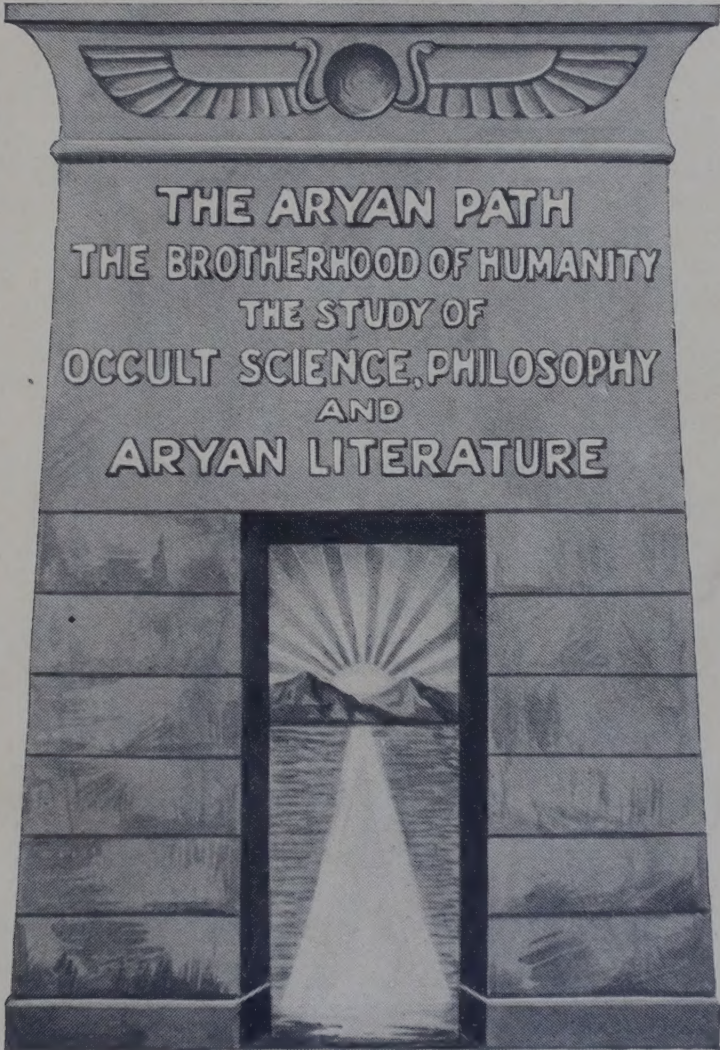




THE
THEOSOPHICAL MOVEMENT
A MAGAZINE DEVOTED TO



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

Vol. VIII No. 1

November 17, 1937

A band of students of the Esoteric Doctrines, who would reap any profit spiritually must be in perfect harmony and unity of thought. Each one individually and collectively has to be *utterly unselfish*, kind and full of goodwill towards each other at least—leaving humanity out of the question; there must be no party spirit among the band, no backbiting, no ill-will, or envy or jealousy, contempt or anger. What hurts one ought to hurt the other—that which rejoices A must fill with pleasure B.

—MAHATMA M.

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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 November 1937

VOL. VIII. No. 1

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THE THEOSOPHICAL MOVEMENT

BOMBAY, 17th November 1937.

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THE PATH OF PRACTICE

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.

The degree of success or failure are the landmarks the masters have to follow, as they will constitute the barriers placed with your own hands between yourselves and those whom you have asked to be your teachers. The nearer your approach to the goal contemplated—the shorter the distance between the student and the Master.

A MASTER OF WISDOM (U. L. T. Pamphlet No. 22, p. 13)

H. P. B.'s Theosophical mission had among its aims the awakening of individuals, however few, who would free their minds from social cant, religiosity, communalism—sectarianism of every kind. Her teachings liberalize the mind and enable the student, if he so wishes, to practise a high and noble code of ethics based upon the logical metaphysics of the age-old Esoteric Philosophy. She not only taught to destroy in ourselves blind servility to persons but also servility to accepted notions and opinions—to test by pure reason all statements, and not to accept them blindly though they be made by the Popes of religions or the Presidents of academies. More—she advocated that Theosophical students should examine her own teachings and not accept them blindly. Only that which the mind grasps can the heart really assent to ; therefore a calm and reasoned examination of the doctrines of Theosophy is the first necessary step on the Path of Practice.

W. Q. Judge, who carried on the Mission of H. P. B. with enlightened faith in the Message and enlightened trust in the Messenger, stressed the treading of the Path of Practice. Himself a successful practitioner, he became the guide and friend of all those who wanted to tread the Narrow Way. His writings are more meant for the convinced aspirant than even those of H. P. B.

Through the vicissitudes and the numerous

failures of the practising aspirants after the death of H.P.B. and later of W.Q. Judge, the obstacles and difficulties of the Path of Practice stood out in clearer relief. Robert Crosbie had the insight to perceive these, and he possessed the humility and the discrimination necessary to use them. In 1909 he founded the United Lodge of Theosophists with its Declaration as its basis. An intimate knowledge of thirty-four years of history of the Movement forms the background of that Declaration. In the Declaration of the Lodge and in his writings now collected in *The Friendly Philosopher* the student learns more about the Path of Practice.

In its work the United Lodge of Theosophists puts a special emphasis on Theosophical application. The beauty and strength of Theosophical study is seen only when the teachings are used to solve the problems of day-to-day living, to purify the lower nature and to make it a fit channel for the higher. Similarly, Theosophical service is dependent on right application ; to preach without practice is worse than worthless. Both Theosophical study and Theosophical service need a base-line to complete the triangle and application provides that line. Therefore, in this magazine the ethical application of Theosophical teaching is stressed. In planning for our new volume of which this is the first issue we have been inspired by these facts. The enemies of Theosophy and of H.P.B.—the two are one and cannot be separated—are many ; the worst among

them are of the theosophical household—those who claim to be preaching and serving Theosophy but who seem to be unconscious of their ignorance of what she stood for and what she taught.

THE THEOSOPHICAL MOVEMENT, like *Theosophy* (Los Angeles), *Théosophie* (Paris), *De Theosophie* (Amsterdam) and *The Aryan Path* (Bombay), serves the cause of Pure Theosophy represented by the United Lodge of Theosophists. It, like them, has many duties to perform, but it specializes, and will do so more in the future, in the application aspect of Theosophy, to offer help to the aspirant who wants to learn the art of Spiritual Alchemy, the transmutation of the iron of hard heart and the lead of twistable mind into the gold of Real Life. Those who wish to reform themselves will find in these pages useful hints, advice and instruction to tread the Path of Practice.

AS A NEW CYCLE OPENS OUR TRIPLE TASK

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

—MAHATMA K. H.

Self-examination is of the past and out of it naturally prospective vision emerges. This happens for the Devachanee at the end of his dreams and before he assumes the new masque of a new body. What is true of the individual is true of a Lodge of students, for a Lodge is composed of individuals. Both in the past and in the future the human soul who has entered the sphere of Theosophical influence is concerned with three major ingredients of his life : Self-control of the Personality ; Self-expression of the Individuality ; Service of the Theosophical Cause. Let us consider this triple task.

I. CONTROL OF THE PERSONALITY

The three gates of Hell mentioned in the Sixteenth *Gita* are Desire, Anger, Covetousness. All human vices are but aspects of these three, which three in their turn spring from the sense of egotism of the lower self. This is the lower aspect of self-control and even the ordinary religious man often tries to overcome them. But there is another aspect of the personality to which the attention of the Theosophist has to be particularly directed. It is the personality which begets the fivefold "distinction of race, creed, sex, caste and colour", which

each one has to transcend. Without overcoming the force of these distinctions there is no likelihood of our really practising Universal Brotherhood. While it may not be possible to attain that transcendence completely in this incarnation, it is possible to achieve a fair measure of success in weakening the personal distinctions along all five lines. To become a Theosophist one has to *transcend* and not only make some outer change in these five distinctions.

II. EXPRESSION OF THE EGO

Thinking and not only good feeling, ideation and not only fanciful imagination, enables the Ego to cut a canal in and through the personality to show its power, virtue and beauty. Study of psychology and metaphysics, as expounded in Theosophy, should be utilized regularly every day. Self-knowledge alone is the mode by which the Ego can be attracted to work through the brain. Fancy, dreaming, etc., in waking consciousness must be brought under control, and active thinking and right imagination founded on the study of the writings of H.P.B. and W.Q. Judge must find a place in the routine of daily life.

III. SERVICE OF THE CAUSE

It is the duty of the efficient student-server to test all outer events, new knowledge, etc., by the aid of and in the light of the Esoteric Philosophy. It is his duty to watch and to avoid the two extremes—dogmatizing Theosophy, so that it becomes a religious creed, is one ; accepting new "facts" of science, new "ideas" in any and every branch of knowledge, so that in "broadening" Theosophy its very principles are shaken or rejected, is the other. A sense of proportion and discrimination are very necessary in Theosophical propaganda and an adequate remembrance of the goal for which the U.L.T. is working—not only to change the Mind of the Race, but to change it with a view to the cyclic event of 1975. Read with attention the closing section of H.P.B.'s *Key to Theosophy*.

Wrote the Mahatma K.H. :—

None of you can be so blind as to suppose that this is your first dealing with Theosophy ? You surely must realize that this would be the same as to say that effects came without causes. Know that it depends now upon each of you whether you shall henceforth struggle alone after spiritual wisdom through this and the next incarnate life, or in the company of our present Associates, and greatly helped by the mutual sympathy and aspiration.

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 वृद्धाः शिष्या गुरुर्युवा ।
गुरोस्तु मौनं व्याख्यानं शिष्यास्तु चिञ्चसंशयाः ॥

"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. Should not the regular assignments at a Study Class, such as the First Item of *The Secret Doctrine*, or the three Fundamental Propositions, be made simpler? Bringing in terms that newcomers know nothing about, is it not likely to bewilder and deter?

Ans. No categorical answer can be given since there are two sides to the matter. On the one hand it is certainly not wise to speak so learnedly and technically at a public meeting that only a few elect among the audience can grasp head or tail of the discourse, but on the other hand Theosophical "baby talk" will not stimulate and inspire to further action. It is no help to the growing child when the fond adult talks down to it, and it is no help when Theosophical speakers make things so easy and effortless for the growing student that desire for effort dies of inanition. The mind may even be stimulated to further questioning by something mentioned only in passing, or deliberately left unexplained. For example, the "fifth race" spoken of in the First Item may stir up enquiry about the sequence of humanity's evolution and provoke some recognition of a vaster horizon than the life story of the petty nations of to-day and yesterday given by our history books. Any one who is ready to take the next step as a student realizes the utter impossibility of understanding wholly the Fundamental Propositions. There must always be something left to stretch forward to, like the bunch of carrots in the old fable, held just out of reach of the donkey's nose, as he draws the cart onward. The measure of our power to gauge the needs of the audience and to balance our presentation therewith, will depend upon two things; first, on our own grasp of the philosophy, for superficial knowledge more easily masquerades in a parrot-like learning; and secondly, the degree of inner heart equipoise attained, which is the key to the situation.

Q. What happens if the soul has finished with Devachan, and there is no suitable family into which it can incarnate?

Ans. Let us remember that everything that happens is under law. The cycle of consciousness and the cycle of matter meet in due course just as the coming of spring and the germination of the seed coincide. We can and do displace the balance of external nature by forcing plants and livestock, and we also can and do displace most terribly the balance of invisible nature by methods of birth prevention that deprive the ego of its body just at the point of physical formation. A price has to be paid for any disturbance of the natural law, even though the deprivation of its bodily instrument comes justly under Karma to the soul.

There appears, however, to be a false premise behind the question. The personality and environment of one life are not merely the continuation of the previous aggregation. The soul only shows a small portion of itself through any one personality. It has a vast and varied storehouse of "mental deposits" on which it can draw. If there is no family, no fitting instrument for the expression of the same line of tendencies as in its last existence, it has others gathered from the far past with which it may work. Even in one life we can see how an obstacle in one direction may turn the activity towards the expression of different potentialities. The history of biography has many examples, painters or playwrights whose original bent for active service, at sea or elsewhere, has been cut short by accident or physical handicap, or successful business men who have developed some dormant talent after retirement, and similar cases.

The error that treats the compounded personality as the real permanent being, passing from life to life, is too common among many who claim to believe in reincarnation. It raises difficulties where none exist, and gives a false idea to those who have only reached the stage of mere enquiry. If we steep ourselves in the higher view-point of the soul, until it becomes the background of our thinking, it will simplify life's problems, and give a sounder basis for action.

[The reader's and especially the questioner's attention is drawn to a reprint of Mr. Judge's article on "Karma" which follows.—Eds.]

THOUGHTS ON KARMA

[This article was first printed by Mr. Judge in *The Path* for August, 1892, Vol. VII, p. 157.—Eds.]

Every day in life we see people overtaken by circumstances either good or bad and coming in blocks all at once or scattered over long periods of time. Some are for a whole life in a miserable condition, and others for many years the very reverse; while still others are miserable or happy by snatches. I speak, of course, of the circumstances of life irrespective of the effect on the mind of the person, for it may often be that a man is not unhappy under adverse circumstances, and some are able to extract good from the very strait lines they are put within. Now all this is the Karma of those who are the experiencers, and therefore we ask ourselves if Karma may fall in a lump or may be strung out over a long space of years. And the question is also asked if the circumstances of this life are the sum total result of the life which has immediately preceded it.

There is a little story told to a German mystic in this century by an old man, another mystic, when asked the meaning of the verse in the Bible which says that the sins of the father will be visited on the children to the third and fourth generation. He said: "There was once an Eastern king who had one son, and this son committed a deed the penalty of which was that he should be killed by a great stone thrown upon him. But as it was seen that this would not repair the wrong nor give to the offender the chance to become a better man, the counsellors of the king advised that the stone should be broken into small pieces, and those be thrown at the son, and at his children and grandchildren as they were able to bear it. It was so done, and all were in some sense sufferers yet none were destroyed". It was argued, of course, in this case that the children and grandchildren could not have been born in the family of the prince if they had not had some hand in the past, in other lives, in the formation of his character, and for that reason they should share to some extent in his punishment. In no other way than this can the Christian verses be understood if we are to attribute justice to the God of the Christians.

Each Ego is attracted to the body in which he will meet his just deserts, but also for another reason. That is, that not only is the body to give opportunity for his just reward or punishment, but also for that he in the past was connected with the family in which the body was born, and the stream of heredity to which it belongs is his too. It is therefore a question not alone of desert and similarity, but one of responsibility. Justice orders that the Ego shall suffer or enjoy irrespective of what family he comes to; similarity decrees that he shall

come to the family in which there is some characteristic similar to one or many of his and thus having a drawing power; but responsibility, which is compounded of justice, directs that the Ego shall come to the race or the nation or the family to which its responsibility lies for the part taken by it in other lives in forming of the general character, or affecting that physical stream of heredity that has so much influence on those who are involved in it. Therefore it is just that even the grandchildren shall suffer if they in the past have had a hand in moulding the family or even in bringing about a social order that is detrimental to those who fall into it through incarnation. I use the word responsibility to indicate something composed of similarity and justice. It may be described by other words probably quite as well, and in the present state of the English language very likely will be. An Ego may have no direct responsibility for a family, national, or race condition, and yet be drawn into incarnation there. In such an event it is similarity of character which causes the place of rebirth, for the being coming to the abode of mortals is drawn like electricity along the path of least resistance and of greatest conductibility. But where the reincarnating Ego is directly responsible for family or race conditions, it will decide itself, upon exact principles of justice and in order to meet its obligations, to be reborn where it shall receive, as grandchild if you will, physically or otherwise the results of its former acts. This decision is made at the emergence from Devachan. It is thus entirely just, no matter whether the new physical brain is able or not to pick up the lost threads of memory.

So to-day, in our civilization, we are all under the penalty of our forefathers' sins, living in bodies which medical science has shown are sown with diseases of brain and flesh and blood coming in the turbid stream of heredity through the centuries. These disturbances were brought about by ourselves in other centuries, in ignorance, perhaps, of consequences so far-reaching, but that ignorance lessens only the higher moral responsibility and tends to confine the results to physical suffering. This can very well lead, as it often does, to efforts on the part of many reincarnating Egos in the direction of general reform.

It was through a belief in this that the ancients attempted to form and keep up in India a pure family stream such as the highest caste of Brahmin. For they knew that if such a clean family line could be kept existing for many centuries, it would develop the power of repelling Egos on the

way to rebirth if they were not in character up to the standard of that stream of life. Thus only teachers by nature, of high moral and spiritual elevation, would come upon the scene to act as regenerators and saviours for all other classes. But under the iron rule of cyclic law this degenerated in time, leaving now only an imitation of the real thing.

A variation of the Eastern story told above is that the advice of the king's counsellors was that the broken stone should be cast at the prince. This was done, and the result was that he was not killed but suffered while the pieces were being thrown. It gives another Karmic law, that is, that a given amount of force of a Karmic character may be thrown at one or fall upon one at once, in bulk, so to say, or may be divided up into smaller pieces, the sum of which represents the whole mass of Karmic force. And so we see it in life. Men suffer through many years an amount of adverse Karma which, if it were to fall all at once, would crush them. Others for a long time have general good fortune that might unseat the reason if experienced in one day; and the latter happens also, for we know of those who have been destroyed by the sudden coming of what is called great good fortune.

This law is seen also in physics. A piece of glass may be broken at once by a single blow, or the same amount of force put into a number of taps continuously repeated will accomplish the same result and mash the glass. And with the emotions we observe the same law followed by even the most ignorant, for we do not tell bad news at once to the person who is the sufferer, but get at it slowly by degrees; and often when disaster is suddenly heard of, the person who hears it is prostrated. In both cases the sorrow caused is the same, but the method of imparting the news differs. Indeed, in whatever direction we look, this law is observed to work. It is universal, and it ought to be applied to Karma as well as to anything else.

Whether the life we are now living is the net result of the one just preceding is answered by Patanjali in his 8th and 9th aphorisms, Book IV.

"From these works there results, in every incarnation, a manifestation of only those mental deposits which can come to fructification in the environment provided. Although the manifestation of mental deposits may be intercepted by unsuitable environments, differing as to class, place, and time, there is an immediate relation between them, because the memory and the train of self-reproductive thought are identical", and also by other doctrines of the ancients. When a body is taken up, only that sort of Karma which can operate through it will make itself felt. This is what Patanjali means. The "environment" is the body, with the

mind, the plastic nature, and the emotions and desires. Hence one may have been great or the reverse in the preceding life, and now have only the environment which will serve for the exhaustion of some Karma left over from lives many incarnations distant. This unexhausted Karma is known as stored-up Karma. It may or may not come into operation now, and it can also be brought out into view by violent effort of the mind leading to such changes as to alter the bodily apparatus and make it equivalent to a new body. But as the majority of men are lazy of mind and nature, they suffer themselves to run with the great family or national stream, and so through one life make no changes of this inner nature. Karma in their cases operates through what Patanjali calls "mental deposits". These are the net results stored from each life by *Manas*. For as body dies, taking brain with it, there can be no storage there nor means of connecting with the next earth-life; the division known as *Kama* is dissipated or purged away together with astral body at some time before rebirth; astral body retains nothing—as a general rule—for the new life, and the value or summation of those skandhas which belong to *Kama* is concentrated and deposited in *Manas* or the mind. So, when the immortal being returns, he is really *Manas-Buddhi-Atma* seeking a new environment which is found in a new body, *Prana*, *Kama*, and astral double. Hence, and because under the sway of cyclic law, the reincarnation can only furnish an engine of a horse-power, so to say, which is very much lower than the potential energies stored in *Manas*, and thus there remain unexhausted "mental deposits", or unexhausted Karma. The Ego may therefore be expending a certain line of Karma, always bringing it to similar environments until that class of Karma shall be so exhausted or weakened as to permit another set of "mental deposits" to preponderate, whereupon the next incarnation will be in a different environment which shall give opportunity for the new set of deposits to bring about new or different Karma.

The object that is indicated for life by all this is, to so live and think during each life as to generate no new Karma, or cause for bondage, while one is working off the stock in hand, in order that on closing each life-account one shall have wiped off so much as that permits. The old "mental deposits" will thus gradually move up into action and exhaustion from life to life, at last leaving the man in a condition where he can master all and step into true consciousness, prepared to renounce final reward in order that he may remain with humanity, making no new Karma himself and helping others along the steep road to perfection.

NECESSITY OR LUXURY?

Those who have given their lives to the service of Theosophy and are sincerely endeavouring to lend a helping hand to newcomers and young students are confronted with one serious difficulty. Their very sincerity and earnestness, their serious and persistent endeavour, their consistent attitude to life and its varied situations are forces which attract other men to gain for themselves what these possess. "There is something you have which I want", says a new enthusiast. When he is told that that something is within the reach of all earnest men who are willing to study, to practise and to sacrifice; that Theosophy is not the exclusive property of the chosen few but is meant for all, the newcomer is fired with such ardour as arouses all his noble qualities.

Having ascertained the first steps on the ladder of Theosophic evolution he proceeds to buy books and begin his reading. The very first contact with the Science of Life reveals to him a new vista, like unto the man who has been ascending a mountain and suddenly, halting and turning round, sees a new panorama lying in front of him. It is the same and yet it is different. Reading necessarily leads him to apply the tenets of the Science to his personal conditions. This, in its turn, produces fresh changes. Full of his new points of view, arising out of his new attitude to life and to the world, he is surcharged with the strong desire to give what he has obtained to others. "No propagandist as a new propagandist"—it is said, and there is truth in that statement.

After a while the new recruit suffers from a reaction: His progress is not fast enough; there are pertinent questions, *his* questions, which Theosophy does not answer—perhaps cannot answer; his abnormality is exceptional and exoteric Theosophy is not sufficient for him; why is he not being taught the co-relation of colour and sound, the true science of numbers and stars, the methods of fast development and quick growth of psychic powers; and so on and so forth. When told of the important facts of Nature's unerring laws and their flawless working, when reminded that he, like all others is part of Nature, guided by those laws, which operate in and through him without a mistake, he fails to perceive the truth thereof. Without meaning to assume that attitude he shows forth his inherent tendency of belief that while all that is true of all others, in some mysterious way he himself is an exception to it all.

Unless Theosophy becomes for us an uttermost necessity of life, fluctuating moods are bound to

disturb us and cause depression, doubt and despair. With and for many, Theosophy has not become an absolute necessity of life, like food, like air, like sleep. It is a hobby with some, like collecting old postage stamps, or a luxury with others, like going to a theatre.

Our civilization brings us up by peculiar methods and these express themselves in strange mannerisms of mind and morals. Our own inherent evolutionary limitations are obstacles formidable enough, but to these are being added by our modern civilization new ones; we suffer from the lack of knowledge as a natural result of our stage of evolution, but in addition we suffer from the acquisition of false notions, the accretions of fictitious ideas, the obsessions of superstitious credulity and crude beliefs. What is true of our bodily nature is equally true of our inner nature. In all conscience, on account of past misdemeanours, we inherit physical bodies which are far from perfect; but further we are branded and tainted with the taints which our materialistic culture has put upon us. So we pamper our bodies till they become addicted to strange habits. False and impure diet, unsuitable exercise, nerve-wrecking habits act as further impediments to a body already suffering from the sins of the Dark Age of ignorance in which we are born.

People are very anxious to get rid of their physical ailments and to enjoy robust and vital health. To this end many are the formularies practised and varied are the programmes followed—but these avail not. It is not recognized that a somewhat simple proposition is involved in all this. When we have fully understood the difference between the necessity of being well and the luxury of feeling well, the duty to others involved in our maintaining good health as opposed to the right of our own nature to feel for ourselves its ruddy glow, we are on the high road to a correct solution of the problem. In this, as in all other affairs, the motive-force brings its own sure reaction and the Law of Brotherhood works in the sphere of health and disease as everywhere else.

Thus there are two factors which every newcomer to Theosophy has to bear in mind: first, Theosophy must become an absolute necessity to him; second, the health, physical, psychic, moral and mental which must inevitably result, will depend on the motive-power which energizes him into the conviction that Theosophy is a necessity.

The difference between those who live to eat and those who eat to live persists in superphysical regions of life. Do we study, serve and sacrifice so that we may feel the glow of life and enjoy the

pleasure it produces or do we live to love and labour without a thought of reward? Between these two are of course many stages and all of us in our varying moods, fluctuate in them.

There are children who have not awakened to the uttermost necessity of food for the body. It is an effort for them to eat—to take to food at all. There are others who are regular gourmands and they have to be protected against themselves. Both these types are to be found in Theosophic families. Total absence of the perception that Theosophy is an absolute necessity exists for many; on the other hand there are those who regard it as luxury and indulge in it luxuriously. Ill health results for both—the first suffer from starvation, the second from overindulgence. These are the very early stages. Often the former die spiritual deaths and there is nothing to be done for them till they are born again in some Theosophical home. The case of the second concerns us: our overenthusiasts, our cocksure spirituals, our self-righteous devotees, our all-knowing wisecracks—and who has not been all these by rotation?—suffer from occult measles, chicken-pox, smallpox and a score of other eruptions. Wrong feeding, overexercise, undernourishment, too much introspection or too little vigilance bring about their reactions in the psychic world which is governed as unmistakably by Law as our physical world. All such troubles can be traced to the fact that Theosophy has not been for us a necessity. Having felt the need for food we have indiscriminately gone to jams, jellies and jujubes; cakes for bread and meat for milk, while mental starches mixed with acid feelings precipitate a condition of dissatisfaction, depression and despair till we want to die!

Once recognize that Theosophy is not a luxury, but has in its nature something which is the bread of life, the water of life, pure and crystal clear, the life-giving air fresh and sweet, to be partaken of by us for the common good of all, and we begin to see daylight. Just as mists disperse with the rising sun, all our doubts and fears vanish the moment we see that we must absorb Theosophy and become Theosophists, not for our own personal benefit and our own individual advantage, but because our health and well-being or their reverse seriously and surely affect the health and well-being of the race to which we belong.

For how many of us has Theosophy become a necessity? When a person is so busy earning his bread and butter that he has no time to study, Theosophy has not become for him a necessity. When tired after his day's hard work he must perforce seek recreation in the open air or in a closed

cinema theatre, Theosophy has not become for him a necessity. When Lodge meetings are sacrificed to social calls, though they be dubbed "duty", Theosophy has not become a necessity. When we have gold mohurs to spend on food and raiment and only silver offering for Theosophic work, Theosophy has not become a necessity for us. Many students give to Theosophy after giving themselves everything desired. Why not give first to Theosophy and then buy ourselves other necessities of life? If Spirit is the basis, energizer and renovator of mind and matter, spiritual wisdom or Theosophy is a greater necessity than food for the body, or ordinary knowledge and culture for the mind.

The following statement by Mr. Herbert Schneider in *The Review of Religion* for May, 1937, betrays scant understanding of Theosophy:—

The chief difference between Theosophic moralism and Catholic redemptionism appears to be that in the former there is an endless process of fallings, risings and judgments, known as the law of Karma, whereas in the latter there is one great Fall in the beginning and one Final Judgment at the end of history.

The two, in fact, differ so widely that they are incomparable. How can we compare an unerring and undeviating tendency in the universe to restore Harmony, a law impersonal, unerring, ever-active, with a Personal Deity whose arbitrary judgment can be influenced by go-betweens and who can be mollified by rituals? Theosophic morality is rooted in the conviction—in the case of advanced students, the realization—that life is one and that all beings are aspects of Divinity. According to Theosophy, to fall is to sin against brotherhood, be it but by failure to live up to the best that one knows and the consequent retardation of the progress of humanity; to rise is to continue the struggle upward, recognizing that the only failure is ceasing to try. The only formal judgment is of oneself by one's Self before the tribunal of one's own conscience, and the sentence in every case is an inseparable part of the act that invoked it and follows that action as surely as the wheel of the cart follows the hoof of the bullock. No tears, no ritual, no intercession, can turn the law a hair's breadth from its course.

The difference between "Theosophic moralism and Catholic redemptionism" is not therefore a matter of timing of similar events. Their whole basis and ideology are the poles apart. But perhaps Mr. Schneider is one of those who writes about Theosophy without examining its philosophy recorded in the writings of H. P. Blavatsky and W. Q. Judge.

SIN AGAINST LIFE

[We reprint the following from *Lucifer*, Vol. I, page 211 for November 1887. It will throw further light on the subject of the article "Suffering of Animals" published in our August issue, page 157—EDS.]

A newspaper paragraph lately declared that a certain American lady of great wealth, residing in London, had conceived the strange desire to possess a cloak made of the soft warm down on the breasts of birds of Paradise. Five hundred breasts, it was said, were required for this purpose, and two skilful marksmen, the story went on to aver, had been sent to New Guinea to shoot the poor little victims whose wholesale slaughter must be accomplished to gratify this savage whim. We rejoice to observe that the whole statement has been flatly contradicted by the *World*, apparently on the best possible authority; but, however little the lady concerned may deserve the reproach which the authors of the calumny endeavoured to evoke against her, the feeling it may have excited is worth analysis in a world where, if bird of Paradise cloaks are rare, most women who dress luxuriously adorn themselves in one way or another at the expense of the feathered kingdom. The principle involved in a bonnet which is decorated with the plumage of a single bird, slaughtered for its sake, is the same as that which would be more grotesquely manifest in a garment that would require the slaughter of five hundred. Too many rich people in this greedy age forget that the grandest privilege of those who possess the means is that they have the power of alleviating suffering. Too many, again, forget that the sympathies of those who rule the animate world should extend beyond the limits of their own kind; and thus we have the painful spectacle of human "sport" associated in civilised countries still, with pursuits which should no longer afford pleasure to men who have emerged from the primitive life of hunters and fishers. But how is it possible, let us consider, to stoop lowest from the proud estate of humanity in search of ignoble gratification? It is bad to kill any sentient creature for the sake of the savage pleasures of the chase. It is bad, perhaps worse, to cause their destruction for the sake of coldly profiting by their slaughter, and it is bad to squander money in this hard world of want and wide-spread privation on costly personal indulgence. But the acme of all that is reprehensible in these various departments of ill-doing is surely reached when women—who should, by virtue of their sex, be helping to soften the ferocities of life—contrive to collect the cream of evil from each of these varieties, and to sin against a whole catalogue of human duties by cruel acquiescence in an unworthy fashion.

CONSCIOUSNESS OF SELF

Writing on "Is Freewill an Illusion?" (*John O' London's Weekly*, 24th September), Mr. C. E. M. Joad formulates for the sake of argument the position taken by a materialist who denies the very existence of mind:—

Admittedly I am conscious, and continuously conscious of myself—at least this is what I say—but, when I attend more closely to the nature of that of which I am conscious, it turns out to be not a unified self, but a string of separate mental events; first, a thinking, then a hoping, then a fearing, then a desiring. I never really meet the self that thinks, hopes, fears, and desires. If mental states are like beads strung on a thread, I am aware of the beads but never of the thread that holds them together.

But the fact that a man centred wholly in his lower mind is unable to perceive the individual consciousness which forms the background of his various mental states, is no proof either of the non-existence of that consciousness or of its incognizability. A man so absorbed in watching the play of shadows on a wall that he became convinced that they represented reality and the wall on which they played a mere figment, would be in an exactly parallel position.

One aim of Raja-Yoga is to reveal that solid foundation for all mental phenomena, or, to use the other simile, the string on which the mental states are strung. This is clear from the following aphorisms of Patanjali, if we remember that what is referred to therein as "mind" is the lower mind while the "soul" is the Higher Mind in conjunction with Buddhi or the Pure Intellect.

The soul is the Perceiver; is assuredly vision itself pure and simple; unmodified; and looks directly upon ideas. (II. 20)

The conjuncture of the soul with the organ of thought, and thus with nature, is the cause of its apprehension of the actual condition of the nature of the Universe and of the soul itself. (II. 23)

The mind, though assuming various forms by reason of innumerable mental deposits, exists for the purpose of the soul's emancipation and operates in co-operation therewith. (IV. 23)

The mind is not self-illuminative, because it is an instrument of the soul, is coloured and modified by experiences and objects, and is cognized by the soul. (IV. 18)

The modifications of the mind are always known to the presiding spirit, because it is not subject to modification. (IV. 17)

When the understanding and the soul are united, then self-knowledge results. (IV. 21)

By concentrating his mind upon the true nature of the soul as being entirely distinct from any experiences, and disconnected from all material things, and dissociated from the understanding, a knowledge of the true nature of the soul itself arises in the ascetic. (III. 36)

IMPERSONALIZE YOUR FEELINGS

Instinct—the flickering reminiscence of a once divine omniscience—spirit.

Intuition the unerring guide of the seer.

Plotinus, the pupil of the great Ammonius Saccas, the chief founder of the Neo-platonic school, taught that human knowledge had three ascending steps : opinion, science, and *illumination*. He explained it by saying that “the means or instrument of opinion is sense, or perception ; of science, dialectics ; of illumination, *intuition* (or divine instinct). To the last, *reason is subordinate* ; it is absolute knowledge founded on the identification of the mind with the object known.”

—*Isis Unveiled*, I, 433-434

Instinct and rationalized instinct or instinctivized reason which is intuition—both are related to the feeling-aspect of our constitution. The body feels heat and cold by the feeling-power inherent in it. The great Hindu Scientist, Sir Jagdis Bose, has shown how minerals respond to outer impacts because of a feeling-power inherent in them. Animals feel instinctively the cruel torture of the vivisector's knife, as they find their foods, build their habitations and procreate their species instinctively. *The Secret Doctrine* states that “an animal can only have direct consciousness or instinct.” (I. 234) Again we read in *Isis Unveiled* (I. 432) : “An animal devoid of reasoning powers has in its inherent instinct an unerring faculty which is but that spark of the divine which lurks in every particle of inorganic matter.”

Much of human life is lived by the feeling-power of the body and its senses, and also to a greater extent by the urge of the desire-principle, named Kama in the Esoteric Philosophy. This principle of desire is independent of the body, is neither born of it, nor dies with its death. It plays an important part in the compounding of every new human form which comes to birth when the babe is born. It plays a major part in the drama of man's life. Surviving the death of the body it lives out its own round of existence.

Two facts about this principle should be borne in mind by the student :

(1) Sometimes this principle of Kama is called Kama-rupa—the Form of Desire. But it must be remembered that H. P. B. has very definitely stated that it is no Rupa or Form at all, until after the death of the body. Kama circulates in man as blood circulates in a living body and congeals only in a corpse. The student must distinguish between the Kamic principle in the personality, and the Kama-rupa, which is the embodiment of that principle after death.

What does the principle stand for? For the Kamic elements in man, which at the present stage

of evolution are mostly animal, such as anger, lust, envy, revenge, etc., the progeny of selfishness and matter—not gross visible matter, however. The incarnated aspect of Manas, *i. e.*, the embodied soul, or Dehi, is conquered generally by its association with these Kamic elements. The current of Kama, or of these Kamic elements, circulates in the brain, the senses and the organs of the body—affecting its health and shaping its future.

(2) Sometimes it is fancied that the principle of Kama results from the sensuous activities of the corpus. But Mr. Judge has very definitely stated that the passions and desires are not produced by the body, but, on the contrary, the body is caused to be by the Kama principle. Kama caused us to be born. Misunderstanding this vital teaching many a Hatha yogi tortures the body, looking upon it as the womb of passions ; and there are Theosophical aspirants who fancy that bodily habits and exercises will calm their desires and passions.

Kama as a principle is defined by H. P. B. not only as evil desire and lust but also as volition. It energizes man to cleave to earthly and bodily existence, and as such it is known as Tanha—desire to live and cling to life in this world. This clinging it is which causes rebirth.

As the universal cosmic principle, Kama is the first conscious, all-embracing Desire ; but that desire is for universal good. It is the first feeling of infinite tender compassion and mercy that arose in the consciousness of the creative One Force, as soon as it came into life and being as a ray from the Absolute. This desire is divine, therefore omnipresent and impersonal.

Just as man appropriates for his breathing purposes some of the air from the vast atmosphere around him ; just as man draws from the vast ocean of Jiva, Life, and appropriates some of it which becomes his own Prana, Energy ; so also from the ocean of this Cosmic Kama or Desire man draws some of it and appropriates it and it becomes the middle constituent of his sevenfold nature. Inhaling

pure air man exhales the poisonous carbonic acid gas; appropriating prana from the ocean of pure Jiva, man pollutes it by his egotistic thoughts and selfish feelings and exudes foul magnetic fluids; similarly absorbing some of the Divine Desire he appropriates it and uses it for personal ends, thus transforming it—carnalizing it so that it becomes the power that gratifies desire on the animal plane. It is man who drags low the God of Love and hurls Him down into the pit of Hell where he becomes the Devil of Lust—the tempter and ensnarer.

The Secret Doctrine (I. 260) makes a pointed reference to this personalized Kama in the following important passage:

It is not molecularly constituted matter—least of all the human body (*sthulasarira*)—that is the grossest of all our “principles,” but verily the *middle* principle, the real animal centre; whereas our body is but its shell, the irresponsible factor and medium through which the beast in us acts all its life. Every intellectual theosophist will understand my real meaning.

The “real animal centre”, “the beast in us”: from the animal centre the force proceeds and builds the beast; Kama-elements become Kamic elementals. Elementals are described as creative angels of the lower world; the animal centre in man draws within its periphery these non-self-conscious but intelligence-possessing entities and they become the feeders and nourishers of Kama and the producers of Kamic-elementals, also called Tanhaic-elementals. Popular fancy makes of these elementals demons and devils.

In the disintegration of the Kama-rupa, formed after the death of the body, and the entry of the Ego into the Devachanic state, the Tanhaic elementals are set free and they are drawn into the composition of the new personality by the law of magnetic attraction or affinity. These Kamic elementals within man tempt him to have intercourse with their kind outside. Unless man knows how to subdue them by acquiring real Magic-Wisdom they will subject him and lead him step by step to mediumship, which is moral ruin. Through this process man causes the downfall of the creative angels of the lower world. Man's involution and evolution proceed *pari passu* with those of every kingdom, visible or invisible, in Nature.

This pure Divine Kama was personified by the Hindus as Kama Deva and by the Greeks as Eros. Kama in man has become personalized: at its best it manifests as human personal, and therefore in the last analysis selfish, love and at its worst as greedy and angry passion. This personalized Kama, unlike the Seeing Eros is blind and is emblemized in Cupid. Eros has become erotic desire. Shiva, the Great Yogi, reduced this Kama to ashes by the power of His third Eye: the allegory says that while

the Great Ascetic was engaged in Tapas, Meditation, this Kama stirred in His body and thoughts of wife and connubial life arose in his mind. Then from His third Eye Shiva streamed forth Fire which consumed Kama and thus reduced it once again to its primeval spiritual form. The example set by the Patron Saint of all yogis has to be followed. The aspirant to Higher Life has to handle his own personalized Kama—fight its vicious aspect, impersonalize its good aspect and reduce it within himself to its primeval spiritual form.

Often the activity of the personalized Kama is narrowed to the expression of sexuality and lust. This is not entirely true. While the sex-function is Kama's most pronounced vehicle of expression, all emotional or feeling-manifestations are also rooted in this principle. This on both sides—good and evil, love and lust, attachment and aversion.

The gross debasement of sex-life rampant in modern civilization indicates that the Kama-principle is allowed freedom, is not interfered with, and the result is license. Theosophy is unequivocal and uncompromising in naming sex-perversion as devilish. In more than one place H.P.B. has pointed out that acts of sex-perversion are acts of Black Magic. Excess leads to perversion and our civilization provides a notable example of the teaching—

Do not believe that lust can ever be killed out if gratified or satiated, for this is an abomination inspired by Mara. It is by feeding vice that it expands and waxes strong, like to the worm that fattens on the blossom's heart.

In Nature, Kama is the life-procreating principle which in man should become the stepping-stone to the Spiritual plane; but absence of knowledge, and nowadays the existence of false and dangerous knowledge—from birth-prevention to sex-perversion—has made it a stepping-stone to soullessness. This may look like a digression from the study of our subject—but it is not. The Theosophical student of the present generation has to be specially on his guard if he would not fall prey to this influence of the Astral Light which seems to be gathering force and strength with the passing of every season.

The sins of black Atlantis are finding out their perpetrators, and the engulfing process has begun and is fast going on. The United Lodge of Theosophists may be compared to the refuge-place of those who not only wish but *will* to be saved—the calm centre in the raging stormy ocean to which people should swim if they do not wish to be drowned.

Neither prudery nor puritanism will be of substantial help in solving this problem; much less, hopes for the future based on mere resolves to do better hereafter. To-day is the day—this hour is the opportune one to acquire adequate knowledge of

the dual task to be undertaken by the sincere and earnest practitioner.

What is the dual task? First to control and purify the Kamic elements by the knowledge of the Esoteric Philosophy. Those who are fast fixed in feelings cannot acquire knowledge; they may understand what they read but they will not be able to assimilate Wisdom-Truths. An immoral man cannot become an Adept of the Good Law. His mind perverted by wrong feelings will bring him wrong understanding and he will indulge in wrong practices. He who is fast-fixed in feelings is allowing his enslaved lower Manas to continue in its state of subjugation to Kama. How can one judge of his own success in the labour of purifying Kama? By watching the nature of his thinking, his cerebration. Selfishness is subtle. Egotism has a great deal of cunning. Even unselfishness of feelings has to be analyzed—is one unselfish with the person one loves or desires to please, or to parade it, or even for the satisfaction of one's own consciousness? Keep in mind the goal to be reached; it is not likely to be attained in a few short years, but it is wise to look at it from time to time. What is the goal? In the words of our Masters—

You must thoroughly put aside the personal element if you would get on with occult study. . . . Realize, my friend, that the social affections have little, if any, control over any true adept in the performance of his duty. In proportion as he rises towards perfect adeptship the fancies and antipathies of his former self are weakened: (as K. H. in substance explained to you) he takes all mankind into his heart and regards them in the mass.

M. spoke well and truthfully when saying that a love of collective humanity is his increasing inspiration; and if any one individual should wish to divert his regards to himself he must overpower the diffusive tendency by a stronger force.

This part of our fight against Kama may be called iconoclastic and destructive—but without freeing the mind at least to some extent, from the thralldom of personal feelings the real "I" of the Higher-Manasic-Ego cannot function using the personality as a direct channel or vehicle. The freeing of the mind from the Kamic octopus is like the birth of a body, then only can education and training of the brain take place. This training has for its goal the aphoristic injunction—Impersonalize Your Feelings. The Masters are the embodied examples of the completed process.

But there is a creative and constructive work to be undertaken by the earnest practitioner—the unfolding of the powers latent in Kama. Kama is defined as "Volition". In the lower personalized and carnalized Kama this volition expresses itself as obstinacy which is mistaken for "strong will".

This volition in Kama is a potency which like Bud-dhi in men is lying passive; it can be activated only by pure ideation i.e., when the mind has freed itself from the incubus of Kama. Kama is like a bad servant who is allowed to do as he pleases, to forget his dharma, and who swiftly exercises domination over his employer. In the process his inherent capacities become atrophied. Personal self-indulgence corrodes and can dissolve the Will and the person who asserts "I will do as I please" may strengthen his obstinacy but weakens his Will. Obstinacy is to Will what egotism is to Egoity, self-righteousness to Righteousness. Spiritual Will and obstinacy do not function together; nor does egotism enable the Inner Ego to act; nor does self-righteousness help the unfoldment of Righteousness.

In one place H.P.B. calls the instinctual the cognitional (*The Secret Doctrine*, I. 267); the power to cognize is generally applied to mind; but animals also know and their knowledge, in many ways, is infallible because their perception is direct; this power of direct perception is related to Kama: it manifests as hunch, premonition, second-sight, dream impressions, a vague feeling which proves to have been a correct intuition, etc.; in all these the thinking-mind is not the active, positive principle of life. "In losing instinct, man loses his intuitional powers, which are the crown and ultimatum of instinct." (*Isis Unveiled*, I. 433). Ordinarily the instinctual-activity is subordinated to thought-activity. Kama, so to speak, in enslaving the mind suffers the loss of its own capacity to cognize. On the other hand this instinctual feeling-perception, when not purified by knowledge and elevated by wisdom and its action checked and verified by reason, pulls its possessor down to passivity and mediumship and psychic diseases. Therefore is the student warned against becoming psychic, passive, mediumistic.

The development of intuition, on the other hand, is recommended, even stressed. "Intuition", it is said (*The Secret Doctrine*, I. 1), "soars above the tardy processes of ratiocinative thought"; reason is the faculty of the mind but intuition sits in the sanctuary of the heart. (Cf. *The Secret Doctrine* II. 516) Heart-feeling must be distinguished from the feelings which throb in the solar-plexus and activate the pit of the stomach. Intuition develops the the Inner Spiritual Eye; "the faculty which manifests through it is not clairvoyance as ordinarily understood, i.e., the power of seeing at a distance, but rather the faculty of spiritual intuition, through which direct and certain knowledge is obtainable". (*Ibid.*, I. 46) The Third Eye, Real Clairvoyance and Intuition are related to virtue and morality (Cf. "The Pineal Gland and Morality"—THE THEOSOPHICAL MOVEMENT, March 1937, p. 72).

While intuition cannot manifest in the psychically diseased and the morally depraved, its flawless functioning illuminates the rational and the reasoning process. Hawthorne spoke of "sagacity and a nameless something more—let us call it intuition". Sagacity is a constituent of Intuition. The Light of the Heart illumines the mind clarified of Kama and reflects that light which may be defined as sagacity. In this quality there is a triple soul—calmness, knowledge and action. The action of the Sage is compassionate and not only wise : the wisdom aspect springs from the knowledge of the Adept, but his compassion is the pure reflection of that primeval spiritual Kama which he incarnates in himself ; therefore his desire is for universal good, his feeling is the infinite tender mercy which "knows not wrath nor pardon".

Acquiring knowledge we obtain Wisdom, unfolding mercy we evolve Compassion ; thus we come to possess that Higher Feeling by which we perceive accurately and understand the truth of things.

The practical step is to make ideation the basis of our actions and that ideation should be on Virtue. At present our desires and instinctive impulses of lower Manas find expression in acts, while Higher Manas finds expression only in words. We know and speak of that which is good, but we have to learn to put our good intentions and correct perceptions into practice and *act out* what we advise others or even ourselves. Writes H. P. B. (*Transactions of the Blavatsky Lodge*, p. 142) :—

Esoterically, thought is more responsible and punishable than act. But exoterically it is the reverse. Therefore, in ordinary human law, an assault is more severely punished than the thought or intention *i. e.*, the threat, whereas *Karmically* it is the contrary.

It is the thoughts at the back of everyday actions which are the spring of real progress. To apply to ourselves what we learn from the Esoteric Philosophy we must not only hold the right ideas and the right attitude but deliberately try to act out those ideas, so that our attitude may reflect itself in behaviour and conduct. The aphorism always to remember in this connection runs—

Make your mind compassionate and your heart intelligent.

To achieve success in this exercise it is necessary to understand that—

- (1) Cognition by Instinct is Feeling-Knowledge.
- (2) Intuition is Feeling-Perception.
- (3) The Volition of Kama is Divine Feeling.

CORRESPONDENCE

"LAST WORDS ON THE FIRE-WALK"

The reader of Mr. Harry Price's recent article, "Last Words on the Fire-Walk" (*The Listener*, 11th August, 1937) may be pardoned some scepticism regarding the sweeping claims made if not the scientific accuracy of the account, particularly if he has himself given any attention to fire-walking and its related phenomena.

On the strength, apparently, of one man's assurance that the heat of the trench prepared in 1935 for the Kuda Bux fire-walk was "'far more intense' than any fire ever seen in Southern India", Mr. Price ventures the surmise, "It is doubtful if any ceremonial walker in any part of the world has ever trod a fire as hot as the one we prepared at Alexandra Palace, on April, 20" !

The current report of the Fire-Walk of Kuda Bux in 1935 differs somewhat from Mr. Price's recent article as to both the length and the heat of the trench. At that time the trench was said to be "about 12 feet long" and the surface temperature 800°F. Now Mr. Price says that on that occasion the trench was but 11 feet long and the surface heat 430°C. The discrepancies are not great—about 9 per cent. and 3 per cent. respectively—but they are surprising if the press reports at the time were based on figures furnished by Mr. Price or the University of London Council for Psychical Research.

Whether that be the case or not, Mr. Price's tone no less than the title of his article proclaims, like the followers of the Eye Doctrine, "Behold, I know".

The mystery of fire-walking was solved at last. The secret is (a) the short contact-time of each foot with the embers ; (b) the low thermal conductivity of burnt or burning wood embers ; (c) confidence in walking. The experiments proved once and for all that no occult or psychic power, or a specially induced mental state, is necessary in a fire-walker. . . . The photographic evidence together with the mass of scientific data which we have secured have enabled us to elucidate a mystery which has puzzled humanity for at least 2,000 years.

Let us see whether this claim is not premature. At the time of the Kuda Bux fire-walk, it was reported that two barefooted Englishmen who attempted to duplicate the Indian's performance took only a couple of steps before they jumped off, their feet considerably scorched and burned. In the fire-walk staged with a 12½ foot trench on the 7th April, 1937, with Ahmed Hussain as the chief performer, the feet of the five amateurs were all burned, though but slightly, while not only were Ahmed Hussain's feet not burned but the sole temperature was actually lower than before the walk. Two days later, with a 20-foot trench, the three volunteers

were slightly burned and the professional fire-walker suffered five blisters on one foot and a marked reddening of the other. In the final tests with a 12-foot trench on the 20th April, the surface temperature of the embers being 800°C. at the time, Ahmed Hussain was uninjured and again the temperature of his soles fell during the walk. An English volunteer who had participated in both the former tests performed the feat this time uninjured. He told Mr. Price "that, with the practice he had had, he felt perfectly confident, and stepped into the fire without the slightest hesitation". At the risk of seeming impertinent, one cannot help wondering why Mr. Price, so thoroughly convinced of how easy and simple the fire-walk was, did not himself perform the feat!

What the tests which Mr. Price reports did demonstrate was (1) that certain individuals command an abnormal degree of invulnerability to fire, whether conscious of its rationale or not; (2) that confidence is apparently, at least sometimes, a factor in this invulnerability, and (3) that on one occasion the invulnerability of one professional fire-walker failed him. Can these findings be called the last word on fire-walking?

Fire-walking is but one aspect of the larger problem of invulnerability in general and to fire in particular. There are innumerable cases of the latter on record which Mr. Price's glib solution leaves wholly unexplained, from the Convulsionaires of Cevennes in the early eighteenth century, whose hands were closed upon burning coals without being singed, to the several well-known mediums of the closing years of the last century who "frequently, in the presence of most respectable witnesses, not only handled blazing coals and actually placed their face upon a fire without singeing a hair, but even laid flaming coals upon the heads and hands of by-standers", as in the case of such unimpeachable witnesses as Lord Lindsay and Lord Adair. (*Isis Unveiled*, I, 379)

H.P.B. adds:—

In the West a "sensitive" has to be entranced before being rendered invulnerable by the presiding "guides," and we defy any "medium," in his or her normal physical state to bury the arms to the elbows in glowing coals. But in the East, whether the performer be a holy lama or a mercenary sorcerer (the latter class being generally termed "jugglers") he needs no preparation or abnormal state to be able to handle fire, red-hot pieces of iron, or melted lead. We have seen in Southern India these "jugglers" keep their hands in a furnace of burning coals until the latter were reduced to cinders. (*Ibid.*, I, 445-6)

Would Mr. Price dismiss this phenomenon also as requiring "no occult power"?

A VERY WONDERFUL FLOWER

Readers of the short article reprinted from *Lucifer* in THE THEOSOPHICAL MOVEMENT, August 1937, on the wonderful snow flower of Siberia which shoots forth precisely on the New Year, may be interested in the following.

The Curator of the Manx Museum, Douglas, Isle of Man, mentions it in a letter to the *Times*, (11-1-35) from which the quotation below is taken, with reference to old Christmas Eve, January 6th.

"On this Eve, according to Dr. John Clague ("Manx Reminiscences," (1911), the myrrh (commonly called "The Herb") grows up afresh above the ground and bursts into flower. I now have it on the authority of five reliable Douglas citizens, who, on the eve of Old Christmas Day, 1935, saw in a town garden the myrrh grow to the extent of 1½ in. At the hour of midnight the earth was quite bare, but by 12-40 there had burst up a light-green spike, opening out gradually until 10 hours later it had grown to 1¼ in. I myself saw the plant to-day, and it is now 1¾ in. high and branching out like the young leaves of a carrot. Its position was under the dark side of a hedge, which prevented a photograph from being taken. The appearance has been witnessed by over a dozen people."

The myrrh mentioned however must not be confused with the Eastern shrub associated with the Magi of the Christ-child legend. It is a British medicinal herb with umbels of white flowers; also called Sweet Cicely for its fragrance.

W. E. W.

Discussing Dr. H. S. Coffin's recent book, *Public Worship*, in which he analyzes modern trends in the Christian Church, Mr. Cyril C. Richardson, (*The Review of Religion*, May 1937) writes:—

The main comparison of worship to-day with that of fifty years ago Dr. Coffin summarizes as a "returning sense of God's sovereignty and righteousness," and a "desire for austerity," rather than "the geniality prized a generation ago." The "otherness" of God is being stressed, and Christians no longer want to "wallow in their own emotions."

Religion and emotionalism represent indeed a *mésalliance* and the sooner they are divorced the better, but the parallel development reported by Dr. Coffin points to the attacking of the churches by dry rot, the sacrifice of the heart quality to the formalism of religiosity. To stress the "'otherness' of God" is not only to strengthen the dire heresy of separateness in which the world's suffering is rooted—and incidentally to play into the hands of priestcraft—but also to turn people away from the Divine, which each must find first in his own heart.

THE LEAVEN OF THEOSOPHY

Theosophy aims at effecting a change in the mind of the race. Students sometimes wonder what this statement implies. But to convince themselves that it is no idle phrase, that the vital truths once again set in motion by H.P.B. are slowly but surely leavening the consciousness of thoughtful men everywhere, they have only to read with an open mind the output of modern writers in books and periodicals.

Prof. Joseph Needham, for example, read a remarkable paper before the recent World Congress of Faiths (*Science and Society*, Summer 1937)—a defence of “dialectical materialism”, which by his definition comes close indeed to the Theosophical teachings. Professor Needham repudiates the traditional mechanistic materialism—that soul-destroying brutal materialism against which H.P.B. waged relentless warfare. But he defines the essence of dialectical materialism as “the acceptance of the existence of diverse levels of complexity and organization, and the interpretation of them as successive stages of a world-process, the nature of which is synthetic or dialectical”. In the coming into being of the world as a whole, dialectical materialism envisages a unity. Professor Needham quotes with approval the following words of the late John Scott Haldane, while challenging the latter’s sweeping condemnation of materialism :—

Vitalist biologists assumed unjustifiably that in a living organism something interferes from outside them with physical processes. For the newer biology there is no interference from outside, but the integration characteristic of life is inherent in the events perceived, and they cannot be described apart from it.

Dialectical materialism forms the ideational background of the faith of the Communist, who, Professor Needham believes, “has... a more highly developed sense of the holy than any of the hierophants of the traditional religions, for he sees that the oppression of man by man is unholy, and he is determined to banish it from the world”.

His philosophy is precisely dialectical materialism, the view that one original creative event, probably for ever impenetrable to us and therefore hardly worth prolonged discussion, gave rise to a succession in time of dialectical developments, ever higher stages of organization being reached. The classless state of justice and happiness on earth itself forms part of this succession, and belief in it is therefore no mere desperate act of faith, but a part of an eminently rational philosophy and a declaration of unshakable confidence—“*Magna est Veritas, et praevalabit.*”

Theosophy is not committed to any political creed ; it is unalterably opposed to the materialism of fifty years ago, with its disbelief in all but material values ; and it unqualifiedly condemns “materialism in conduct and action—brutality, hypocrisy,

and, above all, selfishness”. The very word “materialism” had acquired a connotation of moral obtuseness and of indifference to the higher things of life. But let us not, out of suspicion of a word upon his banner, fail to recognize an ally in the struggle against degrading superstition on the one hand and still more degrading mechanistic materialism on the other.

For the “matter” of the dialectical materialist seems to go back of the matter which is the anti-thesis and the vehicle of consciousness or spirit in manifestation, and to be rather the Spirit-Matter, the “Primordial Substance”, in which spirit and matter are one, and which is “the ‘*upadhi*’, or vehicle, of every possible phenomenon, whether physical, mental, or psychic”. Theosophy’s definition of matter in that sense would doubtless be quite acceptable to the dialectical materialist. One of the great Masters wrote in 1881 :—

We believe in *matter* alone, in matter as visible nature and matter in its invisibility as the invisible omnipresent omnipotent Proteus with its unceasing motion which is its life, and which nature draws from herself since she is the great whole outside of which nothing can exist....

When we speak of our One Life we also say that it penetrates, nay is the essence of every atom of matter ; and that therefore it not only has correspondence with matter but has all its properties likewise, etc., hence is material, is *matter itself*.

The whole process of evolution, Theosophy teaches, is an unfoldment of the potentialities latent in that all-inclusive “matter”.

Mr. A. Romney Green, who writes on “Tomorrow’s Religion” in *The New English Weekly* (23rd September) does not describe himself as either a Communist or a Dialectical Materialist, but he is as insistent as Professor Needham upon the paramount necessity of solving the social problem. Apparently he realizes more clearly than the latter that the improvement of material conditions alone cannot permanently satisfy the human mind and heart. But he sees the reducing of present material disabilities and frustrations as necessary before men “will begin more generally to pursue those absolute ends of human life” which “are so many avenues of approach to that ‘spiritual principle in nature’ which also they have vaguely apprehended from the earliest times”.

Mr. Green, it may be mentioned, approaches other Theosophical view-points as well. He declares that “the intellect is not an instrument for apprehending any sort of ultimate truth”. (*Cf. The Secret Doctrine* I. 1-2, footnote) He is prepared to accept the likelihood of countless other beings of varying degrees of tenuity being interblended with our world, a teaching elaborated in *The Secret Doctrine*. (I. 604-5)

IN THE LIGHT OF THEOSOPHY

Dr. W. Melmoth Bomar sampled the intellectual and spiritual fare offered in thirty-one services and meetings and presents a dispassionate report of each gathering in a 300-page volume, *I Went to Church in New York*, brought out by The Graymont Publishers in that city. One of the meetings reported is a Sunday evening lecture at the United Lodge of Theosophists at 24 East 60th Street. The subject was "The Mystery of Birth" and not only is the Theosophical teaching on that specific subject presented with faultless accuracy, but also the broader fundamental principles that form its background are indicated.

The Declaration of the U. L. T. is dealt with in the report, its impersonal and voluntary basis are mentioned, the weekly programme is given and the writings of H.P.B. and W.Q.J. are indicated as the basis of the teachings of the Lodge. Students of Theosophy everywhere may well congratulate themselves on this fair and unprejudiced statement. The reasonableness and the high tone of the whole exposition are outstanding. They will speak for themselves to the unprejudiced and no doubt will reach many who never before have given genuine Theosophy a hearing.

The Hibbert Journal (October 1937), has an article by Dr. Robert Assagioli on "Spiritual Development and Its Attendant Maladies", in which "the awakening of the soul" is spoken of quite simply as a normal phase of spiritual development. It would be hopeful if we could accept it in the face of prevailing conditions that "the number of persons who are groping, consciously or unconsciously, toward a higher life is much greater than before". Be that as it may Dr. Assagioli's description of "the opening of the channel between the personality and the soul, and the flood of light, joy and energy which follows it" is excellent. "One realizes that Life is One and an outpouring of spiritual love flows through the awakening individual towards his fellow-beings and the whole of creation". He is right, too, in pointing out that this state must end and the complete transformation and regeneration of the personality be painfully achieved before the heights can be won and held.

Yet, however hard he may try, he cannot return to his old state; *he has seen the vision*, and its beauty and attractiveness remain with him in spite of his efforts to suppress it. He cannot accept everyday life as before, or be satisfied with it. A divine homesickness haunts him and leaves him no peace. (Cf. *Raja-Yoga*, p. 32)

Another passage in the article illumines an injunction in *Light on the Path* :—

Stand aside in the coming battle, and though thou fighest be not thou the warrior.
Look for the warrior and let him fight in thee.

Dr. Assagioli warns against "exaggerated personal effort to force the higher development, resulting in the repression instead of the transformation of the lower elements, with an undue intensification of the struggle and of the consequent nervous and mental strain".

The aspirant must realise that the fundamental work is always done by the soul and its energies, and that his chief task is to attract these energies by his aspiration, his prayer, his meditation and his right attitude, and then allow them to perform the work of purification and adjustment within him. . . .

The true solution is to use constructively and harmoniously spiritual energies in the work of inner regeneration, in creative expression and in fruitful service, according to the individual's conditions and opportunities.

In a very Theosophical article on "Steps to Higher Life" (*Presidency College Magazine*, Madras, September 1937), Prof. S. V. Venkateswara brings out many points of practical interest to the student-practitioner—in addition to such metaphysical concepts as that our progress is "from a comprehension of the finite to an apprehension of the infinite", "the highest unknown, which is not unknowable", and that "when a man transcends the limits of thought and the barriers of verbiage, the vision of the infinite dawns on him".

He stresses the fact that evil can be finally overcome only by applying the axe to its roots, *i.e.*, by detachment.

Lopping off the heads of a sprouting plant merely strengthens the roots of life. How, then, to dry up the springs of passions that may well up from within, when the live little senses are startling with delight?

Professor Venkateswara echoes *The Voice of the Silence* in condemning the idea that indulgence even to the point of satiety can ever free a man from vice. "Its strength increases with every exercise."

Theosophy teaches that all outer manifestations and events are symbols of inner realities. Professor Venkateswara writes :—

The true guide to action is that of moving toward the Universal even in the humdrum acts of daily routine. A touch of Universality transforms petty things into hieroglyphs of illumination. The waters that bathe one symbolise the mystery of eternity. The food that nourishes has germs of everlasting life, and that way food and feeder become as one.

A critic in *The Times Literary Supplement*, (25th September 1937), rightly objects to the fact that in the book he is reviewing :—

Everywhere contempt is poured on curiosity and the intellectual use of "the brain" (the use of "brain" instead of "mind" seems to be intentionally derogatory). It is curiosity and man's use of his mind which has lifted him to something higher than the beasts that perish. It ill befits man when he embarks on his highest quest to throw away his most serviceable tool not merely with ingratitude but with scorn.

Reason is not man's "most serviceable tool", intuition being a higher power of intellection. But intuition, however convincing to the seer himself, cannot convey to others the truths perceived. Furthermore, that high step of knowledge is inaccessible even to the spiritually minded except in flashes, unless he has been initiated into Perceptive Mysteries. Only those who have electricity at their command can becomingly speak slightly of candles. But even the man in whom the intuition sometimes speaks, has not the power to distinguish unerringly between its voice and the other voices that reach him from his inner consciousness. H.P.B. has stated that "There is no infallible intuition." (*Lucifer* v. 157)

In the average man intuition is a dormant faculty and the reasoning mind is his most trustworthy available tool. The logic and the strict continuity of the Theosophical teachings offer that reasoning mind its amplest training-ground and its fullest scope.

Justice being preserved, will preserve; being destroyed, will destroy. Take heed lest justice, being overthrown, overthrow thee and us all. (Manu)

In a striking article, "The Nemesis of Political Immorality" (*The Hibbert Journal*, October 1937), Don Luigi Sturzo upholds the supremacy of the moral law in words that recall this warning of the world's oldest lawgiver. Mr. Sturzo's analysis of the relation between politics and morality is masterly. He maintains that the more general the advantage sought by politics, the more they assume the character of morality and fulfil their true aim—"a sharing in the government of a country for the common good". Economic and political advantages the writer clearly sees as subordinate means, the end being "the moral and spiritual life and personal elevation of each individual (conceived as the Kingdom of God and of justice)".

Mr. Sturzo quashes the objection that often a choice dictated by moral considerations would be unilateral, open to advantage being taken of it by an unscrupulous adversary, as underestimating the power of moral values. Perhaps the most valuable feature of his article is the tracing of the relentless operation of the law of Karma. He does not refer

to it by name, but he does point out telling instances of swift retribution which in our time has overtaken nations for the repudiation of the moral law.

It is a true saying that "God does not pay on Saturday," but sometimes the payment is swift and overwhelming.

Ignorance and incompetence, he recognizes, may to a certain extent lessen responsibility, but

The forgetting and shelving of moral values such as the respect for treaties, the protection of the weak, the duty of rendering justice and of withstanding arrogant aggression are moral faults of which the responsibility cannot be wiped out, and which when the moment comes must be paid for, as all moral faults are paid for, even in this world.

How or when, each man knows in his own heart, if for a moment he reflects on the vicissitudes of his life. But history knows it too, history which is a chain of causes and effects, in which material determinism plays a lesser part than the moral values of the actions of men with their personal responsibility and collective influence.

Speaking on "The Cradle of Indian History" at the Madras University Buildings (*The Hindu*, 9th September), Mr. C. R. Krishnamacharlu said :

that to arrive at a true basis for the beginnings of Indian history, they should go to the Vedas, the Puranas and the Epics, not to omit later literature of classical times.

Often the Western Orientalist not having the keys to "Secret Wisdom" dismisses the stupendous Puranic literature of India as mythological, having no historical basis. Says H.P.B. :—

True, a casket so profusely ornamented that its fancy work hides and conceals entirely any spring for opening it, and thus makes the unintuitive believe it has not, and cannot have, any opening in it. Still the Keys are there, deeply buried, yet ever present to him who searches for them. (*S. D.* II, 585 footnote)

Between the Vedas and the Puranas there is an abyss of which both are the poles... The primitive, purely spiritual language of the Vedas, conceived many decades of millenniums earlier, had found its purely human expression for the purpose of describing events taking place 5,000 years ago, the date of Krishna's death (from which day the Kali Yuga, or Black-Age, began for mankind). (*Ibid.*, II, 527)

A careful study of H.P.B.'s *Secret Doctrine* on the subject of Puranas reveals that Puranic literature not only has historical value but throws a flood of light on such subjects as astronomy, geology and anthropogenesis :

Were the highly philosophical and metaphysical Aryans—the authors of the most perfect philosophical systems of transcendental psychology, of Codes of Ethics, and such a grammar as Pānini's, of the Sankhya and Vedanta systems, and a moral code (Buddhism), proclaimed by Max Müller the most perfect on earth—such fools, or children, as to lose their time in writing *fairy tales*; such tales as the Purānas now seem to be in the eyes of those who have not the remotest idea of their secret meaning? (*Ibid.*, II, 253)

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सत्यान्नास्ति परो धर्मः ।



There is no Religion Higher than Truth

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