

सत्यात् नास्ति परो धर्मः ।

“There is no Religion higher than Truth”

THE THEOSOPHICAL MOVEMENT

VOL. 45, No. 11

17th September 1975

THE PROBLEM OF SEX

[Reprinted from THE THEOSOPHICAL MOVEMENT, February 1952.—EDS.]

INTRODUCTORY

IT HAS BECOME apparent that, more than ever before, perhaps, in historical times, this is a cycle when “the problem of sex” has presented itself with unmistakable urgency as something whose time of solution has come. At no period have the issues been more clearly joined, or the consequences of the worldly idea of sex made more abundantly evident in the wholesale lowering of standards of personal morality and family life; not to mention the tremendous upsurge of neuroticism, confusion and insanity due, we may say, in large part to the steady perversion of the concept of man’s power of physical creation.

It is significant that there is little of a categorical nature concerning this problem in Theosophical literature, but this by no means indicates that there is no Theosophical *principle* that can and must be applied in this regard. Both H.P.B. and W.Q.J. carefully refrained from linking the study and practice of Theosophy, or even certain avenues of occult study, with any demand to abandon family obligations. Indeed, their teaching was quite the opposite, to the effect that if a man was not true to the obligations he presently held, no teacher could ever credit him with a capacity for faithfulness in any new undertakings. For confirmation of this, we need only read the article, “Living the Higher Life” [U.L.T. Pamphlet No. 34], and certain sections of H.P.B.’s *Key to Theosophy* on the subject.

We come now to the more obvious problem of sex itself. What can be said from the Theosophical standpoint in regard to the current idea,

so congenial to the world at large and even, it may be, to certain not-too-well-read students of Theosophical teachings, who take the relative silence on this subject as indicating a *laissez-faire* attitude toward sex and relegating it to the status of an insignificant factor in relation to a man's inner life? Such individuals we are apt to hear remark about the "naturalness" of the sex function, implying a casual attitude to physical intercourse. Is this a warrantable position? Close students of *The Secret Doctrine* will not even need to refer to that book to remember the point made by H.P.B. about the complete *unnaturalness* of the present mode of procreation for human beings (*S.D.*, II. 262). The history of its evolution is concisely given in Stanza VIII, Verse 31, of the *Book of Dzyan* (*S.D.*, II. 19):

31. THE ANIMALS SEPARATED THE FIRST. THEY BEGAN TO BREED.
THE TWOFOLD MAN SEPARATED ALSO. HE SAID: "LET US AS THEY;
LET US UNITE AND MAKE CREATURES." THEY DID.

This was the first perversion of "man's" creative powers, stemming from the procrastination of the Manasic host in incarnating into and taking control of the mindless human forms (*S.D.*, II. 185). The choice returned at a later date, we are informed, when men had minds and saw the wrong they were committing by the casual and irresponsible use of their creative potencies. Are we to learn nothing from H.P.B.'s statement of the diseases which followed in the train of such misuse of power (*S.D.*, II. 411), and from her statement:

Nor was the curse of KARMA called down upon them for seeking *natural* union, as all the mindless animal-world does in its proper seasons; but, for abusing the creative power, for desecrating the divine gift, and wasting the life-essence for no purpose except bestial personal gratification. (*S.D.*, II. 410)

We may end this short introductory examination of the problem of sex with the unequivocal statement that, from the Theosophical viewpoint, there is nothing in the least casual in the sex relation, nor can it by any twist of rationalization be termed irrelevant or insignificant to the inner man's evolution. On the contrary, the right or wrong use of the sex function represents a man's choice either to "arise and undo the errors of the past" — racial errors, as well as individual — or to succumb to the lure of the downward path, to which previous errors lend an easy glamour. The function of sex, as of any creative power, is a sacred thing in the Theosophist's eyes and may not, without severe detriment to himself and others, be entered into apart from a regard for its sanctity, or

lacking a spirit of dedication to the highest attributes of the human being thus being made manifest on the physical plane.

This introduction prepares the reader for a Theosophical study of the problem presented here in three sections, the first of which follows. The remaining two, on "The Nature of Sex" and "Marriage and Celibacy," will be published in a subsequent issue.

I.—THE EVOLUTION OF SEX

Ethical teaching carries little weight today, because the presentation lacks the scientific basis that would make it reasonable and practicable to men. Human beings are now too mentally developed to feel satisfied with blind obedience to mere moral precepts. Having lost the fear of a punishing God and a tempting Devil, men are questioning reasons for restraining brute desires. The problem of sex is a case in point. Why is lust wrong? And why is there a rejection by common sense of its opposite pole of puritanical asceticism? Are marriage and family life a necessity? Is birth control an evil or a legitimate practice? What is the true sublimation of desire? Innumerable are the questions that arise.

How can one comprehend the subject of sex without seeing man as a whole, without understanding the various natures — spiritual, intellectual, psychic and physical — of which his nature is compounded; without tracing the lines of evolution that have made man what he is, or without examining his future destiny? One can read hundreds of books on the subject, but it will be found that the Theosophical writings, when collated, afford a better background and a better means of evaluating it. The present digest, based on references in Theosophical books, gives a broad outline, but by no means covers all the references available. The statements made may appear — to anyone unacquainted with the source of Theosophical doctrines — fantastic, arbitrary or dogmatic in their contradiction of the evolutionary hypotheses of modern scientists. But here we are not concerned with the credentials of the statements, only with their correlation, in order to throw light on the problem. Those who wish to check the validity of the tenets must examine for themselves the evidence furnished by Mme. Blavatsky in her books *The Secret Doctrine* and *Isis Unveiled*, from which the statements are mainly drawn.

Man was not "created" as he is today, a two-sexed form, producing eventually an emergence of consciousness. There was a double evolution in contrary directions, starting (1) from the pole of spirit and working down through the spiritual, psychic, intellectual and animal natures, and

(2) from the pole of physical matter, from the simple and homogeneous to the complex and heterogeneous. Spirit falls into matter, which, in its reascent, it liberates and raises; the agents in this process forming a third line of evolution, being Intelligences (Minds) from higher planes and previous periods of evolution, the self-conscious link between Spirit and Matter.

Man began — in this Round of evolution, and on this Globe, as a spiritual entity within a huge, diffused, ethereal or astral form. Mindless and speechless on this plane, he was “self-born,” the mode of reproduction of this and the succeeding Root-Races showing a similar progression to that now found in the lower kingdoms of nature. There was, first, a simple separation into two individuals (the method now seen in the fission of the homogeneous protoplasmic amoeba, or in the nuclear splitting of a cell into two sub-nuclei, which either develop within the cell wall before bursting it, or else multiply outside it separately). The progeny of the “self-born” was formed by a secondary astral image or shadow oozing out from its parent (in much the same way as a Spiritist medium’s astral body is projected), the old form being eventually absorbed into the “shadow.”

The Second Root-Race was produced from the First by “budding,” as in some vegetables, sea anemones, etc., and the early Second Root-Race reproduced itself in the same way — either by the extrusion of a portion of the organism, which separated finally to develop to the same size as its parent, or by the throwing off of a single cell, which developed into a multicellular organism (as in bacteria and mosses). The later stage, called the “sweat-born,” parallels forms of lifelike plants, worms, snails, etc., in an intermediate hermaphroditism, allied to budding. In this Race the two poles of Spirit and Matter began to approach. It was psycho-spiritual mentally and ethero-physical in its outer form. There was, however, still no self-conscious connection between these constituents and the only language of the Second Race was one of chant-like vowels.

There were three main stages in the Third Root-Race, which began in the later Primary geological period. At first propagation was by (unself-conscious) “will, by sight, by touch and by yoga.” The first two stages were parthogenetic (virgin-born) and oviparous, the egg-cell forming inside the body but maturing outside it before the separation into sexes — first without the help of the fertilizing spore. It was exuded during the procreative season as drops of vital fluid which gradually

coalesced, forming a large, soft, external "egg." This hardened after several years' gestation and the young emerged unaided, as birds do. In the early sub-races of the Third Root-Race, the "sweat-born" and "egg-born," man was still bereft of intellect, speaking only animal-like sounds. The body was astro-physical, but the inner intelligence, psycho-spiritual in nature, had no working connection with the just developing physical senses, since there was no individual Ego as yet. Nor was the Third Eye of spiritual vision focused on this plane, communication, such as it was, being by a kind of "thought" transference. These beings, pure and holy as they were, were called "the Sons of *Passive Yoga*."

In the stage of the "sweat-born" the vital fluid, involuntarily scattering far and wide, produced not only the "pre-human" form, but also went to build the first mammalian animal forms, since the evolution of the lower kingdoms, except the mineral, is dependent on man's "cast-off clothing." The astro-physical body, still gigantic and physically unconsolidated, became rapidly more dense through the re-absorption of the matter previously thrown off and built up the monstrous "prehistoric" animal forms of that time.

The "sweat-born" and the "egg-born" were androgynes — Plato in *The Banquet* speaks of them as circular in form and motion. Gradually, from the hermaphrodite condition the young assumed more dominantly one or other sex-form until finally distinct male and female beings developed. The first two-sexed sub-race had monosyllabic speech and were one-eyed Cyclops, the two front eyes not developing fully as physical organs until the beginning of the Fourth Root-Race, which was the densest materially, the first "truly human" race, the *physical* forefathers of present mankind.

The final separation into sexes and sexual procreation took place at the midway point of evolution, in the fifth sub-race of the Third Root-Race, still in the "age of the reptiles," in the earliest Mesozoic or Secondary age, some 18,000,000 years ago. But the descent of the Divine Intelligences to inhabit and light up mindless man into self-consciousness began in the preceding sub-race, which was still immaculately egg-born, before the complete separation of the sexes.

It is the presence of the indwelling God or Dhyani, endowing the lower man with a portion or reflection of his own essence — in some cases with the whole of it — that gives man the knowledge and free-will to carry on his own evolution, to blend Spirit and Matter, thus becoming Master of Life, knowing himself as Spirit, while working in matter. It is the

presence of the conscious, rational, individualized Soul or Mind (Manas) that enables man to eat of the Fruit of Knowledge from the Tree of Good and Evil. And though the gift of free-will produces all the tortures man endures, through the results of wrong choice and sin, better to have the curse of evil, containing the seed of redemption, than mental vacancy however blissful.

There were three groups of the incarnating Dhyanis. First came the "Sons of Wisdom," the Egos who incarnated at the beginning of the midway point, as soon as the vehicles were physiologically and physically ready. Adding conscious knowledge and will to their inherent divine purity, they, in turn, consciously and immaculately, by the power of *Kriyasakti* (the intense power of imaginative thought and will that can make a subjective idea develop into an objective form), created a progeny called "the Sons of Will and Yoga," a progeny set apart from the ordinary line of race evolution. In these incarnated the highest Dhyanis who acted as the Guides and Rulers of the "newly-awakened" human beings who formed the mass of humanity, the latter being generated sexually, not created by *Kriyasakti*. The Divine Kings and Rulers taught infant humanity the fundamentals of the arts and sciences and established the marvellous ancient civilizations that astonish the moderns. These divine and semi-divine beings were the *spiritual* forefathers of the long line of Adepts, Mahatmas and Initiates of succeeding centuries.

The second class of incarnating Egos are those who inform the general mass of humanity. These had delayed their incarnation, being "jealous of their intellectual freedom (unfettered as it was then by the bonds of matter)," but the vehicles for their occupation were of an inferior degree. The Egos could not incarnate fully in them; they could only be quickened by a spark of the self-conscious essence. But the third class, who delayed still longer, till the beginning of the Fourth Root-Race, set up a terrible nemesis, through their procrastination.

In the fourth sub-race of the Third Root-Race, the period of the "egg-born," huge animals, of species now unknown, often tampered with the eggs before they hardened, producing a hybrid, half-"human," half-animal. Though these soon died out, some of the "egg-born" Race, still left mindless by their responsible Egos, after the point of the natural separation of the sexes, mated with these intermediate types (since the animal kingdom had separated into sexes previously, and the difference between the human and animal species was not at that time fully equilibrated), and bred other human monsters. This miscegenation of the

“mindless” was no “sin” for them, since they were unconscious, but the retribution for the abnormal sexual link made by them with the animal kingdom, and the tendencies induced in their nature by the act, became the moral responsibility and dire handicap of the Egos who incarnated belatedly in the later Third and early Fourth Root-Race. They had to use bodies tainted with too great an attraction to animal matter — since habits set up tend to reproduce themselves. This indeed happened, this time with full responsibility, in the later Fourth Root-Race when the Atlanteans knowingly mated again with the female descendants of the human-animal cross-breeds, the lower apes of the Miocene period. Thus were produced the anthropoid apes of today, the only class of the animal kingdom which will become human in this period of evolution.

With the final separation into sexes, the spiritual power of creation was gradually superseded by its material counterpart, the power of physical procreation. And as the outer physiological senses developed into activity, the inner senses lost their power, the Third Eye of clairvoyant understanding disappearing into latency, until by the end of the Fourth Root-Race, it left only a dormant physical representative, the pineal gland. The Fourth Root-Race were still giants in form, gradually dwindling down to the present stature in our Fifth Root-Race. They were also giants mentally, but, with the exception of the Race “set apart,” spiritual discrimination had not fully linked itself to the compound human being and found expression in him. The physical evolution began to outrun the spiritual, and humanity, becoming conscious of its material powers, abused and misused them. The separation into sexes was a natural sequence of evolution, and natural sexual union should have been revered as the outward expression of the divine creative power. Had it been used according to natural law, conception and bearing would have been as easy and painless for the woman as it is for the animal kingdom, where there is no conflict between opposed natures to create an unbalance. But the mind of man, surrounded as it was by the animal instincts and passions in his nature, led him in his pride of free will to transgress the law, to squander his power simply for sensual gratification, oblivious of his responsibility in the act. The gift of free will bestowed by the indwelling god proved therefore temporarily a curse, since humanity has, through the exercise of that free will in unnatural, selfish, bestial ways, produced the nemesis of dire physical disease and degeneration, the psychological disorders and the social and moral ills that destroy whole civilizations.

Even from the days of the early Atlanteans mankind divided into two groups, those who kept the remembrance of their spiritual origin alive, and who worshipped the One, Infinite, Formless Deity; and those who, overcome by the intoxicating awareness of their own physical powers, worshipped the human body. Thus was established the beginning of phallicism, whose symbols form the basis of "every exoteric religion or ritual, dogma and form," producing one of the most prolific causes of fanatic strife and evil.

But life moves in cycles, and the descent sweeps round the circle inevitably into reascent. The dominance of matter will lessen and that of Spirit reassert itself. The form of man will lose its physical density and on the returning arc will become physico-ethereal, with involution of sex. The spiritual senses will once more come to life, and the natural swing of progress will strengthen the power of the incarnating Soul or Mind to assume the lordship over its lower nature, unless the force of matter, through repeated voluntary attachments to it, fetters the uprising Soul beyond all hope. We should be, at the present day, less under the dominance of selfishness and vice than we are. But that potential balance between Spirit and Matter was disturbed when the "sin of the mindless" weighted the human combination with too great a proportion of the animal, material element, and the Atlanteans weighted it still further by their voluntary degradation of their own divinity. And mankind today — those Atlanteans reincarnated — blindly repeats and blindly suffers the consequences of similar sins. What weights the soul most is not merely the lust of sex, the avarice of possessions, the greed for animal foods that impart their own psychic qualities to the eater, or for drink that robs him of his self-control; not even miscegenation of various kinds — the mixing of alien strains, as in blood transfusion and serum-therapy — but chiefly the tendency of the mind to identify itself with all the lower things, so that materialistic civilization makes of sensuality a cultivated art, and of vice an ethic of success to be admired and followed.

But for those who are able to take advantage of the natural uprising cycle, in that gradual change back from the solid physical state to the original ethereal condition of matter, there will be a resumption of the previous creative faculty, replacing the present sexual mode of generation, which will have died out in the next Root-Race. When mankind has learnt the lessons of material existence and through repeated efforts has produced an integrated balance in its own individual nature, and achieved unity in the polarity of the sexes, then it will once more create

Mind-born, immaculate progeny, Buddha-like and Christ-like, through its own intuitive perception, imagination and will. Then it will rebecome Mind-born, and the Seventh Root-Race will be one of great Adepts and Initiates. But the beginning of that development for the ordinary man now is the humble task of fulfilling the practical duties of every day, of using the help and the discipline of true family life, for no one can leap to the pure state of power and knowledge direct from his present stage. The spiritual life does not demand a sundering of ties of family or friendship, a cutting loose from duties to the community, an ascetic escapism from temptations, a denial of powers, which have rather to be "tried, conquered, used, subdued," so that the lower self, illumined by the higher nature, may shine with reflected glory. To recognize the presence of the God within each one, to reverence the sacredness of marriage and the power that makes man a Creator, and to listen to the voice of past experience that sums itself up in true conscience — these lead us in the upward struggle towards conscious Godhood, when we shall come naturally to transcend material limitations, and the problem of sex will simply cease to be.

(To be concluded)

Q.—The Ego passes through a series of incarnations, in some of which it may inform the body of a man, in others of a woman. Is the sex of the vehicle chosen consciously by the spiritual Ego to perfect knowledge, or does it depend upon the Karma engendered in a preceding life? Can any principle be said to preponderate in one sex more than in another?

W.Q.J.—If masculine quality is the predominate characteristic, the Ego probably will be next in a male body; if not, the other sex. But the whole question is answered by that doctrine of Visishtadwaitism which says that "Good Karma is that which is pleasing to Ishwara (the Ego), and bad Karma that which is displeasing to it."

—The Vahan, May 1892

WHY WAS I BORN?

Four classes of men who work righteousness worship me, O Arjuna; those who are afflicted, the searchers for truth, those who desire possessions, and the wise, O son of Bharata.

—*Bhagavad-Gita*, VII. 16

THERE COME OCCASIONS in the life of each man when discontent creeps into his life. He cannot escape it. Circumstances so develop that even in the midst of ease and plenty, with no apparent disquieting element intruding, the rhythm of life seems to halt for an instant of time. It has the power to shake the man from his moorings. It sets up a commotion which, if interpreted correctly, warns that a rethinking on fundamentals has become necessary. Such a warning comes to each, especially during a period of convalescence which follows upon a long illness, but is oftentimes ignored or brushed aside as an idle thought arising out of upsets of mind and body. Thus are opportunities lost.

A large part of the waking hours of the man is spent in attending to the duties of home and employment. The rest of the time he rushes about to work on his hobby, to play, to read or to while away his time in pursuits legitimate or illegitimate. He says that he thus keeps himself busy. He is really fooling himself. He is shying away from the prospect of facing himself alone in the silence. It is in the few moments when he stands face to face with himself, silencing his thoughts the while, that Nature speaks — and speaking, instructs.

Those who have gone through the experience aver that Nature does have a voice, and this in no figurative manner. Before these whisperings can become intelligible, a grounding of the mind on certain basic principles becomes an absolute necessity. Without this preliminary knowledge, no help can be received from the inner planes of being. This is not an arbitrary fiat. Even in ordinary life, the alphabet and the grammar have to be learnt. Even then, the perusal of philosophical and scientific works would require quite a large expansion of the man's vocabulary. So too with the language that Nature speaks. The concepts of God, Karma, Reincarnation, Brotherhood have to be rid of the superstitions and overtones heaped upon them through the crass ignorance of those who styled themselves learned.

Beset by worries, hemmed in by deficiencies in morals, intellectual capacities and bodily functions, the man often stops in his drudgery for an instant and asks the question — WHY? But all too often, he

limits his question to the why of *his* suffering while others enjoy; the why of *his* own lack of talent while others have it in abundant measure. He rarely takes time to ask himself the other and more basic question: Why did I take birth? The priest is of course ready with his answer, the scientist with his. According to the priest, God in his infinite Wisdom and Mercy so ordained it. The scientist says that man came through a chance conglomeration of atoms; the entity lasts as long as the combination lasts. Death disperses the atoms and that is the end of man — his aspirations, sacrifices, progress in rectitude notwithstanding. When the doctrine of Reincarnation is presented to the awakening mind, the question which is often put is: Where was I before I took on this birth? Who am I really if I existed before this present form and name got attached to me? What is it that seemingly against my desire makes me shuttle endlessly between the two planes of subjective and objective existence? Pertinent questions these, and perchance this and several future incarnations may be moulded into desirable or undesirable patterns according to the answers accepted by the mind.

While considering the subject of man's entry into earth life, it is important to keep ever in mind that his birth comes as the culmination of the vast and concerted efforts of kingdoms below his own. To prepare a body for the Soul's future incarnation is no light or insignificant matter. Lives that are trained to carry out specialized functions have to be kept in readiness. Lives that will superintend and perform the functions of the brain, heart, liver, spleen and lungs will have to fall in place at the appropriate time. From the birth of the man, they will take up their own assigned duties and will continue to perform them independently unless meddled with by either the will or the escapades of the man. These congeries of sentient lives are witnesses to any reasoning man of the presence within himself of a guiding intelligence which neither science nor religion knows anything about. These same lives were used by the soul in previous incarnations during which his actions, words, thoughts and feelings weakened or strengthened them in their moral eminence or terpitute. It is thus that man comes to inherit the exact measure of his former thoughts and deeds. Within the embryo, the lives under the guidance of Karmic law carry the potency of still birth or of a longer or a shorter life. The sowings of previous incarnations can bring crop in abundance or make the soul so parched that hardly any valuable crop can result. This converging of the material forces (needed for the incoming soul) displays the work of intelligence which co-ordinates the

gathering of forces at the exact moment when their presence is required.

The period between birth and death may be said to be analogous to the act of ingesting food. The period between death and rebirth is occupied in digesting and then assimilating that food. These latter processes are automatic. That part of the ingested food which was of the earth earthy and therefore uncongenial to the Soul is thrown away just as in earthly existence the undigestable food is segregated and thrown away as waste matter. The fragrance of deeds well done, the essence of the good harvest that was grown in the mortal fields of the last incarnation and all other food-experiences which have the potentiality of being assimilated by the Soul — these accompany it in its ideal condition of the Heaven-world. Once this assimilation — an absorption into the very fabric of the Soul — has been completed, the Soul becomes ready for further experiences. It is refreshed; it is strengthened, but only to the extent of the soul-nourishing experiences that it gathered during the last life.

For each man, there is an aim — a goal to life. There is also the purpose — the reason why he wants to achieve that aim; and lastly there is the teaching or the philosophy or the tenet under the guidance of which he expects to achieve his aim. In most persons, the aim of life is not clearly defined, nor is it exclusively one. It is divided into two rather antagonistic divisions of the temporal and the spiritual, and there are subdivisions which further divide his attention. The mind thus divided becomes unstable and the struggle continues until the man finally decides which aim shall dominate his life. Theosophy recommends the saner approach and the choosing of an aim for the present incarnation which would be in harmony with the great aim of evolution and which further would remain constant through successive incarnations. The ultimate aim for any human Soul would be to make itself an impersonal force for good which could be marshalled along with other Souls into a band for achieving the vast plan and purpose for which the evolutionary existence was launched into objectivity. This means that the man in full control of his powers and emplaced in the impersonal part of his nature gives himself up voluntarily and binds himself to merge his all — aims, high aspirations, liberation from strife and sorrow — in the efforts being put in by others who have graduated before him for the lifting of humanity to the stature of conscious godhood. Why should a man choose such a goal, especially when he stands to get no recognition or fame for the sacrifice and the torture that he has undergone? What would be the purpose of abjuring the joys of this world and of taking on such a task

where his only merit may be of being like a stone among countless other stones in a wall that shields humanity?

He does this because he realizes that he was sent out into this cold and thankless world to carry out a mission of mercy. He takes birth among the ignorant and the superstitious to lift out from among them a soul here, a soul there who thirsts for Wisdom and who dares to ask the question — Why? He, the inheritor of the Kingdom of Light, voluntarily exiles himself in the realms of darkness and gloom, ready to minister to the needs of anyone who struggles to reach the Light. He has no halo round his head, he wears no saintly robes, has no visible insignia of his high estate. Yet, if he is true to his Self, he becomes a Redeemer. He may not shine with the brilliance of the noonday Sun, but he can still shed starlight to guide the way. It is no doubt true that several such have forgotten their high mission and have fallen prey to the lures of sense-life. The adhesives that wrong contacts with matter produce, corrode the channels of communication between the incarnated Soul and its divine overbrooding counterpart. The guidance and instructions from within are cut off. In such cases, the only sure guidance remains in the Teaching. This body of Knowledge and Wisdom is always ONE. It is changeless over times and eras and envisages all circumstances, events and gradations of consciousness. It has Instructions for the high and holy; it has encouragement and advice for the fallen sinner and the battered of fate. It shows not only the reasons for birth and death; it shows that in both these are involved aspects of mercy. Death comes as a deliverer from the almost unbreakable stranglehold of vice. It wipes off memories that plague the man and tempt him to go deeper into the morass. It affords a period of rest for the harassed and tired soul.

Would you profit by the Wisdom? Then take time to re-examine at frequent intervals your Aim, Purpose and Teaching.

BEFORE we can bring happiness to others we must first be happy ourselves; nor will happiness abide with us unless we confer it on others.

—MAURICE MAETERLINCK

THAT ATTITUDE OF MIND

IN ONE OF HIS ARTICLES in *Vernal Blooms* Mr. Judge advocates serious reading, reminding us that "people are responsible for the use they make of their brains," and with his customary common sense he meets in advance a possible criticism: "This does not mean that the news of the day should be ignored, for those who live in the world should keep themselves acquainted with the world's doings." (*Vernal Blooms*, p. 64)

He might well have added, if writing now — Neither does it mean they are to become mere receptacles for everything poured out on them by the media. Rather would he have condemned the thoughtless absorption of all those miscellaneous, uncoordinated facts that are sucked in daily by millions through news bulletins, interviews, opinion polls, questionnaires and forums, not to mention the welter of printed words in multitudinous newspapers, periodicals and books. Yet amid all the false values of our day this amassing of a hotch-potch of "information" seems seldom to be mentioned. One may be sure Mr. Judge would have regarded it as unhealthy, tracing it either to a desire for sensation or to boredom — the boredom due, we are told frequently, to the monotony and pointlessness of many types of work. Or he might have seen it as sheer idle curiosity, a sort of eavesdropping on a world scale, mentally titillating but deadening to true feeling since even the worst horrors experienced by others can become to the listener or viewer merely "news." "Let there be nothing cold or cynical in your view of life," says Mr. Judge. But to minds forever gorging themselves with ill-digested facts, coldness and cynicism do creep in insidiously.

If Mr. Judge was constrained to say in the last century, "What a petty lot of matter we spend time on, when so much is transitory!" (*Letters That Have Helped Me*, p. 129), his comment now would go even deeper and be charged with the gravest warning. With our minds open as sieves to the deluge of words, the result, to him, would seem inevitable. "A vast confusion arises within us that has been likened by some to a whirling motion, by others to the inrushing, overpowering flow of turbid waters." (*Notes on the Bhagavad-Gita*, p. 76)

How infinitely remote from this seems the ideal Mr. Judge presents to us in choice phrases. "Make of your minds a still and placid surface on which the Lord of the palace in the heart can reflect the pictures of Truth" (*Vernal Blooms*, p. 196). But, till that heavenly consummation is reached (if it should ever be), there are means of protection we can

adopt for our poor minds, the first and most obvious, of course, being simply to cut off the inflow of the purposeless, *i.e.*, of all that does not further "the work upon which all disciples are employed." This work, says Mr. Judge, "is that of rendering the body more porous, more fluidic, more responsive to all spiritual influences which arise in the inner centre, in the soul which is an undivided part of the great Soul of all, and less receptive of the outside material influences which are generated by the unthinking world." (*Letters*, p. 36)

In this work, *mind* plays a vital part, though, as Mr. Judge points out, it "is not the supreme or highest power" (*The Yoga Aphorisms of Patanjali*, p. 2). He warns that "mind is restless and wandering in its nature, and must be controlled" (*Vernal Blooms*, p. 176), and a later sentence bears out and amplifies what we have said above concerning the misuse of it. "Now as we are constantly looking at and hearing of new things, the natural restlessness of the mind becomes prominent when we set about pinning it down. . . . It must hence follow that the storing of a multiplicity of useless and surely-recurring thoughts is an obstacle to the acquirement of truth. And this obstacle is the very one peculiar to our present style of life."

To Mr. Judge, "the acquirement of truth" should be the aim of every mortal being, and he declares it to have been proved that "an excess of the technical and special knowledge of the day very often acts to prevent men from apprehending the truth" (*Vernal Blooms*, p. 122). How so, we may ask? Doubtless, to some extent, because of the arrogance of such knowledge. Also because, as we have been saying from the outset, most of it is irrelevant, save to its votaries, and in so far as it forms part of the present glut of "information," it merely confirms mind in that wandering tendency already referred to.

As a first step to countering this, Mr. Judge has something practical to say concerning "the need of mental discipline in the way of compelling yourself to serious reading and thinking, even though for a short time each day. If persisted in, this will gradually change the mental action, just as one can alter the taste for different sorts of food taken into the body" (*Letters*, p. 127). Definitely, this would curb the appetite for the pabulum of the media, for as Mr. Judge explains in his Preface to the Yoga Aphorisms already quoted from, "by means of the eye in reading, it [the mind] is moulded into the form of that which is read" (p. xii), and given sufficient contacts with such superior idea-forms, the lower must inevitably lose their attraction and the mind be

freed from bondage to what Jacob Boehme calls "The Turba," *i.e.*, the sensory phantasmagoria now being glorified and exploited by the media.

Actually, "The Turba" in its manifestations is more on the level of the brain than of the mind, for the function of mind is thought, and thought plays little or no part in the glut of factual "information" against which this article seeks to raise its feeble protest. Mr. Judge instances people "ignorantly talking of 'thought' when they mean 'cerebration,' and . . . airing a superficial knowledge gained from cyclopaedias of the mere lower powers of intellect" (*The Heart Doctrine*, p. 204), and it is "cerebration" that is kept by the media in a constant state of restless, purposeless activity. Not that the brain should, *per se*, be regarded as lower, only as "lowered" by misuse, for, as Mr. Judge says rightly, "the brain can be used for the noblest purposes and can evolve the most refined quality of energy" (*Vernal Blooms*, pp. 63-64). That is why abuse of it is so grievous. It is diverted from its divinely appointed function, namely, to convey the messages of the outer senses to the inner. What these messages must be in so many cases today one shudders to think, but let *none* of us hasten to reject as unnecessary in our own case Mr. Judge's reminder that "to occupy it [the brain] with matters not only trivial but often antagonistic to Theosophical principles is to be untrue to a grave trust." (*Vernal Blooms*, p. 64)

It is, of course, unlikely that this magpie appetite for picking up mentally whatever odds and ends present themselves will develop in students of Theosophy who already know the principles and line of action that keep mind and spirit healthy. Doubtless they have proven, at least in some degree, how right Mr. Judge is in saying that "all of our progress is in the inner nature, and not in the physical where lives the brain" (*Letters*, p. 123). None the less we do well to remind ourselves from time to time of some cardinal points in his teaching, checking that our compass points aright and that we are moving in the right direction, however slowly. Then, as he says, "the results to be reached by following the doctrines of theosophy, relating, as they do, to our real life, will be as definite, as visible, as important as any that science can point to." (*Vernal Blooms*, p. 200)

These cardinal points are set forth succinctly in the editorials of *The Path*, the magazine founded by Mr. Judge, and reprinted in THE THEOSOPHICAL MOVEMENT in the issue for November 1965:

In our view the attainment of true wisdom is not by means of phenomena, but through the development which begins within.

What is wanted is true knowledge of the spiritual condition of man, his aim and destiny.

Krishna says, the kingly science and the kingly mystery is devotion to and study of the light which comes from within.

No comment is necessary. We have been shown how to face "The Turba."

"Never lose, then, that attitude of mind." (*Letters*, p. 1)

THE PLANT

Spring

In the spring the plant put forth its tender green leaves and bright blossoms and swayed gently in the sunshine. "To give beauty and fragrance to all who pass this way is good," said the plant. "This is Life."

Summer

In the warm days of summer the leaves grew larger and darker and, where the bright petals of the flowers had been, juicy berries formed and grew sweet with the help of earth and air, water and the heat and light of the sun. Children playing in the meadow picked and ate the berries and were glad. "To give children food and make them happy is good," said the plant. "This is Life."

Autumn

Autumn days came with their clear, cool weather. All the berries were gone but the plant spread its leaves in the sun. A gatherer of herbs came by and when he saw the plant he was glad. "Its leaves are good for healing," he said, and he took them all off, to make medicine from them. "To help to heal the sick is good," said the plant, as it swayed to and fro in the wind. "This is Life."

Winter

Winter came with its cold and its cutting winds. A bent old woman, thinly clad, came by, gathering sticks to make a little fire. And when she saw the bare stem and branches of the plant she was glad and took the whole plant with her. She broke it up to build a little fire on the hearth and lighted it, holding her shaking hands out to it to warm them, as the plant crackled and blazed. "To give warmth and comfort to the old and lonely is good," said the plant. "Is this death? No, this is Life!"

HEALTH AND DISEASE

[This article by Dr. Archibald Keightley, M.D. (Cantab.), a close associate of H. P. Blavatsky and W. Q. Judge, appeared originally in *Theosophy* (successor to *The Path*) for June 1897.—EDS.]

EVERYBODY believes that the meaning of these words is an open secret. Health is the absence of disease, disease is the presence of some other condition, whether due to accident, infectious fever or perverted vital process. But is "everybody" right? Is there nothing hidden? Is the common voice the voice of common sense? The view so taken seems rather a short-sighted one. Of course on a merely material basis the view is not very far out, especially if it be held that "life" is due to the interaction of the various cells and organs of the body. But one of the old philosophers very wisely said that life does not so much consist in living as in being well, and we may infer from this and our own experience that any deviation will mean disease.

If we refer to any theosophical book or to Eastern and Western philosophies we find that in all alike a separate and distinct place is given to a "vital principle." This means that life does not consist in the interaction of cellular particles but that it is in virtue of an *inherent* and not *extraneous* vitality and that these particles themselves have life and form. What their form may be or what is their power or method of cohesion is another matter altogether. The living body has been compared to a sponge floating in an ocean of life. The water of the ocean within and without is continuous and is the universal life principle. But this principle being universal permeates all forms of matter alike, though not equally, and according to this mode of action of the life principle are the bodies classified.

Such may be said to be the simple, natural method. But let us carry the simile of the sponge a little further. While there is an equal interchange of give and take from and to within and without the sponge — in short, while the centripetal and centrifugal forces are balanced, so long everything goes well. Life, and healthy life, is manifested in the sponge. On the other hand let us suppose that the incoming is greater than the outgoing: the balance is disturbed and life becomes congested within the sponge. The cellular lives take on too great an activity and, unless relieved, a vibration is communicated to the sponge which may shatter the united body of the sponge to pieces. *Too much* life in a body kills that body just as surely as too little will cause its death.

From another aspect we may regard all things known to us as varying manifestations of force in matter. Science tells us that matter in itself is one and the same and that the difference between bodies as we know them is due to difference in the rate of vibration of the force. Take, for instance, the different colours of the spectrum. The colours of the objects we see with our eyes depend (*a*) on the wave-lengths of the vibration of the ether; (*b*) on the varying degree in which any matter or form stops and absorbs those wave-lengths; and (*c*) on the retina of the observer being correctly attuned to perceive the wave-lengths allowed to pass and those absorbed by the coloured body in question. Another element in the question is whether the etheric light-waves are reflected back from the body observed or transmitted through it, to the retina of the observer.

Such very briefly is the case for sight. Coarser vibrations of the air affect the organs of hearing; still coarser, those of touch; similarly in varying degree, the organs of smell and taste. But the underlying principle becomes clear. Bodies differ from one another to human perception by reason of the varying rate of vibration of force in and between the particles of matter contained in them.

Let us apply this to our study of "Health and Disease." Without going into details the anatomist will tell us of a vast complexity of structure, each part of which serves its purpose in the vegetable or animal economy. Each has its own part to play and no organ of different structure can play that part or perform that function. Each different structural type has its own life-vibration and does it well or ill — too much, too little, or exactly right in the general run of bodily work.

Now let us resume the analogy of the musical vibration. According to the rate of vibration is the musical note. According to the various notes in relation to each other is harmony or discord produced. Thus, taking all the vibrations of the various organs of any animal or vegetable body, there will be what we may call the "chord of the mass." And going further, there will be the harmony and discord of the family or nation of individuals. Thus in the unit human body the due and accurate performance of function of the various organs will constitute health, while failure in any one function constitutes disease.

But the problem is at once complicated when we commence to study the human constitution. If we regard living bodies as simply so much matter vibrating variously according to its organic structure, the chord of the mass is, though complicated, comparatively simple. As soon as

we introduce the question of the astral or etheric body and its vibrations, of the astral plane and its intercommunication and interpenetration with the physical, we are confronted with another class of vibration as much more subtle than the physical as the Roentgen vibrations are more subtle than the waves of sound. But even then when we assume that the astral vibrations may be grouped under one generic head, we are confronted with a further and more subtle set belonging to the domain of mind, exemplified in the well-known influence of mind over body. Still the principle is the same and we may perhaps justifiably conclude that the great life vibration is one and the same, operating variously in matter and thereby constituting the various bodies and the grades of matter of which these bodies are formed. "Health" and "Disease" still bear the same relation to each other and to the human constitution — but the sources of health or the seats of disease have been rendered more subtle and complex. They have been rendered much more dynamic than structural. Furthermore, just as we have seen that the physical harmony or discord is subject to the more subtle forces of the astral and mental (for lack of a better word) planes, so we may conclude with Patanjali that there are other and more subtle planes and vibrations, for the "mind" is only the internal instrument or organ for the manifestation of more subtle forces.

Such considerations lead us to a more expanded view of "Health and Disease." We can regard "Health" not only as the perfect and balanced action of a physical body, but also as the perfect action of astral and mental vibrations manifesting the free and indwelling "spirit." But what of disease? This conversely would be the imperfect action. Apart from this, however, I think that we may regard disease as a perverted vital process. Theoretically, of course, all should be perfect, but as a rule, nay invariably, it is to be seen that individual human units have made their own conditions; have by physical, astral and mental action created such conditions and set up such vibrations that the beneficent force of life either is on the one hand unable to "inform" the various grades of matter, or on the other enters in such quantity as to rend to pieces that form of matter which it enters. In the first volume of *The Secret Doctrine* there is a curious footnote in which H. P. Blavatsky deals with the action of the minute "lives" or units of the animal economy. It is there stated that the life force is manifested at one time for the purpose of construction and that the same force is also used to change or destroy the form which had previously been erected. Thus I take it that the life force passes into manifestation in its outbreathing;

it recedes in its inbreathing, still changing its form; and still pursuing the change of form it undergoes a period of "rest," following in this the analogy of physiological respiration. Then comes a fresh cycle of manifestation.

Thus we can follow the law of cause and effect through various incarnations in reference to "Health and Disease." We may consider, from the point of view of vibration, that all action sets up a vibration which may be in harmony or discord with (*a*) the existing chord of the mass of that human unit on the physical, astral or mental planes, and (*b*) the chords of other units in relation with that one, and (*c*) the dominant note of the universal life force. The result will almost inevitably be a discordant vibration. Such discordant vibration, wherever it act, will as surely produce "disease," either mental, astral or physical, which will *manifest on all the planes* or be stored up as a "mental deposit" or *skandha* to be more easily manifested on another occasion.

This naturally raises the question of the cure of disease and the promotion of health. It would seem easy, perhaps, for the possessors (if there be such) of the "Elixir of Life" to cure all diseases of suffering humanity by a few of their magical drops. But this would be contrary to nature and would be akin to a vicarious atonement if the harmony of health were to be thus produced. Man is his own destroyer, and he must be his own physician. Terrible would be the result of these magic drops; they would kill the body as surely as the strongest prussic acid. To be an "Elixir of Life" the drops must be a concentrated life force imprisoned in a vehicle. Such a force coming in contact with the body and vibrations not attuned to itself would rend that body asunder and destroy it as a form. Man can do it for himself if he chooses, but must not attempt to shirk the consequences of his own acts. Having by acts (and the thoughts which preceded them) laid up the mental deposits which will manifest later as discord and disease, how is he to restore harmony within himself and with nature around him; how manifest harmoniously the indwelling life force?

The answer is tolerably simple. He has to simplify himself. While man continues to occupy himself with a makeshift panorama of his own making he will perpetuate the evil. What man wants is an ideal—an ideal self to which he may cling and of which he can think, and then by gradually raising that ideal he may come to realize his own true healthy self.

In all this I would not be understood as saying that the cure of bodily

or astral disease lies in the mind or that the presence of bodily disease is evidence of an unclean or diseased mind. Nor would I wish to argue that to cure disease of the body we are to meet it on the mental plane alone. I say, on the contrary, that nature means us to meet it on all planes alike. Again, when I see a diseased body and the clear spirit shining through ill-health, I rejoice, for I know that the mental deposits have worked down and out and that the karmic deposit is almost done away with. Meet discord with the true weapons and restore the harmony: but do this because it is right according to nature's laws and not because you shall benefit your own poor body. If you use the mental life force for this purpose you will lay up a mental discord, and by injecting too much of this into a form unfit to receive it render that form diseased and insane in every sense of the word.

Therefore, I say, use all things properly according to nature's laws to a lawful end on every plane alike. Regarding all these manifestations as so many different vibrations we shall find that we become more and more impersonal, and by becoming so we shall be better able to sympathize with and thereby help the suffering.

Consequently the touchstone, the "Elixir of Life" which all alike have it in their power to administer to suffering humanity — one which is without danger to those who receive it — is that loving vibration of the human life force which we try to express by Brotherhood.

IN ALL YOU DO, have a reverence for life. If there is a spirit in a rice grain, you can't ill-treat that spirit. You must respect it. Spirits in the hills and the trees and rivers near your home make you feel an awareness, a reverence for your surroundings. You feel more part of them, enchained to them, or to use a similar word, enchanted by them.

—STEWART WAVELL

STUDENTS: REAL AND NOMINAL

Help Nature and work on with her; and Nature will regard thee as one of her creators and make obeisance. . . . Unsullied by the hand of matter, she shows her treasures only to the eye of spirit — the eye which never closes, the eye for which there is no veil in all her kingdoms.

—*The Voice of the Silence*

LEARNING is questioning. It is acquired by strong search and humility. It fails in one of its chief purposes if it does not evoke gratitude for the Teaching and the Teacher. To both these reverence is due, for it is They who open the understanding to newer and wider horizons.

With an averagely developed reasoning faculty, the inquirer may feel that he is well equipped to study subjects such as religion, cosmogenesis, anthropogenesis and the life and behaviour of nature's finer forces. He is mistaken. In such a study, the intellect is not all that important and may under certain circumstances become a hindrance. Further, the inquisitive mind which modern methods of study encourage is definitely not the questioning mind, and he who has it will have to curb its ebullience. One notable defect which makes a farce of student-life is perceptible in the modern spirit of irreverence that has taken hold of pupils as a class (the young and the grown-ups alike) and which precipitates in bouts of indiscipline and violence against teachers and institutions. A student who is infected by this virus is very much in need of mental readjustment, for, till this particular maladjustment is removed, he will cease to derive any benefit from the teacher's efforts. The knowledge and help that flow from the teacher to the pupil through osmosis will in such circumstances remain incommunicable. In all cases, the desire to learn must match the willingness of the teacher to instruct. Without it, there can be no pupil-teacher relationship. Where minds should join in harmony — the one to give, the other to receive, there is a feeling of frustration and antagonism and therefore a recoiling from close and friendly intimacy.

In worldly schools and academies, pupils are left to themselves to adjust their relationship with co-pupils. Rivalry instead of emulation is encouraged. This is bad enough. What is worse is that jealousy, fear, animosity, sexual attractions, etc., are allowed to simmer so long as they do not surface during study hours. Such undesirable tendencies which

are allowed to exist between co-students generate an inner disturbance in the pupil. This beclouds perception and hinders concentration. But the greater and more lasting ill effect that arises from such tendencies is that in the mind are sown seeds of fear, distrust and discord. A pupil exposed to such influences becomes a drag on his nation and society because he starts seeing foes, real or imaginary, in all congregations of men. He is unfortunate, for, wherever he goes, he carries with him germs of discord, unsettled ideas and a distorted vision of the true destiny of himself and his fellow-men.

Where devoted students gather and along with the teacher get immersed in the study of universal truths, there an interplay of affection and respect becomes manifest. An electrifying force pervades the group and enables the teachings to alchemize the mind and brain of each pupil according to the degree of his receptivity. There is a constant and harmonious interflow of sympathetic currents in and around the group. At least for that time and in that group, brotherhood in one of its real senses gets established. The solidarity and spirit of unity which can pervade a group and raise it to sublime heights may be likened to a similar condition in a musical ensemble where the individual instrumentalist finds his identity merged in the composite whole and the joint effort achieves not only a harmony in sound but creates an atmosphere which, emanating from the group, overspreads the audience. True union or brotherhood, whether it be joined in study or application or service, discloses something more than a compact unity. It gives birth to that impalpable something whose force and influence radiate from the group in ever-widening circles. Even at his stage of a beginner, the student can make a valued contribution towards such unity.

To resolve to be a student is easy. To become one requires the imposition of a rigid discipline on oneself, and that is not easy. Any ordinary institution of learning has a set curriculum, a fixed set of textbooks, and set modes of imparting knowledge. The pupil is expected to move within those prescribed ambits only. Why, then, should a grown-up man who in his youth has passed through this discipline chafe at similar limits when he enters upon the study of a knowledge as unknown to him as was at one time algebra and geometry? And yet, to judge from experience, the would-be student of life wants a lucid and exact clarification on points which at his relatively kindergarten stage are inexplicable because of non-development of certain faculties which alone can help him to understand. The beginner has to realize that the reasoning processes

of the intellect have their uses only for a lower stratum of consciousness and that if he desires to delve deeper into knowledge, he must build for himself other instruments of perception — like, for instance, intuition. Without his microscope, telescope and X-ray machine, man is handicapped even in earthly knowledge because his physical senses are powerless for the penetration of those points in space which these instruments reveal. So with intuition. It opens up new horizons of knowledge which no reasoning can reach. There are vast areas of knowledge inaccessible to the man of ordinary intellect, and he is too often tempted to turn away from the higher study because of the initial difficulty of arousing intuition.

Whereas the intellect can be heightened by a greater development of the brain and memory, the development of intuition requires the concentrating of attention on all fields of action, and specially those of ethics and service. This is difficult to most natures, and students failing in their attempts are prone to fall back on their intellects, hoping that somehow this will help them to progress. The hope is as futile as that of the man who, frustrated by a wrongly set up microscope, discards it and hopes that his physical sight will so develop in time as to bring about the desired magnification. Pupils who lay aside their quest for intuition go on marking time. They attend classes and lectures year after year in endless routine, wondering why enlightenment does not come.

Both *The Voice of the Silence* and *Light on the Path* speak of an inner Voice, an indwelling Divinity. Says the *Voice*:

That which is Uncreate abides in thee, Disciple. . . . If thou would'st reach it and blend the two, thou must divest thyself of thy dark garments of illusion. Stifle the voice of flesh, allow no image of the senses to get between its light and thine, that thus the twain may blend in one.

Says *Light on the Path*:

Stand aside in the coming battle, and though thou fightest be not thou the warrior. Look for the warrior and let him fight in thee. Take his orders for battle and obey them. Obey him not as though he were a general, but as though he were thyself, and his spoken words were the utterance of thy secret desires; for he is thyself, yet infinitely wiser and stronger than thyself. . . . If thy cry reach his listening ear then will he fight in thee and fill the dull void within. . . . He is thyself, yet thou art but finite and liable to error. He is eternal and is sure. He is eternal truth. When once he has

entered thee and become thy warrior, he will never utterly desert thee, and at the day of the great peace he will become one with thee.

This inner Voice and inner Teacher has to be searched for through all experience and all teachings. Intuition itself, though it introduce the student to territories hitherto sealed, is itself an aid — a valuable one, but still an aid. The study of the basic aspects of the Teachings, even the recondite ones about Karma, the Hierarchies, Cycles, Light, Force, etc., must be so undertaken as to lead to and not away from the moment when the inner Voice becomes a living, vibrating entity. Thus, for the student there are two teachers. The first is one perhaps a little more learned than his pupils — a person who possibly delays his own advancement towards the Light because he burns with the desire to help as many as he can to step across the threshold that separates the non-eternal knowledge from the eternal Wisdom. This Teacher, in however small a degree, is the representative of the ultimate Teacher. Any disrespect to him, any opposition or ill-feeling, creates singularly bad influences that thwart teacher and pupil alike.

The Teachings that flow from the inner Voice, and therefore in reflected degree through the teacher of a class or group studying Occultism, are *sui generis*. They remain the ultimate in knowledge. Yet, the real secrets, the true mysteries, cannot be imparted by the earthly teacher. They are communicated by the inner Voice, and so the awakened man cannot but say, "Thus have I heard."

INTUITION means "direct cognition and comprehension," without reasoning from premises to conclusions; it is a power that every human being has, either latent, or operative in some degree. It is beyond or above the reasoning faculty; the bar to its operation is our tendency to depend upon our reasoning powers, based as they are upon our superficial and incomplete common knowledge. This common knowledge is based upon our personalities in their relation to the external world, and does not take into account the spiritual nature of Man, who is the real Seer and Thinker. . . . In all Theosophic teaching there is an endeavour to arouse the Intuition by presenting universal principles, processes and analogies, which the student shall apply and thus find the answer to his questions

—ROBERT CROSBIE

TETRAGRAMMATON

II

[In our last issue appeared the first portion of this article by H. P. Blavatsky. The concluding portion is reprinted here from *The Theosophist* for November 1887.—EDS.]

IN THE "Scale of the number Seven," the name of God is represented with seven letters. The scale is *septenary*, whatever way one looks from the first original or archetypal down to the seventh or temporal world.

The "Tree of Life" has seven branches and seven fruits on it. In the *Book of Concealed Mystery*, BRASHITH, the initial word in *Genesis*, reads *Bera shith*, "He created the six." Upon these depend all things which are below (v. 16), all things being synthesized by Malkuth — the Seventh — Microprosopus.

"Microprosopus is formed of the six Sephiroth, three male and three female" (v. 67). The limbs of the Tetragrammaton are called the six members of Microprosopus, and 6 is the numerical value of V (Vau), his letter. When they (the limbs) touch the earth, they become seven (p. 32, *Kabbalah Unveiled*, and verse 9 of Comm. xxii, in *Book of Numbers*).

The whole *Book of Concealed Mystery* is full of such sentences. "The Microprosopus is *sixfold*... As he is formed of six Sephiroth which are called with Malkuth the inferior seven. These members are emanated from the first six (creative) words pronounced. His seventh principle is represented by the tenth Sephiroth... who is Eve in the exoteric system, or the inferior mother..." Hence the *seventh week* is called the Millennium, the Sabbath, and also the seventh kingdom. (*Book of Concealed Mystery*, v. 22)

The Kabbalists have always made a difference not only between AIN-SOPH, the numberless and the Inconceivable, but even between Microprosopus and the lower Tetragrammaton, the "Son," thence, the Logos. For, it is written in the *Greater Holy Assembly*:

(v. 83) "And concerning this the children of Israel wished to know in their minds, like as it is written (*Exodus*, xvii. 7), 'Is the Tetragrammaton in the midst of us, or the negatively existent one?' Where they distinguished between Microprosopus who is called Tetragrammaton, and between Macroprosopus, who is called AIN, the negative existence" (p. 121). But — the "*Yod* of the ancient one is hidden and concealed."

(73. *Introd.*)

(v. 1152) "We have learned that there *were ten* (companions, the Sephiroth) who entered into the SOD (mysteries of creation) and *that seven only* came forth."

(v. 1158) "And when Rabbi Shimeon revealed the Arcana, there were found none present there save those (companions.)"

(v. 1159) "And Rabbi Shimeon called them the *seven eyes* of Tetragrammaton, like as it is written, *Zech.* III. 9, 'These are the seven eyes of Tetragrammaton'."

In the Bible the latter word is translated "The Lord," which shows plainly that the Christians have accepted for their "Lord God" a *fourth* Sephirothal emanation and the *male* letter "Vau."

Is this the "Logos" every *initiate* has to seek union with, as "the ultimate result of his labours?" Then, he may as well remain in his *septenary* mortal body as long as he can.

With respect to the other "obstacles," they are as incorrectly stated. The "Figure of the man on the Throne" in Ezekiel answers in esotericism to the archetypal plane, the world of Atziloth, not to the Shekinah in Malkuth and Asiah, on the material plane; as will become evident to anyone who analyses the vision *kabbalistically*. For, firstly, there are four clear divisions of the symbolism of the vision; namely, the form of the man, the throne on which he is seated, the firmament above the heads of the living creatures, and the "living creatures" themselves with their ophanim or wheels. These again clearly answer to the four Kabbalistical worlds or planes themselves, *i.e.*, *Atziloth*, the Archetypal — the shadowy figure of the man; *Briah*, the Creative — the throne; *Yetzirah*, the Formative, the firmament; *Asiah*, the Material, the living creatures. These answer again to the four letters of the tetragram, thus: the uppermost point of Yod in IHVH to the "figure of the man," the H (*He*) to the throne, the V (*Vau*) to the firmament, and the H final to the creatures. (See *Plate IX* of *The Kabbalah Unveiled*.)

The "figure of the man" is not "the male form of Shekinah." Shekinah is *not* "an androgyne power."¹ Shekinah is sexless or feminine if anything. It is primordial light emanating from the ever-concealed Ain-Soph. In the archetypal world it is Sephira, in the material and the *for-*

¹ See engraving from the Babylonian account of creation (by G. Smith, *Chaldean Account of Genesis*) of the Sacred Tree, with figure on each side and serpent in the background. This engraving is taken from an early Babylonian cylinder, and represents the said tree with its seven branches.

mative it becomes Shekinah, the *latent life and light* of this inferior world of matter — the “veil of Ain-Soph” and the “divine presence” on the *path* of Malkuth from the material to the higher worlds. She is the *Buddhi* of the physical body — the soul or spark burning *in* the vessel; and after the vessel is broken, merging into the seventh (according to Theosophical computation) and into the first or *Macroprosopus* Kabbalistically, as it is the first ray from the concealed.²

The plan revealed by Malkuth is given in the *Book of Concealed Mystery*, the *Siphra Dzenioutha*, V. 31, as follows:

The Tree which is mitigated (that is, the Path of the Kingdom or Shekinah, which is the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil, which in itself existeth from the judgment, but is mitigated by the bridegroom through the influx of mercies) resideth within the shells; (because the Kingdom hath its dominion over all things, and its feet descend into death). In its branches (in the inferior worlds) the birds lodge and build their nests (the souls and the angels have their place). Beneath it those animals which have power seek the shade (that is, the shells, *Klipoth*, “for in it every beast of the forest doth walk forth.” *Ps.*, civ., 20).

This is the tree which hath two paths for the same end (namely, good and evil, because it is the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil). And it hath around it *seven* columns (that is, the *seven* palaces), and the *four* splendours (that is, the *four* animals) whirl around it (in four wheels) on their four sides (after the fourfold description of the chariot of Yechesqiel (Ezekiel).

This tree has *seven* branches,³ on each of which are four leaves and three fruits. Moreover there is an evident analogy between the above verse in *Siphra Dtzenioutha* and Chapters I to IV of *Revelation*. For the seven churches “of Asia” are identical with the “seven palaces” in Asiah, or the material *septenary* place. The seven stars which are in the right hand of the “figure” are not these seven churches, but the seven keys to them; and the two-edged (androgynous) word which proceeds from his mouth is the Yod of IHVH. This “figure” is the septenary

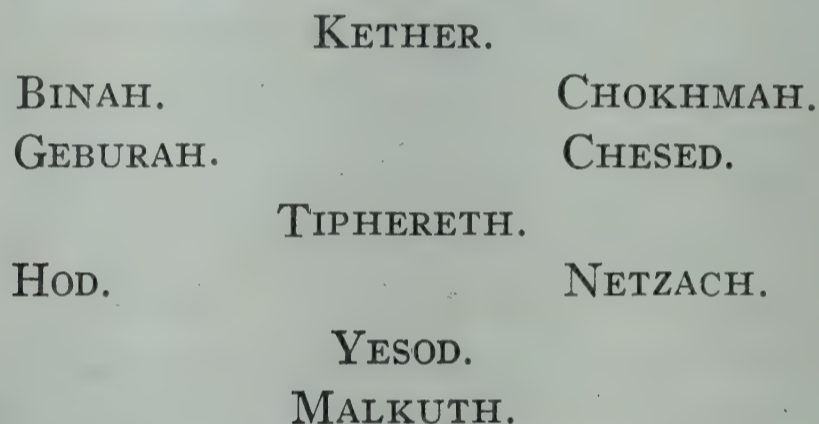
² Nor is Shekinah a Sephiroth, for she proceeds from, and is latent in, the tenth Malkuth, and is destroyed with the latter. (See I. 22, *Book of Concealed Mystery*.) The mistake has probably arisen from Shekinah’s divine name being Adonai and the angelic Kerubim. But no Kabbalist will give out in print the key to this.

³ I have consulted our brother Mr. S. Liddel MacGregor Mathers whether any Kabbalist justified the idea that Shekinah was “an *androgynous* power.” He said *no* — “it is sexless and is the divine presence.” (See his *Kabbalah Unveiled*, page 55, note between verses 32 and 33.)

“Tetragrammaton,” the V (Vau).⁴

But this figure is a different thing altogether to the one which is on the throne in Ezekiel’s vision. For the former (the figure in Chapter I of *Revelation*) is on the planes of Yetzirah (the world of formation, the habitat of the angels *who would not create*), and the figure of Ezekiel is on the plane of Atziloth, and is described in the fourth chapter of the Apocalypse as the “one who sat upon the throne.”

In order to be two, to bear the burden of the above statements, I have applied to Mr. S. L. MacGregor Mathers (than whom there are few more learned Kabbalists in England, though I do not certainly agree with all his views. But on this question we are in almost full agreement). Our brother has kindly consented to give an opinion in writing, and this is how he distributes the SEPHIROTHAL TREE.



Here the figure on the throne in Ezekiel’s vision refers to Kether; the throne to Chokhmah and Binah, the world of Briah, whose alternative name is *Korsia* — the throne; the firmament is Microprosopus, who consists of the six Sephiroth — Chesed, Geburah, Tiphereth, Netzach, Hod and Yesod. Now Yesod is the path of ingress into Malkuth or the created material world; and the Shekinah is the Presence in Malkuth, the Queenly Presence; for Shekinah is feminine, *and not androgynous*. And the seal of the Macrocosm, the six-pointed star, the⁵



⁴ Or *Vau*, whose number is six and symbolism — a hook or crook; *phallic*.

⁵ It is the seal of the Macrocosm certainly, but it becomes that of Microcosm only when the five-pointed star is enclosed within it, for it is the latter which is properly the sign of Macroprosopus. It is the *Shatkona Chakra* (the wheel of Vishnu) and the *Panchakona* (Pentagram). We would call the former the seal of Macroprosopus only when the hexagram is surrounded by or within a circle; not otherwise. But this does not affect the question. The *Kabbalah Denudata* of Knorr von Rosenroth contains a good many errors, and other versions — especially the Latin translations, all made by Christians bent upon squeezing *nolens volens* a prophetic and Christian meaning out of the *Zohar* — more still.

is the emblem of Microprosopus, the Tetragrammaton — the Vau of IHVH, who stands within the *seven* light-bearers of Malkuth, which are no other than the seven last Sephiroth themselves, or the six Sephiroth which compose Microprosopus with Malkuth added as the *seventh*.⁶

Nothing can be plainer, I believe. Whatever the transcendental, metaphysical speculations and interpretations, which, of course, can be satisfied with *Tetraktis* on the plane of the Archetypal world, once that we descend into the world of the Astral and of the phenomenally occult, we cannot have less than seven principles upon which to base ourselves. I have studied the Kabbalah under two learned Rabbis, one of whom was an initiate, and there was no difference between the two teachings (the esoteric Eastern and the Western) in this instance.

Of course it is well known that anyone endowed with even a moderate dose of ingenuity can, if he has studied the three Kabbalistic modes of interpretation — especially the *Notarikon* — make what he likes of the unpointed Hebrew words and letters. But the explanations I give require no *Notarikon*, but simply a knowledge of the seventh esoteric key. With Massoretic points one can transform the astral Jehovah-Tzabaoth, and even Jehovah-Elohim into the “One living” and the highest God, the “God of gods” — whereas he is merely one of the formative and *generative* gods. A good instance of the above dishonesty is found in Mr. Mathers’ translation of Knorr von Rosenroth’s *Kabbalah Denudata*. He gives us six specimens of the various readings of the first word only (B’rashith) in *Genesis*. With the rules of *Notarikon* the opening sentence “*B’rashith Bara Elohim eth hashamayim v’eth h’arets,*” or “In the beginning God made the heaven and the earth,” may be made to mean whatever one pleases; since the first and solitary word *B’rashith* is forced to yield six dogmatic teachings of the Latin Church.

As shown by the aforesaid Kabbalist, Solomon Meir Ben Moses, a convert to Roman Catholicism in 1665, who took the name of Prosper Rugere, succeeded in proving on strictly *Notaricomist* grounds that the said first word (B’rashith) revealed six Christian meanings; the first of these was “The son, the spirit, the father, their trinity, perfect unity”; the third, “Ye shall worship my firstborn, my first, whose name is Jesus”; the fifth, “I will choose a Virgin worthy to bring forth Jesus, and ye

⁶ The *Siphra Dtzenioutha* says concerning Malkuth, “The Shekinah (or queenly presence) which is below that is a *Path* of the kingdom, namely, Malkuth, the tenth and last Sephira.” (I, c. 32.)

shall call her blessed." The sixth is given in the footnote below.⁷ The two others are repetitions.

The same remarkable elasticity of interpretation is afforded in the esoteric texts of other nations. Each symbol and glyph having *seven keys* to it, it follows that one party may be using one key to any subject under dispute, and then accuse another student who is using another key of deliberate misinterpretation.

Such is not *my* policy, however. In esoteric matters I would rather seek conciliation than quarrel over mistakes made, whether real or imaginary; because the CAUSE and the triumph of truth ought to be dearer to a true Occultist and Theosophist than petty successes over disputants.

No one occultist, if he is true to his colours, can give out the meaning of *all* the "Seven Mysteries of Wisdom"—even if he himself is acquainted with *all*—which would be a marvel, indeed. For those "Seven Mysteries" *in toto* are known thoroughly only to the "MASTERS OF WISDOM"; and those Masters would hardly indulge in polemical discussions whether in newspaper or periodical. What is the use then of losing time and power over proving that one facet of the diamond shines with more light and brilliancy than its sister facet instead of uniting all the forces to draw the attention of the profane to the radiance of the jewel itself? We students of the sacred science ought to help each other, encourage research and profit by our mutual knowledge, instead of unprofitably criticizing it to satisfy personal pride. This is how I look at it; for otherwise our enemies, who started by calling us humbugs on the sole strength of their sectarian and materialistic prejudices and bigotry, will be justified in reiterating their accusation on the ground of our mutual denunciations.

Materialism is raising its ghastly head higher than ever.

Knowledge, one of the scientific papers of London, gives us a foretaste of what is in store for the occultist. While reviewing the *Kabbalah Unveiled*, it is loud in proclaiming "the extraordinary intellectual

⁷ In the *Notarikon* "Every letter of a word is taken for the initial or abbreviation of another word, so that from the letters of a word a sentence may be formed." Thus, from the letters of this word *B'rashith*, I too could easily make a sentence which would read:—"Beware! rows are soon hatched in Theosophy"; and then offer it as a divine warning and revelation, taking as my authority the "Book of God." This reading would be as true, but more to the point than the sixth of Prosper Rugere's versions; for he made of *B'rashith*—"Beaugoth Ratzephim Asattar Shegopi Jeshuah Thakelo," which, translated, reads: "I (God) will hide myself in cake (wafer) for ye shall eat Jesus, my body"—and converted thereby, and forthwith, another Jew to Roman Catholicism!

vagaries of the Hebrew commentators on their scriptures." It crushes under the weight of its materialist contempt the idea from Dr. Ginsburg's "Essay on the Kabbalah" — that the mysteries of being were "taught by the Almighty himself to a select company of angels, who formed a theosophic school in Paradise"! and winds up by a tremendous point of mocking admiration, in parenthesis (!). This, on page 259 of *Knowledge*, Sept. 1, 1887. On page 245, Mr. Edward Clodd offers us, instead of the teachings of the "Theosophic angels," those of the Darwinists of the Haeckelian School. Having surveyed "a vast field" in *Kosmos*, "the limits of which shade into the unlimited on all sides," this anti-Kabbalistic champion of modern science ends *his* "vagaries" by the following startling enunciation:

We began with the primitive nebula, we end with the highest forms of consciousness; *the story of creation is shown* [! ?] to be the unbroken record of *the evolution* OF GAS INTO GENIUS [!!!].

This shows how we stand with the men of *modern* science and how much we need all our forces to hold the materialists at bay.

One word more and I have done. I am repeatedly asked to show my authority — book, page and verse — for the esoteric doctrine of the "Septenary." This is like saying to one in the midst of a desert: prove to me that water is full of *infusoria* when there is no microscope to be got. Better than anyone, those who make such a claim upon me, know that outside of the few places where secret MSS. are stored for ages, no *esoteric* doctrines were ever written and plainly explained; otherwise they would have lost long ago their very name. There is such a thing as an "unwritten" Kabbala, as well as a written one, even in the West. Many things are *orally* explained, and always have been. Nevertheless, hints and allusions to it are numerous and scattered throughout the exoteric scriptures, and the classification depends, of course, on the school that interprets it, and still more upon personal intuition and conception. The question is not whether there are three, five or seven colours in the rays of the *spectrum*, for everyone knows there is, in fact and nature, but one — the colourless white. And, though Science discerns very plainly seven prismatic rays as clear as are the seven notes in the scale, yet, one has heard of very great men of science who insisted there were only four or five until it was found out that they were colour-blind.

—H. P. BLAVATSKY

wards its Sun — the Monad — the lower *Ego*, or *personal* Self, will have the upper hand in every case. For it is this Ego, with its fierce Selfishness and animal desire to live a Senseless life (*Tanha*), which is “the maker of the tabernacle,” as Buddha calls it in *Dhammapada* (153 and 154)...For the first three and a half Root-Races, up to the middle or turning point, it is the astral shadows of the “progenitors,” the lunar Pitris, which are the formative powers in the Races, and which build and gradually force the evolution of the physical form towards perfection — this, at the cost of a proportionate loss of spirituality. Then, from the turning point, it is the Higher Ego, or incarnating principle, the *nous* or *Mind*, which reigns over the animal Ego, and rules it whenever it is not carried down by the latter. In short, Spirituality is on its ascending arc, and the animal or physical impedes it from steadily progressing on the path of its evolution only when the selfishness of the *personality* has so strongly infected the real *inner* man with its lethal *virus*, that the upward attraction has lost all its power on the thinking reasonable man. In sober truth, vice and wickedness are an *abnormal, unnatural* manifestation, at this period of our human evolution — at least they ought to be so. The fact that mankind was never more selfish and vicious than it is now, civilized nations having succeeded in making of the first an ethical characteristic, of the second an art, is an additional proof of the exceptional nature of the phenomenon. (*The Secret Doctrine*, II. 109-10)

Much has been said about the problems presently confronting us and posing a threat to the future of humanity. In the *Observer Magazine* for February 23, Ronald Higgins names six such threats: population explosion, food shortage, scarcity of resources, deterioration of the environment, misuse of nuclear capacities, and technology racing beyond control. To these he adds the “Seventh Enemy” — our own moral blindness and the frightening disparity between the affluent and poor nations. Says the author:

We mutter about charity beginning at home and turn aside embarrassed. The idea of common humanity has not been digested. This may be less due to greed and selfishness than to slowness of mind. We have failed to see that mankind’s interdependence is no longer a slogan....

Our Governments see little connection between northern affluence and southern deprivation.... The northern minority [North America, Europe and Japan] consumes up to 85 per cent of many vital commodities, some of which come mainly from the South [Asia, Africa and Latin America]. As the development gap widens and famine spreads, the indignation, claims and pressures of the poor must grow....

Many contemporary writers... think that the origins of the global crisis are spiritual, not just technical or political. They believe we should reappraise some of our most settled attitudes. Far from rejecting action they say it needs to be rooted in something deeper than our conventional moralities or the self-interest of our species.

The line of reasoning I find persuasive starts from the notion that there is a peculiarly modern and shallow cast of thought and feeling. We have an insufficient idea of our nature, which shows in the priority we give to the condition of our outer life, to the neglect of the inner. We are misled about our place in the natural order: that measuring everything in terms of human benefit, we have lost our sense of creaturely dependence on the earth. We have been shouting, "We are the masters now" only to find the abyss at our feet.

In less than a century, science and technology, ambition and appetite, have swept us from the horse-drawn to the supersonic age. Their dramatic achievements have brought some benefit to most of mankind but their hypnotic power may now condemn it. The materialism that produced our northern style of life is now impelling the universal worship of "economic progress" and the inhuman scale and pace of much industrial life. It leads to fragmented and meaningless work; fragmented and superficial personal relations.

Our deepest responses become mechanistic. We revere the mind that "works like clockwork," undervalue instinct and feeling, overvalue cleverness and are cruel to failure. We strive for the next satisfaction without dwelling on the last. We are go-getters, who get nowhere very satisfying: go-getters who forget where we come from. We believe in "doing" and in our hunger for stimulation have almost forgotten what "being" — and death — is about. We are less able to use solitude or silence. We become less known to ourselves and to each other, less valuable, perhaps more dangerous. For in losing recognition of our unconscious drives, some of which are evil, we are less able to handle them. We also become prone

to facile indignation; the evil is always in others.

We must recover some sort of inwardness and restore our reverence for the earth's life, if we are to inform new beginnings or, if we fail, to receive calamities with some understanding and grace.

In the last few years, words like "drugs," "narcotics" and "addiction," which had long been considered as somewhat alien or as related to the activities of only very specific groups, have been appearing in the daily press in a number of countries. Drug problems have been so ill-defined and so much controversy prevails on the subject that Unesco has just published a booklet entitled *Drugs Demystified*, prepared by Dr. Helen Nowlis, Director of the Drug Education Office in the United States Department of Health, Education and Welfare.

After stating the problem, describing the effects of various drugs, distinguishing between different forms of use and identifying various approaches to the problem of drug addiction — moral-legal, the disease or public health model, psycho-social and socio-cultural — Dr. Nowlis writes of the challenge to society that the problem poses:

In rapidly changing societies that are becoming more diverse and more impersonal and whose institutions are less able to respond to rapid changes, communities and nations must continually assess their role in nurturing individuals. If family, school, church, community and government do not, young people will create their own institutions, among them peer groups, that do respond to their perception of their needs, or they will resort, as individuals or as groups, to deviant and destructive behaviours.

As long as a society hides behind pharmacological agents and believes that if they could only be eliminated, all problems would be solved, the basic problems go unattended. Until young people are supported in thinking through and working out important and meaningful identities and roles in adult society, mature social relationships and a meaningful relation to life and to whatever God one has, attempts to cope with the "drug problem" or any other disturbing behaviour will be less than successful. As long as the use of any substance, whether it be alcohol or any other drug, is serving a need, real or imagined, that is not being met in some other way, some will use it unwisely. It is important to recognize that even if the wave of a magic wand could make all these sub-

stances disappear, something else would take their place, perhaps more acceptable, perhaps less. As an unintended consequence, the medical profession would lose many of its most valuable means for relieving pain and treating a myriad of psychological ills.

Parents and teachers must work with, not for, young people as they identify and strive to cope with the complex problems that a few of them seek to solve or escape from with chemicals. It might help in the long run if adults set a good example.

Young people are using drugs, including alcohol, not as many of them as indiscriminate reports from visible areas and schools would tend to show, but enough of them to suggest that it may be necessary to ask some searching questions about youth, about drug use, about society and its response both to youth and to drug use, and about the adequacy of institutions.

Indeed, such an inquiry may be one of the most positive steps that can be taken as a result of the concern caused by the use of drugs in present society. Taken individually, each answer can but point to partial avenues for action. Together, however, they may constitute the framework for meaningful developments and joint efforts for the benefit of all.

How much do our scientists know about concepts such as time and space, force and matter? When Planck and Einstein linked time to space and the fourth dimension was described, few had the courage to accept the theory. But when it was shown that nothing in the universe is ever static, that everything is relative and that the three familiar dimensions are observable only in relation to sequentiality or time, the sceptics fell silent. Now the concept of space-time continuum is commonplace.

Likewise with matter. The three states of matter are well known: gaseous, liquid and solid. Some years ago a fourth state was discovered and was named plasma. Now some physicists claim to have actually photographed a fifth state of matter: a droplet of "excitons" in a crystal of the semi-conductor germanium. Excitons behave both like a metal (they have high conductivity) and like a liquid (they have surface tension and make the exciton fluid form spherical droplets). Their other characteristics remain to be explored.

Commenting on this, *The Times of India* for August 13 states:

This tempts one to ask a rather unorthodox question. Are there only four dimensions and only five states of matter? Can there be more? On the analogy of a two-dimensional thing being unable to grasp the meaning of a third dimension, we four-dimensional creatures may be unaware of a fifth dimension (peopled possibly by ghosts!) And if five, why not six, seven or twenty states of matter? What does Occult Science teach?

Occult Science teaches us that at the end of the Fourth Race, matter, which evolutes, progresses and changes, as we do along with the rest of the kingdoms of nature, shall acquire its fourth sense, as it acquires an additional one with every new Race. Therefore, to an Occultist there is nothing surprising in the idea that the physical world should be developing and acquiring new faculties — a simple modification of matter, new as it now seems to science, as incomprehensible as were at first the powers of steam, sound, electricity. But what does seem surprising is the spiritual stagnation in the world of intellect, and of the highest exoteric knowledge. (H.P.B. in "Occult or Exact Science?": THE THEOSOPHICAL MOVEMENT, September 1964)

Matter is . . . septenary in esoteric teachings, like everything else in the universe. (*The Secret Doctrine*, I. 10 fn.)

Matter, to the Occultist, it must be remembered, is that totality of *existences* in the Kosmos, which falls within any of the planes of possible perception. . . . We must seek for the ultimate causes of light, heat, etc., etc., in MATTER existing in *super-sensuous* states — states, however, as fully objective to the spiritual eye of man, as a horse or a tree is to the ordinary mortal. (*Ibid.*, I. 514-15)

Astral matter is fourth state matter, having, like our gross matter, its own "protyle." There are several "protyles" in Nature, corresponding to the various planes of matter. The two sub-physical elemental kingdoms, the plane of mind (*manas*, the fifth state matter), as also that of Buddhi (sixth state matter), are each and all evolved from one of the six "protyles" which constitute the basis of the Object-Universe. The three "states," so-called, of our terrestrial matter, known as the "solid," "liquid," and "gaseous," are only, in strict accuracy, SUB-states. (*Ibid.*, II. 737)
