexpected source of well-being, a different kind of consciousness—a second current of consciousness running parallel with his everyday experience. This, he soon realises, is the place of peace. whence flows the sense of satisfaction of the man who is happy within himself and on nothing dependeth. What this new current brings him has nothing to do with his personal condition. He may feel it as gladness, strength and safety amid all sorts of personal dangers and difficulties. It is the dawning consciousness of the inner man, the self of spirit, which, although it can never meet and mingle with the self of matter, may at times illuminate the self of matter, "if the latter is willing." To be willing means, among other things, to "let go"-to let go that mood which gives rise to the above question.

A helpful thought in connection with this problem is the following: "Joy and sadness are your twin slaves joined from birth and they must serve you together or not at all."

THE BROTHERHOOD OF MAN

Humanity is a great Brotherhood by virtue of the sameness of the material from which it is formed physically and morally. Unless, however, it becomes a Brotherhood also intellectually, it is no better than a superior genus of animals. (*The Theosophical Glossary*)

In the long ages already covered by evolution, Nature was busy making and moulding the physical and moral being—Man—out of Her own Substance, body of Her body, life of Her life. All men are therefore brothers by virtue of this sameness of material of which they are made. In the human kingdom the process began by which Humanity *must become* a Brotherhood intellectually. The difference between "is a Brotherhood" and "must become a Brotherhood" should be noted.

Today men are thinking in terms of physical and moral Brotherhood because it is being forced on their minds that what hurts one hurts all and that non-recognition of this fact may ultimately result in the annihilation of mankind. "Saturation " raids, " atomic " bombs, however necessary they may be from the military point of view, are bringing home to men the realisation that war is becoming so destructive that unless it is stopped (or changed in form) the future must witness the total destruction of the human family. Selfpreservation is the key-note of this line of reasoning, and therefore the result will not be the creation of a Brotherhood intellectually, even though "the only palliative to the evils of life is union and harmony-a Brotherhood IN ACTU, and altruism not simply in name."

The intellectual realisation that men are brothers by virtue of the sameness of material of which they are formed, "makes no appeal to our higher and deeper feelings," and the same is true of the recognition that men must live in harmony if the race is to survive. It is "the identity of the soul and spirit, of real, immortal man, as Theosophy teaches us" that "once proven and deeprooted in our hearts, would lead us far on the road of real charity and brotherly good-will."

The recognition by the human being of this identity of soul and spirit makes of Humanity a

Brotherhood intellectually, and this is possible because of the descent into the Form of Man (the Brotherhood physical and moral) of the Sons of that other Parent-Universal Mind (the Brotherhood of Spirit). In the human kingdom the two Brotherhoods merge into One. Man, as matterform and desire-mind or moral nature, is little more than an animal: Man, the Thinker in matterform and desire-mind, is the important factor in the human kingdom. The outer is the animal, the inner is the god; the cross of matter and the Christ. Today the "god" is barely perceptible in the human form and Humanity seems to have lost any concept it might have had of its spiritual identity, or indeed of any Spirit in Nature. But through sorrow and suffering the Thinker is beginning to pierce through the density of earthly forms and muddles, and men are searching within their own minds for some light on today's problems. Old creeds and dogmas have failed; old ideas have lost their value, and a totally different answer is now required as to the purpose of life. It is the soul of Man-not the souls of the fewthat is awakening and for this nothing but the "primitive soul-satisfying philosophy of the Aryans" will suffice. Where else should we turn but to the presentation of that soul-satisfying doctrine which we know as Theosophy?

Study of the following quotations should call forth the inner nature and satisfy even the outer man, for they answer in brief or in germ the questions of all time.

Why does the Universe exist? The universe exists for the sake of the soul.

Why does the Soul exist? The Secret Doctrine teaches "the fundamental identity of all Souls with the Universal Over-Soul, the latter being itself an aspect of the Unknown Root....No purely divine Soul...can have an independent (conscious) existence before [it]..has...acquired individuality, first by natural impulse, and then by self-induced and self-devised efforts...thus ascending through all the degrees of intelligence, from the lowest to the highest Manas, from mineral and plant, up to the holiest archangel....The pivotal doctrine of the Esoteric philosophy admits no privileges or special gifts in man, save those won by his own Ego through personal effort and merit.

How is this accomplished? There exists in Nature a triple evolutionary scheme...or rather three separate schemes of evolution, which in our system are inextricably interwoven and interblended at every point.

These are the Monadic (or spiritual), the intellectual, and the physical evolutions.

What is man's constitution and what his goal? Man... has his objective, physical body, his vitalizing astral body (or soul), the real man; and these two are brooded over and illuminated by the third—the sovereign, the immortal spirit. When the real man succeeds in merging himself with the latter, he becomes an immortal entity.

Though the second line of evolution, the Intellectual, includes the growth of intelligence through every part of Nature, as there is but one Indivisible Intelligence in reality, in the human kingdom it is the evolution of the indwelling soul with which we are most concerned. This evolves through self-induced and self-devised, i. e., thought-out, conscious efforts, for man must win his immortality. He has already passed through certain aspects of intelligence in the far past in a non-self-conscious way; his human evolution is concerned with the conscious aspects of that intelligence. A close study of the sentence "Mind is the name given to the sum of the states of Consciousness grouped under Thought, Will, and Feeling" is very illuminating. In the lower kingdoms consciousness, or mind, shows itself as sensation or feeling. The human kingdom adds thought and strives to reach the superhuman kingdom where Will, the pure Force of Spirit in action, predominates.

As man thinks in terms of Divine Ideas instead of personal or individual ones, and brings his Will into operation consciously, he is creating the Intellectual Brotherhood of Man for he is recognising the spiritual side of life and the oneness or unity behind all manifestation. He is not so much concerned with similarity of ideas as he is with trying to find out what the Divine Ideas are so that he can "merge himself" in them and become an immortal entity. Though there is but One Self, One Intelligence, One Universal Soul, One Flame, One Substance-Principle, Spirit-Matter; One Fohat, the link between Spirit and Matter; one Law of involution and evolutionunless he grasps, intellectually, these facts and sees them reflected in himself, the brotherhoods of Spirit and Matter will not blend into the conscious Brotherhood of Man. He must see these in Nature, and in himself, and emulate Their workings. He must try to see the law of involution and evolution as showing in him as action moved by stimulus from without or from within; he must see himself as the One Intelligence in its passages from the Hierarchies which guide and rule the lower aspects of evolution to the Dhyan Chohans, whose thought reflects " the Ideation of the Universal Mind."

In this stage, action from within without, i. e., conscious action, is the method of growth, though the twofold aspect of motion must not be lost sight of. Just as the fire in the coal cannot burst forth without outside aid, so man's mind cannot progress without any outside help. He gets this help from others, either embodied Beings, evolved or unevolved, or from the vibrations of the Divine Thought which is ever fecundating those minds which are ready to receive the seeds. Just as man today can guide the natural functions of the body, desires and lower thinking, so greater Beings "guide some of the minor currents" of life and give out Ideas that will illuminate those minds ready to be illuminated. It is the selfinduced and self-devised efforts of man that make for the readiness of the mind to receive help, for though help is ever in the world, "the receptivity must be equal to the desire to instruct" for that help to be fully availed of. But even receptivity is not enough; neither is instruction. Instruction comes from without-within; it must be changed into action or realisation through the self-induced and self-devised efforts of the recipient to absorb the instructions and act them out. Just as food taken into the body from without becomes part and parcel of the strength and energy and health of that body after the bodily functions have worked on it, so ideas taken in from without have to be absorbed before they show forth their dynamic force. It is because man has "both mind and consciousness, which act and make him perceive things both within and without himself" that he has free-will. He has the power to see the without of the brotherhood of man physically and morally; he has the power to see the within of men as brothers by virtue of the same spiritual essence; he has free-will to act in terms of the one or the other or of both. Man's beginning "is in...[the] and rogynic protoplast, and [his] end is in the Absolute." Between stands Mind, capable of reflecting both. Man must demonstrate for himself

on logical, philosophical, metaphysical, and even scientific grounds that...all men have spiritually and physically the same origin.

What is also needed is to impress men with the idea that, if the root of mankind is one, then there must also be one truth.

ASTROLOGY

[The following Editor's note was appended to an article entitled "Horoscopes and Astrology" in The Theosophist for January 1883, Vol. IV, p. 94.—EDS.]

We believe in astrology as we do in mesmerism and homeopathy. All the three are facts and truths, when regarded as sciences; but the same may not be said of either all the astrologers, all the mesmerists or every homeopathist. We believe, in short, in astrology as a science; but disbelieve in most of its professors, who, unless they are trained in it in accordance with the methods known for long ages to adepts and occultists, will, most of them, remain for ever empiricists and often quacks.

The complaint brought forward by our correspondent in reference to the "class of men coming out of schools and colleges, " who, having imbibed Western thought and new ideas, declare that a correct prediction by means of astrology is an impossibility, is just in one sense, and as wrong from another standpoint. It is just in so far as a blank, a priori denial is concerned, and wrong if we attribute the mischief only to "Western thought and new ideas." Even in the days of remote antiquity when astrology and horoscopic predictions were universally believed in, owing to that same class of quacks and ignorant charlatans-a class which in every age sought but to make money out of the most sacred truths, were found men of the greatest intelligence, but knowing

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nothing of Hermetic sciences, denouncing the augur and the abnormis sapiens whose only aim was a mean desire of, a real lust for gain. It is more than lucky that the progress of education should have so far enlightened the minds of the rising generations of India as to hinder many from being imposed upon by the numerous and most pernicious and vulgar superstitions, encouraged by the venal Brahmans, and only to serve a mere selfish end or aura sacra fames of trading in most sacred things. For, if these superstitions held their more modern forefathers in bondage, the same cannot be said of the old Aryas. Everythis universe-progress and civilthing in ization among the rest-moves in regular cycles. Hence, now as well as then, everything with a pretence to science requires a system supported, at least by a semblance of argument, if it would entrap the unwary. And this, we must allow, native quackery has produced and supplied freely in astrology and horoscopy. Our native astrologers have made of a sacred science a despicable trade; and their clever baits so well calculated to impose on minds even of a higher calibre than the majority of believers in bazaar horoscopers lying in wait on the maidans, have a far greater right to pretend to have become a regular science than their modern astrology itself. Unequivocal marks of the consanguinity of the latter with quackery being discovered at every step, why wonder that educated youths coming out of schools and colleges should emphatically declare native modern astrology in India-with some rare exceptions-no better than a humbug? Yet no more Hindus than Europeans have any right to declare astrology and its predictions a fiction. Such a policy was tried with mesmerism, homeopathy and (socalled) spiritual phenomena; and now the men of science are beginning to feel that they may possibly come out of their affray with facts with anything but flying colours and crowns of laurels on their heads.

THE TIES OF THOUGHT

The importance of the Mind principle in the evolution of the human being is constantly stressed, and all students are familiar with the phrase, the fight is in the mind. To be familiar with a phrase and to realise the truth behind the phrase are two very different things, although the one grows out of the other. In the same way we are familiar with the story of the battle on the field of Kurukshetra and we know what parts of man the various combatants stand for, but it is difficult to realise that the battle is being fought on the Kurukshetra of our own mind, the combatants our own desires and our own heart which has glimpsed the Truth and sensed the Motive behind the fight. We know that the motive is the final destruction of all desires save one, the desire to do the bidding of the Spirit, and we know that it matters not what the result of the battle is, nor the number of soldiers (desires) taking part, for with the power of that One Desire also taking part, the final result is sure. True it is that "Wherever Krishna, the supreme Master of devotion, and wherever the son of Pritha, the mighty archer, may be, there with certainty are fortune, victory, wealth, and wise action." But to realise this in the heat of the battle presupposes much preparation and many skirmishes in the past, skirmishes in which Krishna, the One Spirit, has been our guide and helper. He is there also when the final battle begins, even though it begins before we are ready. Things generally come to a head before we are ready, and perhaps it is the very urgency caused thereby that seems to give us a glimpse of the future. Fortunate are we if the past also is illumined by that glimpse and we remember who has been our guide before, and thinking of Him, find Him by our side now. Though the greatness of the final battle overwhelms us, it does not overwhelm Him, and united to Him the victory is sure.

But to bring about complete victory there must be one leader and not two. Arjuna is told to make victory and defeat, honour and dishonour the same to him, though, in the first instance, it is the love of victory and honour that is appealed to in him. Later, in the last chapter of the *Gita*

he is shown that in reality he has no choice as to whether to fight or not, for because of his nature, higher and lower, the fight must come. His choice lies in whether he lets events rule him or decides to follow, willingly, the bidding of his Higher Nature, Krishna. Before this final stage, Krishna had helped Arjuna; now, Arjuna has to become merely the immediate agent of Krishna. He is shown that the enemies in the field are already dead; all he has to do is to slay the bodies as the last act of carrying out the will of the Spirit. It is, therefore, in this choice that lies his responsibility, not in the actual destruction of the foe, and having made his choice, Arjuna can enter the fray without being overwhelmed by personal considerations. It is the realisation that this change of direction of the consciousness is not a letting go of individual responsibility in order to obey an outside dictator, but that the Spiritual and ourselves are One Being, that brings assurance and enables us to say, "I am free from doubt, firm, and will act according to thy bidding." The Spirit is the Vision and the Force; we are the agent of that Vision and its Force; the enemy himself is also the Vision and the Force. All BEING is One.

It is in moments of exaltation that the mind grasps these truths. In the enthusiastic application of them in life they become covered over with pride of prowess and self-conceit. Therefore the *Gita* tells us that we must remember the Vision again and again.

On the Kurukshetra of our mind the various entities composing our desires have been at war with one another for ages, good desires versus bad desires, and by slow degrees we have identified ourselves with the good. But now the time for this kind of battle has passed. We must give up the leadership of the good desires and place the leadership of the whole battle in His hands, for those desires which have taught us all we know have now to be destroyed if the next stage in spiritual evolution is to be reached. In this dark hour when we seem bereft of all we know and love, we reap the benefit of the friendship, forged through the tie of thought, with the Higher Nature. Our very need presupposes Its presence by our side and in despair we turn to It for guidance.

It must take lives of thought to make this connection more powerful than the almost overwhelming claim of the multitudinous desires and the bonds of personal friendship with which we have united ourselves in the long line of our evolution, and the earnest student is invited to begin now to look into his mind and beyond it to Spirit. He must find out which of his desires are to be destroyed ruthlessly and which will pain him in their destruction. He must seek inspiration and help all the time from that which is greater than any desire, greater than himself, and he must question over again the motive behind his actions and his life.

In this search we find that it is not we ourselves who are the leaders in the battle of life, but that we are moved by desire. Thought and will follow desire and desires make the motive for which thought and will work. These desires are either of a Kamic nature or are rooted in Buddhi, and in themselves are not important. To be fulfilled they need the help of thought and will, and without this help they die. We can see this in respect of lower desires, but we do not apply the knowledge to the Desire rooted in Buddhi. If our lower desires seem to rise spontaneously in the mind, they are actually awakened by sense perceptions and impressions, or brought into objectivity from the Astral Light. The higher Desire also seems to arise spontaneously, but, in fact, it is awakened either by sense perceptions or from the higher region of the Akasa. Sense perceptions are not bad in themselves for the senses can be used to look at an obscene picture or a picture of Krishna; they can be used to read other people's day-dreams or to read the Gita, to listen to music that elevates or that which stimulates the lower nature. If we wish to alter for the better our desires, we will feed the senses with spiritual things, the good, the true, the beautiful as well as the inspirational, and will use our will and thought on them. We will remember these things again and again.

But this is not all. Mind in us today has given us a false sense of individuality, and, as with Arjuna, we feel that it is we who are fighting

the fight to destroy the lower. Absorbed in its sense of "I-ness," feeling itself one with us as persons, it calls up in itself the vision of its prowess and is proud of itself. We see this manifesting in our lives when we look at ourselves in relation to the Path and the Goal. Most of us on hearing of them visualised ourselves as treading that Path and reaching that Goal, and our hearts were filled with joy. As The Voice of the Silence tells us, "The road... is straight and smooth and green....Nightingales of hope and birds of radiant plumage sing perched in green bowers, chanting success to fearless Pilgrims." Even in smaller things we visualise ourselves now as workers for the Cause and a sense of pride creeps in unawares, and in time we find ourselves caught on the battle-field where all that pertains to "us" must be destroyed and despair sets in. It is difficult to learn that "All is impermanent in man except the pure bright essence of Alaya," and that only "at one with it" are we invincible.

It is difficult to put into practice "Unconcerned in the battle save to do his bidding." We must have an all-powerful motive before we can make this change. Motive is subject to growth and we should find, in the search into our mind, that our motives are changing with further knowledge and experience; they are unfolding from within without and in time, by effort and thought. we shall find the 'One Motive, to do His bidding in the world and in ourselves, shedding Its radiance into every corner of our being. The Personality does not give up easily, neither does the sense of "I." It is difficult to become an "agent" only, to give up the freedom of expression which we have cultivated for so long, to alter our conception of ourselves and to take orders, even if we know these orders are given by a greater portion of ourselves as one with the ONE.

The remembrance of the Vision, the glimpse of these things that made us first start the battle, will help us, and this remembrance must be cultivated in the mind and heart lest it grow dim. The mind must become saturated with the Vision instead of being the play-ground of our desirefraught senses. Too much attention is often paid to conquering the lower tendencies by the higher tendencies without due emphasis on that which is

beyond both, the One Desire, the One Will, the One Indivisible Spirit. The One Spirit illuminates all and true renunciation of our lower desires and sense of "I" is to stop thinking of them. Once we have glimpsed something beyond or greater than a desire, or "I," that old conception is dead; we have outgrown it. But we keep it alive by remorse, or by longing. Our great difficulty is to leave behind us those things we have outgrown, while we practise acclimatising ourselves to the new. If we identify ourselves with the armies in the field, with all our baseness, inabilities, desires and feelings, and even with our abilities and noble qualities, we are lost. If we follow Krishna through the field and identify ourselves with Him, spiritual knowledge will well up in our minds and that light shining on the field will destroy the enemy. Both Arjuna the mind, -- "we "-- and Krishna are in the one chariot of the body. The chariot is drawn into the heat of the fray. Krishna drives, Arjuna acts, but the three are one, three aspects of the ALL. So in our lives we must ask Krishna to take us into the battle, into the hottest part of the fray, and there we must do what has to be done, remembering wherever we are and whatever we are doing, that we are only the immediate agent of Krishna.

The future state and the Karmic destiny of man depend on whether Manas gravitates more downward to Kama-rupa, the seat of the animal passions, or upwards to *Buddhi*, the Spiritual *Ego*. In the latter case, the higher consciousness of the individual Spiritual aspirations of *mind* (Manas), assimilating Buddhi, are absorbed by it and form the *Ego*, which goes into Devachanic bliss. SIMPLIFICATION OF TEACHINGS

[Reprinted from The Path, Vol. X, pp. 331-32, for February 1896-EDS.]

At the present time one of the most urgent needs is for a simplification of Theosophical teachings. Theosophy is simple enough; it is the fault of its exponents if it is made complicated, abstruse or vague. Yet enquiring people are always complaining that it is too difficult a subject for them, and that their education has not been deep enough to enable them to understand it. This is greatly the fault of the members who have put it in such a manner that the people sadly turn away. At public meetings or when trying to interest an enquirer it is absolutely useless to use Sanskrit, Greek or other foreign words. Nine times out of ten the habit of doing so is due to laziness or conceit. Sometimes it is due to having merely learned certain terms without knowing and assimilating the ideas underneath. The ideas of Theosophy should be mastered, and once that is done it will be easy to express those in the simplest possible terms. And discussions about the Absolute, the Hierarchies, and so forth, are worse than useless. Such ideas as Karma, Reincarnation, the Perfectibility of Man, the Dual Nature, are the subjects to put forward. These can be expounded-if you have grasped the ideas and made them part of your thought-from a thousand different points of view. At all meetings the strongest effort should be made to simplify by using the words of our own language in expressing that which we believe.

WILLIAM Q. JUDGE

The whole trouble has arisen from this: we have started our exposition of, and discussion about, the "Principles," using their Sanskrit names instead of coining immediately, for the use of Theosophists, their equivalents in English. We must try to remedy this now. To avoid henceforth such misapprehensions, I propose to translate literally from the Occult Eastern terms their equivalents in English, and offer these for future use.

-H. P. B.

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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.

Correspondence should be addressed to

The United Lodge of Theosophists

51, MAHATMA GANDHI ROAD, BOMBAY, INDIA.

OTHER LODGES

LOS ANGELES (7), CALIFORNIA, U.S.A	k ts et et
PASADENA (I), CALIFORNIA, U.S. A Theosophy Hall 266 Arcadia Stree	
HOLLY WOOD (28), CALIFORNIA, U.S. A Thessophy Hall 1621 Choroline August	
INGLEWOOD, CALIFORNIA, U.S.A	ie
SACRAMENTO (16), CALIFORNIA, U.S.A	d
THEADERING (3), TENNSTLVANIA, U.S. A	
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SYDNEY, AUSTRALIA	et

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