

# QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

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*Articles by William Q. Judge*

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONERS

THE ENQUIRER

THE STREAM OF THOUGHT AND QUERIES

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

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## ANSWERS TO QUESTIONERS

THE notice published last month, that questions might be asked, addressed to “Zadok,” has elicited several queries, from which we select the following. Hereafter “Zadok” will continue his answers, but they will be given through the PATH’s columns, except where their private nature may call for personal correspondence.

*From C.*—(i) Is celibacy necessary to the highest spiritual life and attainment? Is this your idea of true occultism?

*Answer*—By no single way is the highest spiritual life attained. The highest Adept and the true occult student, have at some time been wedded to woman. The highest attainment is never reached until a man has passed through this experience. Under certain conditions and at a certain time celibacy is a great aid, but if the student is wedded then it is his *duty* to continue in that condition, and instead of proving a barrier it will be an assistance to his progress if he rightly comprehends its significance. All the lessons which are taught the true occult student are given in daily life and through nature’s laws. The celibate loses some of these lessons—lessons which he must inevitably learn—because he violates a great law of nature.

The result of celibacy is that the student works by intellect alone. It is necessary for true occult work that the heart be used also. One of the greater of the “mysteries” can never be learned by the celibate, for he never stands as hand in hand with God a controller of a creative force.

(2) Is a purely vegetable diet indispensable to a high and serene spiritual life?

*Answer*—One might eat grass, grain and turnips, a million years,

but that *of itself* would not produce a high or serene spiritual life. All these things are aids, not necessities.

If the physical condition is such that animal food can be dispensed with, or without disturbing other people or neglecting the labor given, then it is wise to do away with it. The physical is thereby purified, making it less gross, material and animal like. But “one man’s meat is another’s poison.” Use that which seems the wisest to you. “It is not that which goeth into the mouth but that which cometh out that defileth a man.” The right thought, the proper motive, the true Will have more to do with true Occultism than any exterior acts or practices.

*From T.*—(1) Am I the result of a series of existences or a series of co-existences?

*Answer*—That which is known as you is the result of one continuous existence of an entity. Your present body and your soul (or the personality) are the results of a series of existences. Your Karma is a result of co-existence. The individuality, or spirit, is the cause of the soul and personality, or what is called “you.” You are the manifestation of an entity and are the result of many appearances of that entity upon this stage of action in various personalities.

(2) May one walk for any distance along the Path without being able to see into the Astral Light, or without recognizing anything extraordinary?

*Answer*—One may journey an entire life time on “The Path” and not see into the Astral Light *consciously*. All men see into it, for all who dream are looking there, the body being asleep and not receptive.

One may journey a long distance and not see, for all do not work in the same manner. Some may hear “ages before they see,” or may feel a long time before either seeing or hearing. The tool most efficient at a certain period is the one used.

We may journey the entire way without recognizing anything extraordinary or encountering phenomena. The most extraordinary things are found in the most ordinary, and are overlooked because of their seeming familiarity. When the understanding is directed to the natural, one finds the supra-natural or supra-human things.

All questions are vital so long as they remain unsolved but all will be answered. It requires patience in ourselves, for many times the

answers do not come until years after the question has been propounded. If I can be of further use to you please consider me at your service

*From J. V.*—“There are two ways to ascend and descend, the direct and indirect.” *Tea Table*, Oct. PATH, (1) What are these ways?

*Answer*—The thistle down is blown hither and thither with every breath of wind: The arrow speeds straight to the mark from the powerful bow.

The indirect way is that of the thistle down; the Astral going out when the body is asleep, does so in a diffused condition—a passive state—with no adequate force to control it or master unseen forces. It floats at the mercy of every current in the Astral, gleaning here and there as a butterfly but taking the good and bad indiscriminately. It may reach high spheres, but is more likely to remain in those nearest to the physical. This way is travelled by all when asleep, and there dreams are made. It is the passive state where desire is the ruler, and is sometimes travelled in the waking conscious state, but is uncontrollable and unreliable.

The direct way is that of the arrow from the bow. The Astral speeds directly to the sphere which holds the knowledge it is to receive. It does so in obedience to an irresistible force—the Will: Will in accordance with divine law. It is concrete going and returning in obedience to this force, bringing little with it from intermediate spheres other than that for which it is seeking. This occurs in dreamless slumber and the knowledge acquired is not communicated in a dream. This way is travelled in the conscious state for it is the way of the student of the Occult. Unless the man’s thought and motive are pure, he is incapable of using the true will, and his Astral goes where other wills or forces drive it. It pauses when other forces interfere—learns from the place it happens to be in, and brings back a horrible jumble sometimes.

(2) Where do these ways lead?

One way leads to Theosophia—Illumination—when travelled awake or asleep.

The other to consideration of self—ordinary living with its

erroneous conceptions—as an Occult way, to love of phenomena and spiritism

They lead to spheres within the astral, for the astral body passes not beyond astral limits. Only when the soul is freed from the astral and material bodies does it pass to higher spheres. These ways also lead to planets, stars and other worlds, for all these may be within the astral of this globe.

ZADOK

*Path*, November, 1887

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*From C.H.V.*—Apollonius is said to have worn a mantle of wool to aid in insulating himself from the astral currents. Has wool in itself any such property as is seemingly ascribed to it? The question has this value, perhaps, whether the occult laws which govern the merely physical regulation of the toiler toward adeptship, may not be of great value from a sanitary point of view and form, if properly understood, a useful medical creed.

*Answer*—Wool in itself has no especial occult power. It is a nonabsorbent to the exhalations of the human body; is lighter, cooler in hot and warmer in cold weather than any other fabric. The late discoveries of a German scientist prove it the best of all materials from a sanitary point of view. It is a conductor for electricity and other unseen forces. Apollonius, as well as other occult students, knew its value and uses. Being a student of nature's laws he was well aware of nature's requirements. Upon the knowledge gained by occult students touching the human body are founded all the schools of medicine. Bathing is essential, a woolen dress where permissible, as little animal food as possible, a sparing diet at best—a high ideal—an exalted motive and strong will, a total forgetting of self otherwise, and neither elementals or human beings will oppress one.

*From J.C.V.*—What is the true Will? Is it a faculty of the soul? How is it one with the Divine Will and how may we make our will at one with the Divine? Is it something which now we know not, or may we perceive its germ in our own Will, or is it an instinctive movement of the soul?

*Answer*— (1) The will as known to man is that force which he

exerts for the accomplishment of his aims—he uses it blindly and ignorantly—and self is always the one for which he uses it. It is used as a brute force. As ordinarily used it has little tendency to lift the personality farther than the attainment of material results. It has for its source, the lower elements of the soul. The true will is a concentrated force working steadily yet gently, dominating both soul and person, having its source in the spirit and highest elements of the soul. It is never used for the gratification or self, is inspired by the highest of motives, is never interposed to violate a law, but works in harmony with the unseen as well as the seen. It is manifested through the human will for things visible.

(2) It is more than a faculty of the soul, for it is the soul at work. The spirit is unmanifest except through the soul. The soul manifesting the spirit is the true will. The human will is the lowest form of this manifestation.

(3) As the true will is the manifestation of the spirit through the soul, it must be at one with the divine, inasmuch as the spirit is the divine in man. It is the God in man, a portion of the all-pervading. Asserting itself through the soul, the true will is brought forth and in truth we say, "It is the will of God." We may make our finite wills at one with the divine by elevating our aim, using it for good or in the search for God, in striving to find how to use it in harmony with the laws of God. By proper use in the right direction the human will becomes purified, elevated, and being exerted only in conformity with our highest ideal, eventually becomes at one with the highest in man.

In our ordinary material state we know only the human will. Through the human will we reach the divine will. We become aware of the true will through the ordinary will just as we become aware of the soul through the body. It is not instinctive of the soul. The soul is father of the human will—the spirit is father of the true will.

*From E.L.T.*—"A great deal depends on purity of thought and motive," Oct. PATH, p. 220.

Please explain what should be the actuating motive in developing psychic capacities.

*Answer*—The desire to find God, the desire to know one's self, our possibilities and capabilities, that we may be of true use to the world, these are the motives. The thought should be unselfish, undisturbed by material affairs—free from wonder-seeking curiosity, concentrated, and in entire accord with the motive, the search for God.

Is Sinnett's explanation of the origin and extinction of "Intermediate Forms," accepted as being clear and satisfactory by the majority of students who are beginning the study of Buddhism?

*Answer*—By the majority who are *beginning* yes—but not by those who are advanced.

Sinnett claims that Kama Loka is (like earth) a condition of unsatisfied longings, progressive idealization. It might be the "ne plus ultra" at the time of entrance, but how after a period of years?

*Answer*—All these states may be entered into while in the body. The condition of unsatisfied longings does not cease except in Nirvana. Beyond a certain point the intellect is useless. Up to and at that point the intellect is increased in its powers. It is never decayed or paralyzed. It is useless because a better tool is used.

Do advanced students contemplate "Rupa Loka" and "Arupa Loka" as at present desirable conditions? If desirable then in what sense: absolutely or comparatively as regards earth life? Is Sinnett's statement of the entire satisfaction of the soul's longings, to be regarded as "Ex Cathedra," or is it only Sinnett's personal conception?

*Answer*—All states and conditions above the ordinary material are desirable. In the absolute sense, any "conditioned" existence is undesirable. "Advanced students" try to be free from desires. "Rupaloka" means *place of form*; "Arupaloka," *place of no form*. There are many Lokas.

His statements are his personal interpretation of the teachings he has received. Read Nov. PATH, p. 252.

Are we to understand that the "medium" who provokes a representation of phenomena from departed spirits is thereby riveting the chains by which the said "spirit" is held fast to low conditions?

*Answer*—Yes—as you use those words—but I do not call them "spirits."

Is Sinnett's use of the word "spirituality" to be used as synonymous with our word conscientiousness?

*Answer*—No.

Does he not rather use it in the sense of imaginative or intuitional capacity?

*Answer*—No.

How do Buddhists regard this faculty as compared with conscientiousness, self-sacrifice and integrity?

*Answer*—It is not a faculty. Conscientiousness, self-sacrifice, integrity, duty, are all portions of the whole, which is spirituality.

Do they not accord respect and honor to preponderance of intellect over purity of heart?

*Answer*—No, they honor intellect when governed by purity of heart.

How can I cultivate thought reading? The impressions received are involuntary.

*Answer*—By continual exercise of the power. By concentrated thought in obedience to the will. By purifying the thoughts as well as the body. But your aim must be higher than the mere acquirement of a wonder-working power, or you will fail. With all the power you possess concentrate your thought upon the object you desire, and receive that which is given by what is termed intuition.

*From M.E.C.*—What steps must I take to open the heart so as to exercise the Will for governing the Astral body?

*Answer*—There is but one way to open the heart. That is by living the life. It is a simple matter to govern the will, but this is not the true will. The governing of the Astral body is the smallest of the tasks of the true will. The will should be used to obtain wisdom, and when so used it will control the Astral body without effort. We should exert psychic powers only to benefit others, never to free ourselves from the disagreeable. Let your aim be to find God; your motive, to know yourself for the sake of Theo-Sophia and humanity: your desire, to help humanity, and the true Will will be developed, the heart opened and you will not only control the Astral body but all in the Astral. You must seek beyond the Astral for powers, but it is not wise to desire

the acquisition of powers. Let your aim be beyond that, and the powers will grow of themselves. If the strong-willed or sick depress you, seek to aid each in some way, forget that you are depressed, *forget your self* and they will not affect you. The life of the Occult student is full of sorrow, anguish and depressing influences. These go to make him a student in the Occult. A portion of his training is to become aware of these only in so far as they affect others. As to their affecting his own personality, he does not know they exist. If you desire to help humanity, then you possess the true motive. If you use your will in this cause, wisdom, peace and all the powers will be given.

ZADOK

*Path*, December, 1887

*From Walter L.*—(1) Is it well to cultivate the intellect at the expense of the heart? Do we not pay too much attention to intellectual progress, and in so doing allow the Heart-Mind to wander where it may?

*Answer*—It is not wise to cultivate either at the expense of the other. Each alone will end at the same place—The Threshold. Both are excellent means for the manifestation of that which is higher than either, when cultivated to their highest in unison. Both are useless after a certain point, except as tools for truth. Metaphysics, logic and emotion all end at a dead wall.

(2) Do not the words and teachings of Jesus, taken in their esoteric sense, point one (the) way to the Theosophic Path?

*Answer*—Taken in the sense he intended the people to take them, they lead to *the way*. Taken in the sense in which he desired his Disciples to receive them, they are teachings upon *the way*. Taken in their esoteric sense—as he knew them — they *are the way*. Were the wisdom of Egypt and India today blotted out from both the seen and unseen worlds—the true seeker would find in his teachings, *when rightly studied*, all the teachings of Isis and Buddha. As he received his instruction from Egypt, heired from India, it is more than probable that esoterically his teachings are identical with both.

*From F.F.*—Will the Devachanic period form an interruption to work

for humanity in the case of one devoted to this during earth life? Is Devachan then a rejuvenating, strengthening period necessary for us while in the bonds of flesh, and is the Elixir of Life the only escape from this egoistic period? May an answer be given to this?

*Answer*—As the Devachanic period is a result of work for humanity—the true and pure devachanic state being only thus obtained—it should form no interruption to such work. It only does become such when the soul is selfish enough to prefer Devachan to a continuance of work for other men, and even then to a certain extent the soul continues its work. There is rest in Devachan, but not idleness. As this state is frequently entered and passed through while yet in the body, it should be an aid, not a hindrance, to true work. In truth it is a state of reward, but in that state no rewards are received. There is no state up to Nirvana that can be an obstacle to work for humanity for those who are devoted to that work. The Elixir of Life is the only means by which we can pass beyond both Devachan and the thoughts of it; the Magnum Opus is the only thing that entitles us to it.

*From M.E.S.*—(1) Are the Astral and the lowest plane of mental life synonymous terms?

*Answer*—They are not. The impulses for all mental life originate beyond the Astral. The outer man with his mind interprets these as he conceives they should be. The lowest as well as the highest mental life may receive knowledge from the Astral, but it is not the Astral. All that all forms of mental life produce is indelibly impressed upon the Astral.

(2) Is the “rising above the Astral” in effect rising above the stings and approbation of public opinion?

*Answer*—For us, there is no public opinion. We know neither sting nor approbation. Rising above public opinion is merely rising above the material. Until men forget the material, they can not rise above self. Until they forget self, they can not rise above the Astral: All things that please as well as those that distress men are in and through the Astral. Rise above both.

*From M./G.*—Whence come the visions seen just before dropping to sleep? They are uncontrollable—sometimes unpleasant, and have increased since childhood, and since beginning the study of Occultism.

*Answer*—When we enter that condition called sleep, we open wide the doors and windows of the body or this house we live in, and the soul goes forth as a bird freed from its cage. In partial unconsciousness or falling into sleep, the body has, to a great extent, ceased to act, but the brain is still sensitive or receptive to the pictures or impressions of the Astral. Of the lower principles the Astral is the last to cease action either in sleep or death. The brain is its instrument. In the partial somnolent condition, the pictures of the Astral are conveyed to the brain; through that the outer man realizes and beholds the visions. If he were fully asleep these visions would be dreams. Precisely, as dreams, they may be either pleasant or the reverse. Like dreams they are uncontrollable by the ordinary every day mortal. The Occultist being master of himself beholds only that which he desires, either in vision, or dream, or neither. As one makes himself more sensitive to impressions from the Astral when and after he begins the study of Occultism, visions and dreams will increase in frequency for a time.

ZADOK

*Path*, January, 1888

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*From Adelphi*—A most perplexed individual is writing to you. I have been for three years endeavoring to study Theosophy. I have heard lectures, have read an immense amount of literature devoted to that cult, from the sages of old down to the Sinnetts, Olcotts, and Blavatskys of the present day. I have conned the Yoga Philosophy and I read THE PATH. *Light on the Path* aids me not, nor does *Bhagavad Gita*, and why? Because I am yet without the first steps towards practice. (Surely Theosophy—like other sciences—must have *something* practical about it?) Guide me with your friendly hints. Imagine me alone in a room. How to commence? Show me the first step upon the practical ladder! All I have heard and read seemeth to me so elaborately unintelligible that I lay it aside and beg you to instruct me in my Theosophical ABC, Astral Light! Is it a figurative light, *i.e.* Revelation? or is it a light, as electricity—the Heavens-coal—gives light? If abstraction (into insensibility) is necessary, can you instruct me upon Hypnotism (self mesmerism)? “A shining object” is advised to stare at! A mirror is a shining object, for instance. But of what avail to stare at a mirror and see reflected ugliness!

*Answer*—You say that for three years you have been endeavoring

to *study* Theosophy. Such being the case, you will meet with but little success. Divine Wisdom can not be a subject for *study*, but it may be an object of *search*. With the love for this same wisdom uppermost in our hearts, we ask you if it would not be wiser to lay aside the *study* of so called Theosophy and study yourself. Knowing yourself you know all men, the worlds seen and occult, and find Theo-Sophia. One cannot absorb Theosophy as a sponge does water, to be expelled at the slightest touch. Our conception of Theosophy is apt to be based upon the idea that it is an especial line of teaching—a larger, wider, and greater doctrine than others perhaps, but still a doctrine, and therefore limited. We must bear in mind that the true Theosophist belongs to no cult or sect, yet belongs to each and all; that he can find the true object of his search equally as well in the Hebrew bible as in the Yoga philosophy, in the New Testament equally as well as in the *Bhagav ad-Git a*.

You say you have “conned the Yoga philosophy.” This is not enough; merely to “con” it is not to know it. It is in fact a most practical system (if you refer to that of Patanjali), and one that will meet all requirements you have in the way of difficulty; for it is one of the most difficult. It is not possible for you to judge its merits without practice: and it gives full directions. If for three years you study and practice it—aye for one year—, you will find that you need no other. In these matters there is no child’s play nor the usual English and American method of mere book-learning,—we must absorb and work into the practice and the theory laid down, for they are not written merely for the *intellect*, but for the whole spiritual nature. There must be within the man something which he already knows, that leaps up and out when he scans the books of wisdom; a thing already existing, which only takes an added life or confirmation from books. True Theosophy has all that is practical, but many forget this; there is no greater system of practice than that required by it.

Desire wisdom; love all men; do your duty; forget yourself; let each thought and act of your life have for its aim the finding of divine wisdom; strive to apply that wisdom for the good of other men. If you search in every direction, Light must come to you. Let the place in

which you now are be the lonely room you speak of, and seek to find in everything the meaning. Strive to know what they are, and by what governed or caused. This is the first step. Live your life with this ever before you. Purify your thought as well as your body. Reason all you can, feel all with your heart you may, and when intellect and heart fail you, seek for something higher. This is the A.B.C.; it is enough for the present.

It is not Theosophy that is a science, but its application. It is not a “cult,” for it covers and includes all.

The Astral Light is an actuality. It is not revelation, but a means through which that which causes revelation acts. Electricity, the heavens, all lower fires, are but the shadows of the Astral Light, just as the Astral Light is but the darkness of the Ineffable Light.

Abstractions into insensibility is not intended. If it had been so intended it would be unnecessary for us to be in these bodies. If you can forget yourself sufficiently—forget that you exist as a human body, you will not need to stare at a mirror; but so long as you realize, when staring into a glass, whether you be pretty or ugly, you can not reach Celestial sensibility or terrestrial insensibility.

Hypnotism is the controlling of other personalities. Under this you would be but a puppet for the thought of another. Your outer self had better become a puppet for your own thought.

We seek to make the body alive, not to kill it.

ZADOK

*Path*, February, 1888

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*To Zadok*—Suppose persons have reason to believe they have found the beginning of the Way, and then find they do not care to investigate the mysteries of Occultism; that they are content to remain without knowledge on these subjects, though they found Truth through Theosophy, and that they are happy because they feel that whatever God orders in their lives must be right, whether it is pleasure or pain.

Suppose also that such persons, though having put themselves in a spiritually receptive condition, feel no weight of Karma, though willing to

suffer to whatever extent is needed from it. Do you not think such persons may be deceiving themselves in thinking they are Theosophists, when they have lived many weeks in this condition? Do you think it harder for women to attain spirituality than men? and if so, still should they not strive all the more to obtain it? I know we should not avoid anything merely because it is irksome or uninteresting.

Do not Theosophists allow themselves to feel happy if happiness comes to them without their desiring it? Also why do Theosophists wish to avoid feeling pain or pleasure, if God orders the circumstances which produce them, after we have subjected our will to His?

Please answer in your next issue of *THE PATH*. L.

*Answer*—Men attach an erroneous meaning to Occultism. If one has found the beginning of *the Way* he has found sortie of the mysteries of Occultism, for none find *the Way* until they find something of the Unseen. It is impossible for one to put himself in a spiritually receptive condition without “*investigation*” of or being under the sway of Occultism or Occult conditions; and it is through these same conditions that he knows that pain and pleasure are one and all wise. Karma does not always manifest itself as suffering, by any means; it is quite as likely to produce joy as sorrow, and Karma is not always weighty. Such persons of whom you speak may be trying to become Theosophists, but are not Theosophists. A seeker for Divine wisdom seeks in all directions and refuses none.

(2) It is as hard for man as for woman to enter the mysteries. Man works through the intellect, woman through the emotions or heart. Both are equally useless after a time, and of the two the heart is the better tool. But woman becomes engrossed or overwhelmed by her emotions, and passes no farther. The greatest Teachers have been those who have had most of the womanly in their natures. It is more difficult to master the body as a woman than as a man. This can be answered only partially in print.

(3) The *True* Theosophist allows himself, or *is taught* to feel, both pain and pleasure, happiness and sorrow, for he knows them all to be wise. Men long for and desire; they fight for happiness and do not find it. We have given to us peace, which is far beyond happiness. Happiness is of this world and is a mockery of the True; yet as all

other men we feel it, for we feel all things, for in all these things lie the lessons to be learned as men. I dare not speak for other men, but were I to wish to avoid either pleasure or pain, knowing them to be God's will, then would I utterly fail. Once having subjected *my* will—my human will—to His, then I avoid nothing that *is* His will.

*To Zadok*—(1) Why, since the Deity chose of His own divine will to make the descent into matter, or—as some put it—by this process alone came to Him a realizing sense of His being, in the manifestation through and by matter, why should this be considered a “fall,” or, indeed, *an evil at all*, since, being the work and choice of the Deity, it must necessarily have been both wisdom and goodness which dictated the “descent”; and, as Theosophy teaches the inner Light and indwelling Emanuel (God with us) to be ever present in all forms of life, wherein consists the evil of this divine descent, and why must this *experience* be necessarily associated with evil at all?

(2) I met an F.T.S. the other day who believes he has arrived at “Saintship” and cannot therefore err. He cannot bear the slightest contradiction, believing that he has arrived at such a state of “enlightenment” that he is infallible, whereas we less gifted mortals feel that he often makes grave mistakes. Of course this assumption is untenable in this case, but are sainthood and consequent infallibility likely to result from the humdrum every-day life of an ordinary nineteenth century man?

*Answer*—For the Deity there is no fall. He can not fall. In the so-called descent into matter, He must manifest *through* something. Never does the Ineffable stand unveiled before mortal man. When the All Wise deemed it good to manifest Himself as individualities, He did so through the soul. After creating the human man with the soul that all things possess, “He breathed into his nostrils and man became a *living* soul,” or the Deity manifested Himself through the soul in the man. Nothing below man is immortal. Man is not immortal; his soul is not immortal; but the breath of God, which is God's life or God himself, *is forever*. Man was to have lived as the angels, “for they also were made”; but, although by the grosser elements of matter or nature; by its lusts and desires, its seductive beauties and deceptive pleasures, realized most fully through the senses of the human body, the *soul* was drawn *down* instead of upward, into *ignorance of the true* instead of toward the wisdom of God, holding and binding thus the spirit in the meshes of the grossest part of nature, and *so fell*. God did not fall,—the spirit; nor did man as the human man; but the soul, being a free

agent, did so, causing the spirit to be limited, and entailing pain and anguish upon the human man. Man with the Divine manifest in him was to know only the good, or wisdom; but, not content, he must eat of the *tree of the* KNOWLEDGE of good and evil, or the misapplication of the good, and *fell* into ignorance. There can be no greater evil than losing the wisdom of a God for the ignorance of a man. Herein consists the only evil of the *fall* after the descent into matter.

(2) How do you know that he makes grave mistakes? I may not say that anyone errs or makes mistakes, other than my own self. Neither you nor I may say another is saint or devil from our own standpoint of what makes either. Both you and I have been taught, however, that one who has arrived at the state of “Saintship” never lays claim to it or to “enlightenment.”

Saintship and a certain measure of infallibility will result from humdrum every-day life in the nineteenth century, and in no other way, if rightly comprehended. Otherwise one would not be here at all, or would have lived in some other time, before time was. To become a saint one must know what sinners are and what sin is. The best way to arrive at this knowledge is through the nineteenth century or the time in which we live, through life and all it tells us. Believing that one cannot err and in one's infallibility is however not a characteristic of saintship.

ZADOK

*Path*, March, 1888

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*From G.M.*—(1) During sleep I have a feeling that I can fly by an intense act of will. I then do float in dream over the ground, my body seeming rigid. The force exhausts, then I have to descend. What is your explanation of this?

*Answer*—It is part of the effort of your inner man to demonstrate to your outer self the existence and action of unrecognized and unfamiliar forces, which every man has in him the latent power to use. Dreamless slumber is better.

(2) In Theosophical books I find occult or magical phenomena referred to. I am disposed to reject these and consider their publication of a very

questionable character in light of matter for the improvement of intelligent seekers after truth. Still I do not deny them, and hold myself open for conviction in any direction.

*Answer*—Why then bother yourself with the phenomena of your dream state? The dream of flying is as much a phenomenon as any other that Theosophical literature contains. The proper attitude for true theosophists is not to be ready or anxious to bring conviction as to any phenomena to inquirers. Hence we cannot enter into proofs. We know personally that phenomena of a most extraordinary character have taken place, and are still occurring; we also agree with you that the constant publication of accounts of phenomena is unwise. Still it must sometimes be done, as some minds have to advance through the aid of these things.

We also know that the Masters who are behind the Theosophical Society have, in writing, condemned the thirst for phenomena made so often degrading, and stated that the Society ought to progress through its moral worth. One phenomenon can be seen by but a limited number of people, some of whom even will always doubt, and each one hearing of it afterwards will want a repetition for himself. Further than that, it would be certain to bring on a thirst for mere sight-seeing, resulting in a total forgetfulness of spirit. But, on the other hand, there are laws that cannot be guessed at without phenomena. And in each human being is a complete universe in which daily occur phenomena that should be studied. This is the proper realm for each student to investigate, for therein—and nowhere else—is placed the gate through which each one must advance.

ZADOK

*From G.B.*—Why does the Baron in Mr. Sinnett's "Karma" advise Mrs. Lakesby not to communicate with the "astral spectres" she saw about the Professor?

*Answer*—The answer to this will not yet be well understood. The English language has not acquired the needed words. The Baron's reply was that thereby the real ego of the deceased would be retarded in its advancement, and Mrs. Lakesby might lay herself open to influences from the astral world that would prey upon her unexpectedly.

This answer opens fire at once upon the whole "philosophy" of spiritualism, and contains a challenge of the ignorance of most seers and nearly every student of psychical laws. The ordinary spiritualist sees complete proof for the returning of deceased friends in the phenomena of the seance room, and nearly every seer is fascinated with his or her own pictures in the astral light and the absolute truth of what is seen.

Mrs. Lakesby did not see the spirit of any person, but only the *reliquae*. The *spirit* is never seen, and the soul is engaged in experiencing a certain portion of its deserts in other states. These states are unnameable and incomprehensible to English speaking people. But for a period there is a magnetic connection between that soul and the *reliquae* seen at seances and by seers. By means of that connection the soul is prevented—against its will, except when it is extremely wicked—from passing through its purification preparatory to entering into *devachan*. This purification, or preparatory state anterior to *devachan*, has not been explained by theosophical writers. It is nevertheless, a fact of the highest importance.

The second portion of the Baron's reply is also valuable. When a seer or medium perceives these shades of the departed and desires to communicate with them, a crowd of nature-spirits, of no moral character but solely moved by magnetic impulse, rush into the shade of the deceased and give it a temporary life. They too are then able, on their part, to see the seer or medium, and may and do often transfer themselves from the shade to the medium, whose lower, baser nature they occupy and vivify. By thus incorporating themselves with the *reliquae* of dead persons, these elementals stop the process of disintegration of the atoms of matter composing the shade, which would have gone on to completion if left to nature. As soon as this disintegrating process is inhibited, the soul itself is held, so to say, in a vise which it is powerless to open, and unaware as well from whence comes the disturbance. Thus, then, these who run after their deceased friends' shades or reappearances are each day condemning their loved ones to a longer and more painful stay in a state that closely corresponds to the Christian hell.

I know my words will sweep unheeded over the forest in which our spiritualistic friends are wandering, but some sincere students will believe me.

HADJI

*Path*, April, 1888

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*From M.C.D.*—I am told that an Adept has said “that one can help or cure another if his Karma does not prevent it.” Am I to understand that when suffering is before me I am not to relieve it if in my power to do so, on the ground that the suffering person’s Karma has brought him there and I must not interfere? Some Theosophists have enunciated this rule.

*Answer*— If an Adept said this it is not incorrect. But no Adept ever drew the conclusion you give. Some Theosophists have, we are sorry to say, declared that they may not help for the reason stated. It is not theosophical to take such a position. The sufferer’s Karma truly produced the suffering, but your Karma offers the opportunity for a kind deed that may relieve him; it may be his Karma to be relieved by you. It is your duty to do this kind act, of whatever nature it be. The meaning of the declaration attributed to the Adept is that you are to try to relieve suffering, which effort will have a beneficial effect unless the Karma of the sufferer prevents; but you know nothing of his Karma and must not judge it: your duty lies in the act presented to you for performance, and not with its result nor with the possible hindrances resulting from the Karma. The wrong view given by you in your question arises from the conceited attitude of persons who, having slight knowledge, presume to be the judges of others and of the great and hidden causes springing from Karma. Knowledge of these causes and of their operation in any particular case comes only to those who have reached Adeptship; for, in order to rightly judge how to rightly act, you must know absolutely the other’s Karma, together with your own, in order not to fall into the awful error of deliberately sinning. It would be wiser for all students to seek to do their duty and to act as true brothers on every occasion than to run about endeavoring to imitate Sages and Adepts.

MOULVIE

*From B.J.*—What can you tell me about the Mind Cure and Christian Science? Are they true, are they theosophical? Ought I to study them so as to be *mens sana in corpore sano*, as it were?

*Answer*—As we have not made a thorough study of these, we could not assume to tell you much about them, and hence cannot say if they are true or theosophical. Many earnest theosophists are believers and followers of both. We, however, have been trained in the Eastern theosophical school. Following the teaching of the latter, our advice is to have a healthy body by paying regard to rules for health, so that your mind, whether it be healthy or not, may exhibit its workings untrammelled. And the teacher has ever said, as taught by the Sages of old, that the body must not be *the object* of the student’s care. The same teacher also warned us that, as the body is a material thing, the proper remedies needed to counteract extreme discordant vibrations are also of a material nature. Our work lies not with your body, but with your mind and heart. See to it that the latter is right. The quantity and quality of mind that are yours may be little or poor, but even if great and good, the heart and soul are greater, and mind has its limits beyond which it passes not.

MOULVIE

*Path*, June, 1888

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A change of circumstances having made it necessary for ZADOK to remove to another sphere of action, no more answers to queries will appear from his pen. Queries, however, will be answered to the best of the ability of one or two others who have agreed to undertake the work, and they may be addressed to the *PATH* as usual.

*From F.N.W.*—(1) What is the difference between the *Esoteric Society of Boston* and the *Theosophic Society*, and is that difference very serious?

*Answer*—The last clause of the question shows that the questioner probably means “disagreement” instead of “difference.” There can be no disagreement, inasmuch as the Boston Society is no part of the Theosophical Society. By reading the objects of the Theosophical

body and those of the Boston Society, any difference which may exist may be discovered. I cannot say if there be any, as I know nothing of the latter.

WILLIAM Q. JUDGE

General Secretary, T.S.

(2) Do members of the T.S. practice the method of regeneration propounded by Hiram E. Butler?

*Answer*—I cannot say. The T.S. imposes no “method of regeneration” on its members; it only asks them to cultivate and exemplify Universal Brotherhood. As to a method of regeneration, it would seem that there can be but *one* regeneration.

(3) Do members of the T.S. accept “Solar Biology” as a real science?

*Answer*—There may be some who do. The term “Solar Biology” is an example of the ability of the American mind to strain English terms out of their usual meaning. Ordinarily it would mean some biological effect produced by the sun of our system, or, as equally, biologizing the sun himself. Since, however, acceptance of a particular dogma or system is not required of members of the Theosophical Society, one should not waste any time in trying to find out whether persons who are members believe in certain isms or sciences. The same amount of time devoted to a careful, cold, and passionless scrutiny of our own outer and inner nature will lead us nearer to compliance with the old direction, “*Man, know Thyself*” This is *the only science* worth knowing, for, as the old sacred books say, “In the heart of man are all things, sun, moon, and stars, all is contained within it.”

MOULVIE

*From L.C.*—What are the “peace” and the “voice of the silence” spoken of in *Light on the Path*? Are they easy to attain to?

*Answer*—The peace is that period succeeding a storm set up in your nature by any attempt to conquer the lower self. It follows each

such conflict if the battle has been waged to victory for the higher. But few modern men can wage the battle with more than one thing at a time. Hence, we have many such storms. Each peculiarity, passion, or propensity has to be attacked singly and overcome. When that happens, a period of inner silence arrives in which the soul grows and attempts to instruct us. This is the voice. And, as *Light on the Path* says (Rule 21 part i), “It cannot be described by any metaphor.” The silence has its counterpart in nature when, after storms or cataclysms, *silence* occurs. The silence after a storm is due to the effect of water falling through the air upon earth, vegetation, insects, and animals, and to the peculiar results of loud reverberations of thunder. All these combine to produce a silence quite appreciable by any one accustomed to nature. And when a cataclysm takes place, such as the falling of a tremendous avalanche of snow, another sort of silence is brought about, during which many things in the astral and natural world not at other times evident can be perceived. Each of these silences comes to an end because the ordinary normal operations of nature reassert themselves. So it is with ourselves. Storms of disappointment, or terrible upheavals from tremendous sorrows, or the effect of our own intense will, bring about those silences in which the voice of the soul has perchance a better opportunity of being heard.

MOULVIE

*Path*, July, 1888

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A. C. R. asks if a long definition of Karma given in the letter is in harmony with the Asiatic definition.

*Answer*—We do not think that the definition of A.C.R. is good, for the reason that it is not clear what is meant. One thing is certain, and that is that Karma is the governor of all our circumstances, and is also in part a cause of acts, and is again the act and the circumstance also. The Universe itself is the Karma of the Supreme. Karma means work or action, and, as action is performed in more ways than by the bodily organs, the field of Karma must not be limited to the body. As A.C.R. says, the most important thing to consider is how we think

and what is the motive with which we do any act.

On the subject of Karma the sect of Visishadwaitas of India say:

Karma is the cause of connection of Jivatma—or the particular spirit—with matter in the shape of Karanasarira, as well as the cause of misery or happiness. Karma is the producing cause of birth, death, rebirth, and every kind of body. Karma is the result of the conscious action of Jivatma, whether good or bad. Good Karma is that which results in pleasing, and bad Karma is that which results in displeasing, Ishwara. [He is held to be the particular spirit in each body—our Higher-Self.] The action of Jiva produces Karma through ignorance, and this ignorance is of two sorts: one the confounding of the attributes of one thing with those of another; and the second the confounding of one thing with another. Thus, the Jivatma first confounds the body with itself, and then such attributes as birth, death, and so on, with the attributes which really belong to Jivatma only; then certain actions are done, and they lead to other Karma composed of ignorance and of habit. Thus Karma works without any definite beginning, and the causes of Karma mentioned above remain latent during a pralaya or night of Brahma, and when a new evolution begins they again become active and produce results as before.

Karma even works in Swarga or heaven, for, as soon as the causes that take us there are exhausted, we are brought back to rebirth under the operation of Karma; thus it is seen to be stronger than the blissful state of Heaven. This going to and returning from Swarga goes on until salvation is obtained,—one who attains that state is called Jivanmukta. This condition is defined as “an entire separation of Jiva from all connection with matter, and complete destruction of Karma, whether good or bad.” The word *Moksha* literally means “release from bondage.”

NARAYAN NILAKANT

*Path*, November, 1888

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*From L.—(V)* What plan of life should a theosophist adopt? Take one who does not aspire to chelaship, but who is anxious to live rightly. Should he give up literature, or music, or art; and ought he to give up thoughts of marriage?

*Answer*—The plan of life should be that which shall appear to the student the best one under his lights; any sort of life may have as a

plan under it the good of the race. It is not required that literature or art should be given up: theosophy seeks to round men out and not to produce moral skeletons. As to marriage, we have nothing to say.

(2) *Is Light on the Path* written for chelas alone or for all?

*Answer*—It was written for all who strive to understand the meaning *under* the language; its real sense is not that conveyed by the mere words in it.

(3) Why do so many warn against rashly attempting chelaship? If it is right, why not for all? Will it be easier in some future life, or will it be always a struggle? If the necessity for leaders makes it right for some to essay this, how is one to tell which is his duty, to try or not?

*Answer*—The reason for the warning has been given over and over again. A chela calls upon himself awful possibilities of disaster, and voluntarily exposes himself to the most pitiless foes the race has,—those within the mind's plane and in the astral world. These are not figments, and every one who forces himself must meet the consequences, for the kingdom of heaven is surrounded by monsters, and the way to it is enveloped with the black cloud of the soul's despair at a place where knowledge, power, and faith are needed, and where sentiment plays no part.

The road winds up hill all the way even to the very end; but in this life we may prepare ourselves to be ready to make a farther advance in our next reincarnation.

Any one who *is* to be a leader will easily find that out. We are not to try and discover that we are leaders, but to do our every duty; if they are performed, the Law of Karma will find those who are the real leaders, and all sham captains will disappear.

A STUDENT

*From “An Outsider”—in England*—If I write to you sometimes anonymously, will you answer? There must be many like myself, lonely and ignorant, who need help and might find it in the *PATH*. My health is poor; how can I regain it? I have not the “superb audacity” you speak of.

*Answer*—Those who answer questions for us will attempt replies

to all reasonable questions, but we *are not an oracle*. As to health we cannot say; each case is special, but cheerfulness and faith in the implicit justice of Karma and in the Great Souls who help all earnest students may give better health. All diseases begin within, but the way to health is not found by brooding on disease; some diseases proceed from causes generated in other lives, and may have a given period during which they run and cannot be stayed. But we cannot go into personal questions relating to the physical body's ailments.

*Maggie Crawford* writes stating that she judges the truth of theosophic doctrine by the characters of those who promulgate it, and that she finds Mme. Blavatsky an objection to the truth of theosophy. Charges are brought against other prominent persons who are named by her A, B, and C; we cannot notice these, as they are anonymous, or rather straw defendants. But as to H. P. Blavatsky, we desire to say to the questioner that we have known her many, many years and think her character is not ungoverned nor uncontrolled; we also know her to be generous and just, as well as wise and far-seeing. But truth must never be judged by any personal standard; and we advise our friend to pursue truth for its own sake, and not because any person says it is true.

JASPER NIEMAND, WM. BREHON, EUSEBIO URBAN

*Path*, February, 1889

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*From Hadji*—What is the meaning of newspaper references to Mme. Blavatsky thus: "Theosophy, too, despite the exposure of Mme. Blavatsky's impudent impostures is still flourishing.?"

*Answer*—In 1885 the London Psychic Research Society took upon itself to investigate the alleged letters from Adepts received by Mr. Sinnett and others in India, and sent out a young man named Hodgson to inquire into facts that had happened months and years before. He reported that they were all frauds by Mme. Blavatsky, and that she had a tremendous combination of conspirators ramifying all over India. His report was published by the P. R. Society. It is so

preposterous however, that no well-informed Theosophist believes it. The newspapers and superficial thinkers often refer to it. Mr. Hodgson, in addition to inventing the great conspiracy theory, was full of prejudice which he has since displayed in various cities of the United States by declaiming against H. P. Blavatsky although he says she is not worth pursuing.

*Path*, May, 1889

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*From C.N.* (1) Is there a "Parent" Theosophical Society?

*Answer*—Strictly there is not. Such a term would imply a separate parent body which gave out Charters or Diplomas. The Society is composed of its members who are, for administrative purposes, in Branches or unattached; the latter are called "members-at-large," but all are fellows of the T.S. The government is in the General Council, which now meets in India, in which all sections of the Society have a voice, and which issues charters and diplomas. But aside from Branch members and those at-large, there is no parent Society. The term "parent" should be abandoned, as it implies separation.

(2) Is there an Esoteric Section of the Society in America different from that governed by H. P. Blavatsky?

*Answer*—There is not, and there never was. In the first establishment of the T.S. other degrees than that of a mere diplomaed member were recognized, but no one save H. P. Blavatsky has had the authority to confer those degrees. She has now fully announced the first of those, although during all these 14 years they have existed and included certain members who were also fellows of the T.S.

Some misguided persons may have pretended to confer those degrees, but such a thing was improper on their part, and absolutely worthless to the recipient. These real degrees in occultism may not be trifled with, and yet they protect themselves because pretenders and triflers can make neither entry nor progress

In 1875 H. P. Blavatsky directed a certain fellow of the Society to attend to the needs of all the members of the T.S., who were then called "entered apprentices" by her, and her letter of that date is still

extant in which the present Esoteric Section was plainly referred to.

(3) Why has H. P. Blavatsky waited until now to so publicly proclaim the Esoteric Section?

*Answer*—As a matter of fact she has not so waited. In 1875 and since many knew of its existence and have been in it, and she has frequently spoken of it; but until now there have not been enough members interested in the realities of theosophy to justify her in a definitive statement and organization. These efforts have to proceed slowly; people must first be waked up and directed towards theosophical doctrines before it is wise to open up that which is plain to those who know how to use their intuition. But the Western mind, for all its boasted progressiveness, is generally unable to know what is behind a wall unless a hole is cut through it: others, however, can guess what is hidden when they perceive signs and sounds that are quite plain and made on purpose.

But for the first 14 years of a theosophical effort—periodically made in every century—the work of such persons as H. P. Blavatsky is always directed to preparing the ground, and then more open invitation is extended. It is so done in the last 25 years of each century.

HADJI

*From R.L.R.*—(i) What is a Nirmanakaya?

*Answer*—Such is one of the appellations give to an Adept who, in order to devote himself to mankind, has consciously given up his right to pass into Nirvana. He has no material body, but possesses all the other principles; and for such an one space is no obstacle. There are many of them, and they perform various works; some take full possession of great reformers, or statesmen who carry on a beneficial policy; others overshadows sometimes several persons, causing them to act, speak, and write in such a way as to produce needed changes in their fellow men. These Nirmanakayas pass through the haunts of men unseen and unknown; only the effects of their influence and presence are perceived, and these results are attributed to the genius of the individual or to chance alone.

(2) Has a Nirmanakaya any sex?

*Answer*—No. The pronoun “He” has been used because it has a general application just as “man” or “men” has. In such a development as that of a Nirmanakaya the distinctions of sex have disappeared, because in the spiritual plane there is no sex.

MOULVIE

*From T.D.*—If there be any defect in the Mind Cure system, what would you say it is?

*Answer*—I should say the constant assertion that there is no evil or badness is that prime defect. For if one so asserts, he should also admit that there is no good. These two oppo-sites stand or fall together; and they cannot disappear until all has passed to that plane which is above all good and all evil. Yet those who say that there is no evil are on the plane of consciousness where they perceive these two opposites. It appears to me that here in the Western world the old Hindu doctrine that all is illusion because impermanent is half-used. The illusionary quality is attributed only to so-called “evil,” whereas the good is equally illusionary, since it as well as evil is so judged to be from some human standard. As in a community in which death is a blessing disease will be called “good,” since it hastens death’s advent; or, in another where insanity is supposed to be due to the presence of some god, such a condition is not esteemed to be evil.

NLLAKANT

*Path*, June, 1889

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#### ARE THERE NEW SOULS? WHY REINCARNATION?

*M.E.A.*—We all know that the population of the earth is increasing yearly, and that in time this globe will not be able to support its population unless the future inhabitants can get along on air. Does Theosophy teach us that new souls are created? Each one of these future unfortunates must have a soul. Will the PATH please explain?

*Answer*—There are some assumptions in this inquiry about which no one has positive information. It is not settled that the population “is increasing yearly.” For the apparent increase may be only a more

accurate knowledge of the number of inhabitants, following from a more accurate knowledge of the globe on which we live. For instance; we have only lately acquired information of vast quantities of people in Africa previously unheard of.

Nor does it follow that the earth will not be able to support its population in time. A great many well-informed persons think exactly the opposite. Not very long ago several millions of people were destroyed in China, Japan, and elsewhere in a single week; this would leave a good deal of room for a population—in the United States for instance—to expand. Hence the question is narrowed down to the single one—“Does Theosophy teach us that new souls are created?” Mme. Blavatsky answers this in the *Secret Doctrine* by stating that from now until the end of this period of manifestation there will be no new Monads (which will answer to the word “souls” of the questioner), but the old ones will be reincarnated on this globe. If her view is the correct one, then the reincarnations from now onwards will be incarnations of Monads who have been here many times before. That is to say, we will all be worked over many times. This opinion of Mme. Blavatsky’s is held by many Theosophists.

If we started as spirit and therefore perfect, why need we these reincarnations of suffering, only to finally attain what we started with?

*Answer*— This is the old question, the old inquiry, “What has the Absolute in view, and why is there anything?” The question contains its own answer, for if we started as “spirit,” and therefore “perfect,” we must still be and so remain forever perfect. But in the *Upanishads* it is said that “These radiations from the Great All are like sparks from a central fire, which emanate from it and return again for its own purposes.” Furthermore, there is nothing more distinctly and frequently taught in Theosophical literature than this, that it is the personal, the illusory, the lower “I,” who asks such questions as these, and that the real person within, the spirit, sees no such thing as suffering but rejoices forever in immeasurable bliss. “We” did not start perfect, but imperfect, and “our” progress to union with spirit is the perfection of the lower “we” and “our.”

*Path*, April, 1890

## THE ENQUIRER

*Query*—Is it well to talk about Occultism to the ordinary enquirer into Theosophy?

*W.QJ.*—It is better not to do so. Ordinary enquirers may be attracted to Theosophy because of its mysterious appearance, but that is no reason for giving them just what they demand. For surely later on they will find that the pursuit of the mysteries and the occult is hedged about with many difficulties and that it demands an acquaintance with every other philosophy that ought to have been offered to them when they first enquired. Furthermore it is not the many who are fitted for Occultism, but rather the few, and those few will soon find their way into the path no matter how they may have approached it. Enquirers will then be directed to this philosophy and the ethics of the Theosophical system, as true Occultism springs from philosophy, and its practice is alone safely possible for those who have a right system of ethics.

*Query—How* is it that H.P.B. so severely criticizes the Western systems of Occultism and yet admits in some of her writings that they lead to the same end as the Eastern system?

*W.QJ.—li* is very true that all systems of Occultism lead to the same end, since all must be based on similar principles however distorted some may be in practice, but the road by one will be more difficult than by another until the real highway of Universal Occultism is reached. It was thought by H.P.B. that true Eastern Occultism was the primeval system and hence better than the Western. For the Western is all overgrown with the weeds sown by Judaism in the beginning and mediaeval Christianity in the end. So it will be found that although at bottom Western Occultism has the same doctrines as the Eastern, a vast mass of rubbish has to be carried off in order to

get at the truth. Any one who will dive into Rosicrucianism will find those difficulties. It must always be borne in mind too, that H.P.B. in speaking of Eastern Occultism had in view the real thing and not the many systems in India which would juggle the student quite as much as the things in the Western schools.

Speaking for my own beliefs, I do not think Western Occultism is worthy of the name and is only a hodge-podge that produces confusion when the mere outer crust of virtuous living is mastered. It leads to saintliness but not to that higher knowledge which must be added to the good in order to make them also the wise.

*The Vahan*, June 15, 1891

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*W.P.*—I am very much interested in Theosophy and should like to help the Society. What work can I do?

*W.Q.J.*—This is a Theosophical business question. Service is rendered in many different ways: by work in the Branches, by spreading literature, by explaining the doctrines and doing away with misconceptions, by contributing money to be used in the work, by constituting oneself a loyal unit if ability and time be lacking; and chiefly always by acquiring a knowledge of Theosophical doctrines so as to be able to give a clear answer to inquiry. One could also procure some inquiring correspondent and by means of letters answer questions as to Theosophical literature and doctrines. These are all general answers, while the question requires almost a personal examination. Any work that is sincerely done in the Society with good motive and to the best of one's ability is good Theosophical work.

If another by altruistic service benefits one, is not such action vicarious and inconsistent with Karma?

*W.Q.J.*—A common error, which arises from incompletely viewing the doctrine of Karma, is the idea that we interfere with Karma when we benefit another. The question is equally applicable to the doing of any injury to another. It cuts both ways; so we might as well ask if it is not inconsistent with the law and vicarious for one to do any evil act which results harmfully to a fellow creature. In neither case is there

vicarious atonement or interference. If we can do good to our fellows, that is their good Karma and ours also; if we have the opportunity to thus confer benefits and refuse to do so then that is our bad Karma in that we neglected a chance to help another. The Masters once wrote that we should not be thinking on our good or bad Karma, but should do our duty on every hand and at every opportunity, unmindful of what may result to us. It is only a curious kind of conceit, which seems to be the product of nineteenth century civilization, that causes us to falsely imagine that we, weak and ignorant human beings, can interfere with Karma or be vicarious atoners for others. We are all bound up together in one coil of Karma and should ever strive by good acts, good thoughts and high aspirations, to lift a little of the world's heavy Karma, of which our own is a part. Indeed, no man has any Karma of his own unshared by others; we share each one in the common Karma, and the sooner we perceive this and act accordingly the better it will be for us and for the world.

What place have mercy and forgiveness in Theosophy, and are they consistent with Karma?

*W.Q.J.*—Mercy and forgiveness should have the highest place in that branch of Theosophy which treats of ethics as applied to our conduct. And were it not for the perfect mercifulness of Karma—which is merciful because it is just—we ought long ago to have been wiped out of existence. The very fact that the oppressor, the unjust, the wicked, live out their lives is proof of mercy in the great heart of Nature. They are thus given chance after chance to retrieve their errors and climb, if even on the ladder of pain, to the height of perfection. It is true that Karma is just, because it exacts payment to the last farthing, but on the other hand it is eternally merciful, since it unerringly pays out its compensations. Nor is the shielding from necessary pain true mercy, but is indeed the opposite, for sometimes it is only through pain that the soul acquires the precise knowledge and strength it requires. In my view, mercy and justice go hand in hand when Karma issues its decrees, because that law is accurate, faithful, powerful, and not subject to the weakness, the failure in judgment, the ignorance that always accompany the workings of the

ordinary human judgment and action.

*G.E.L.*—I am a married man, without children, and my wife, who takes no interest in Theosophy, complains that I am neglecting her to attend Theosophical meetings or lectures in the evenings. Should I give up the lectures?

*W.Q.J.* — Justice to ourselves and those dependent on us would seem to answer that no wife has the right to demand the whole of a man's time. If she cannot attend a lecture or meeting once a week, she ought to be willing that her husband may. But if she considers herself the "legal owner" of the man she married to the extent that she wishes to eat up his entire attention, then of course dissatisfaction will supervene, unjustly founded and wholly inexcusable. If her complaint of neglect is based upon one night in a week devoted to a Theosophical meeting which she has no taste for, the man who submits is his own task-master, who ought not to ask other Theosophists to lay down his duty in daily life. Questions between man and wife ought to be settled in the family forum, and not dragged into the field of Theosophical discussion, where they are utterly out of place.

*The Vahan*, August 1, 1891

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*B.M.*—In both Europe and America, I have met a good many Theosophists who enquire into and appear to dabble in practical applications of the directions found in some of our literature, in the "*Upanishads*" and in a little book by one Sabapathi Swamy, respecting psychic development, by means of postures, regulating the breath and the like. What can be said upon this?

*W.Q. Judge*—*These* attempts at practical Yoga—as it is called—are most dangerous, and in addition presumptuous and foolish. It is well understood in the right circles in India, that the directions found in many of the *Upanishads* should never be practiced except under the following conditions: (*a*) a complete knowledge of all, and of the consequences, with a knowledge of correctives to be applied when changes take place; and (*b*) the possession of a thoroughly competent guide to point out errors, to restrain endeavour and to indicate danger, as well as to cure troubles that ensue. Yet in the face of all this, and of

repeated warnings, there are those who will foolhardily begin the practices in complete ignorance. They do not even pursue the ethical regulations that accompany all the other, such as the doing away with all vices, bad habits, uncharitable thoughts and so on; but go in for the practices, merely in the hope of procuring psychic powers. It is time it were stopped, and time that those who give out this literature looked into what they give out to a grasping and stiff-necked generation. That damage has been wrought both to the Society and some of its members cannot be contested, in face of actual experience in all parts of both countries. It is well known that these postures, even when ignorantly used, bring on physiological changes in the body, with great nervous derangements. Further than that the enquiring public is frightened off from our movement by the ill-balanced view of Theosophy and of the Society which these dabblers promulgate. Let us halt before it is too late. Let us give out the ethical and philosophical doctrines for the promulgation of which the Theosophical Society was founded. Thus alone can we accomplish our mission, which is to the world at large and not for the benefit of a few cranky investigators in a field than can only be safely trodden by the thoroughly prepared, the fully armed and the deeply experienced man who has a sound mind and high, pure aspirations, joined to a sound body.

*The Vahan*, January 1, 1892

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*E. W. B.*—Is it correct for Theosophists to postulate that a "phase of Idolatry is necessary for the poor in mind?" I made and still make a very strong objection to any phase of Idolatry being necessary.

*W.Q.J.*—Common-sense, truth, discrimination and right rules of life all seem to declare that idolatry is not necessary for the Western world; but we cannot judge the mind of the East any more than we can understand why a Western hero-worshipper should indulge in such a practice.

*G.W.R.*—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 predominant 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 Visishadwaitism which says that “Good Karma is that which is pleasing to Ishwara (the Ego), and bad Karma that which is displeasing to it.”

*P.C.W.*—If animals do not reincarnate, how do they receive a just reparation for the life of suffering which some have to endure?

*W.Q.J.*—The answer is easy. They do reincarnate, but that which from them goes forth to reincarnation is not similar to the reincarnating principle of the human being. Were we to suppose that the monads now going through the present animal life were reincarnating in a haphazard way, then surely law disappears, our philosophy tumbles to the ground, and a reign of terror in the scheme of evolution ensues.

*F.J.D.*—What is the difference between forms seen in dreams or vision on an astral plane and those seen on a Kama-Manasic plane? And which of the two are considered as having the greater objective reality? If Kama-Manasic forms accompany Devachanic consciousness, how is this connected with the Higher Ego?

*W.Q.J.*— Forms seen in dreams and visions are almost always pictures; those on the Kama-Manasic are more often actual forms of that sort of matter. The difference—when existing—is that which there is between a photograph of a form and the form itself. The “forms” of Devachanic consciousness are not objective to us, but are to the being in the Devachanic state of consciousness. As the entity is not free—hence in Devachan—the mind creates for itself all its surroundings in every detail, and also thereby cultivates departments of the nature which could not be cultivated to the same extent elsewhere. The connection with the Higher Ego, as to which F.J.D.’s ideas are vague, is the same connection as in earth-life, only operating by a different channel.

*F.G.B.*—How am I to reconcile these two statements?—(a) The Seven planes of Cosmic Consciousness correspond to the Seven States of consciousness in man, (*S.D.* I. p. 199, O. Ed.; I. p. 221, 3rd Ed.); (b) The Seven States of consciousness in man pertain to quite another question (than the planes of Cosmic Consciousness), (*S.D.* I. p. 200, O. Ed.; I. p. 221, foot-note, 3rd Ed.)

*W.Q.J.*—Quotation (b) does not conflict with (a), as attempted to be shown in the question. On p. 199 the seven planes are said to correspond to the seven states of consciousness in man; the third note on p. 200 says that the reference in the diagram to the fourth plane and above includes—or refers to—the four lower planes of *cosmic* consciousness—which is a totally different thing from human consciousness—and that the three higher planes of *cosmic* consciousness are inaccessible to present human intellect; and that the seven states of *human* consciousness pertain to another question. Quite so, and quite plain. The querent left out the word “human” in quotation (b) thus making “a totally different question” of the matter, for there is a great difference between saying “human consciousness” and “consciousness in man.” The entire seven planes of cosmic consciousness must correspond with, and may yet not be the same as, the seven states of our present human consciousness for there is a radical dissimilarity between a *plane* and a *state*, for you may be in a certain state of consciousness and yet function on a plane quite different; as when the drunken man has all his consciousness in a *Kamic* state and functions with it on the earthly plane. Further, the seven states of human consciousness may perfectly well be our possession and not be developed for the race beyond the first four states of cosmic consciousness, its seven-fold character being potential with its own upper four divisions based on those of the cosmic. The confusion lies in the words *plane* and *state*.

*The Vahan*, May 1, 1892

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*S.M.*—I can believe in the idea of continual progress of the soul in higher spheres, but cannot understand the idea of its returning again and again to this same earth: can Theosophists give any reason for the latter?

*W.Q.J.*—Ought to be answered by politely requesting the querent to read what has been for years written hereupon, and after having digested it, then to see if the question is not answered.

*M.R.*—Is not the Brahmanical faith the antipodes of Universal Brotherhood, in that no one who is not born a Brahman can ever be received into their religion?

*W.Q.J.*—That faith is not such antipodes, for the Brahmanical

faith is not the same as the Brahmanical law of caste, now only a perversion of the actual and eternal divisions among men. Rightly understood and practiced, the real, the pure Brahmanical faith increases universal brotherhood and furnishes for Egos the right stream of heredity for future true progress. But nowadays it is corrupted and hence fulfils not its objects.

*The Vahan*, June 1, 1892

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*S.C.*—Can any one explain the following sentence, quoted from H.P.B. in the *Path* for June: “Those who fall off from our living human Mahatmas to fall into the Saptarishis—the Star Rishis—are no Theosophists.”

*William Q. Judge*—This is explained by the fact that there are two classes of beings able to influence mankind at large: the one being the “living human Mahatmas,” and the other the non-human beings, who, though not strictly in our stream of evolution, can and sometimes do affect certain human beings. For the purposes of this answer—but not at all as a full description—the Saptarishis, as meant by H.P.B., are in a very advanced class of elementals, able sometimes to communicate with man, and by their apparent knowledge to make him suppose them to be high spiritual beings regularly evolved from the human stage. But, in fact, they are not human spirits, but of the same character as some of the Devas of the Hindus, and only by accident, as it were, work to the real benefit of the race. That is to say, by communicating with them one is deflected from the normal line of human development. In some cases they have influenced certain mediums, who, being deluded, or rather dazzled, by the extraordinary experiences passed through, do not lean to the human side of spiritual evolution. On the other hand, the “living human Mahatmas” form the direct link with the human spirits of all degrees, who have charge of human spiritual evolution.

*The Vahan*, August 1, 1892

## THE STREAM OF THOUGHT AND QUERIES

### I

I have watched the stream of thought, the battalions of questions pouring along the channels that reach out from THE PATH, and am asked to put a few on these pages with some answers.

#### WHAT IS RESIGNATION?

In what way are we to understand this word, as it is used, for instance, on p. 35 of May PATH? If it is used in a special sense, that should be made clear.

This word was not used in a special sense. Theosophists should strive not to strain speech or specially allot terms. The English language has quite enough words to meet most of our present wants. The intention was to give the deepest meaning possible to the term. *Resignation* was used in the sense of a total mental resignation, not a mere appearance or pretence. We must do as commanded by Krishna, resign all interest in the event of things, and be able to say that any event whatever that comes to us is our just due. This is perfect resignation: it is difficult and yet easy to reach. We reach it by reflecting that the object of the soul is union with the Supreme Soul, and that all our desires grow out of our bodily nature alone. It is really the first step; as the author in the May PATH said, it is the one seldom thought of by students.

#### IS KARMA ONLY PUNISHMENT?

Karma is action. The law of Karma operates to bring about rewards as well as punishment. The man who is now enjoying a life of ease and wealth has obtained it through Karma; the sage who has attained to great knowledge and power reached them through Karma; the disciple drinking the bitter drops from the cup of failure

mixed the draught himself through Karma; Buddha's great disciple Magallana—greater than any other—was suddenly killed, apparently in the height of his usefulness, by robbers: it was Karma; the happy mother seeing all her children respected and virtuous dies the favorite of Karma, while her miserable sister living a life of shame in the same city curses God by her life because she knows not that it is Karma. The world itself rolls on in its orbit, carried further and further with the sun in his greater orbit, and grows old through the cycles, changes its appearance, and comes under laws and states of matter undreamed of by us: it is the Karma of the world; soon or late, even while revolving in its orbit, it will slowly move its poles and carry the cold band of ice to where now are summer scenes,—the Karma of the world and its inhabitants.

How then shall Karma be applied only to reward or punishment, when its sweep is so vast, its power so tremendous?

#### PICTURES AND SYMBOLS IN THE ASTRAL LIGHT

I have seen pictures and symbols of wonderful beauty in the Astral Light. A beautiful face surrounded with light . . . a head with wings which soon seemed to sink into my brain. Were these seen through the action of manas and buddhi ?

I do not think so. These beautiful things belong to a lower plane and are seen by several senses and departments of senses. Many different causes might have produced them. Today you might see the face of a woman or a child whom you will not meet for the next ten years and have never yet seen; or a long-forgotten and slightly-noticed object in the past of the present life may be suddenly opened to clairvoyant sight; again, there may be deeply laid in your nature mental deposits from long past lives, and these may tinge your visions. I cannot answer individual cases: such is the work of a vulgar fortune teller. Each one must with patience study his own experience through many years, carefully noting and verifying and eliminating as time goes on. Each person who has clairvoyance has his or her own special phase—and there are millions of phases; hence five separate clairvoyants may see five different pictures or symbols, all produced by one and the same cause; or four of them may see four different

pictures while the fifth sees the result of a combination of his own with the other four phases.

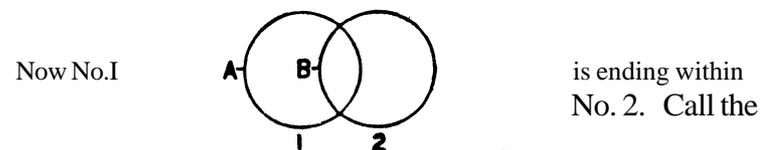
#### HOW DID THE SYMBOLS GET INTO THE ASTRAL LIGHT?

The world is so old that man's acts and thoughts for many millions of years have stamped the Astral Light full of pictures. But the Astral Light itself has cycles, tides, and changes, so those must be allowed for; it is useless to try to explain this, but in the changing of the cycles the symbols sometimes are mixed and interblended. When a class of elementals is fully developed and ready to run its appointed course from the beginning of an Age, there is a symbol for it that can be used until the complete decadence or extinction of that class, but at the change of certain cycles the symbol ceases to have power because that to which it once applied has altered and we know not the new symbol. You ask to know more about these symbols? It is not useful or necessary.

#### ABOUT THE CYCLES

I have heard and read much about cycles and their changes. I believe in cyclic law, and in the greater and lesser cycles, although I know them not. But are the cycles definite in limit, or are they shadowy?

Much that has been said on this subject is vague except as regards the number of years included in certain cycles. The lunar cycle and some others are known, but it is well to clear up some of the shadows. Many persons think of one cycle beginning, say today, just as another has ended. This, however, is not correct, for the cycles overlap each other, and before one has really closed another has begun. The best way to understand it is to draw two circles intersecting each other thus.



beginning of No. 2 at B, and it is seen that it had its inception

while No. i was finishing. The real point of ending for one and commencement for the other is probably at a point found by drawing a line through where the circles touch at top and bottom, and let the spaces on either side of that line be called the dawn and twilight.

Then, again, there are some important cycles which begin and end wholly within the limits of larger ones, and, in fact, it is these smaller cycles that we notice most, for they are more quickly felt. All of this relates to physical cycles; there are others of a higher and more spiritual nature very difficult to trace and comprehend. It may be partially understood by anyone who has observed a man working for several years at some occupation in itself not particularly elevating, but who at the end of this period has altered his mental attitude in such a degree as to vastly change his entire life and development. In his case the occupation represented a cycle of debasement or expiation, and all the while another cycle of a higher character was running its course in his mental and moral nature quite unknown to anyone else and perhaps also to himself. There are also great cosmic cycles that proceed slowly to our comprehension because they cover such stupendous periods, but they powerfully affect mankind and can only be faintly imagined by students.

The ancient Egyptian civilization illustrates the power of one of the greater cycles long since run down. That brilliant civilization rolled on through a vast stretch of years with no appearance of diminishing glory, but gradually the change took place. We can imagine the hopeless and frantic efforts of her sages to counteract the decay. But they were powerless, and Egypt gradually sank to the place where we find her blazing in the records so far discovered and yet then in her decline; and at last all that remains are sand heaps and degraded ignorant Copts.

But the sweep of that mighty cycle merely moved on to other spheres, and when Earth again meets the same impulse the old civilization will return, the old force revive within a better body.

To me the cyclic laws are full of hope and eminently just.

#### ABOUT BLACK AND WHITE MAGICIANS

How is one to recognize a black magician, and how to treat such as one ?

It has been well said by H. P. Blavatsky that “each one has a potential black magician within.” The black magician is the fruit and perfection of selfishness; selfishness is the triumph of the lower nature. The black magician is the opposite pole in human development to the white Adept, and the latter is the fruit and perfection of the highest qualities in man enjoined with entire communion with spirit; this is the triumph of all that is best in the human being; it is the conscious union with the divine. The black magician stands for self alone, and therefore for discord, separation, and destruction; the white one is the embodiment of union, harmony, and love. In the words of *Bhagavad-Gita* the white adept “is the perfection of spiritual cultivation,” and it must follow that the black one is the perfection of material cultivation. In this question, “black” represents self and “white” the spiritual whole.

The query then arises, “Why are there now only white magicians and merely embryo black ones?” We think there are but few black adepts existing today, but of the white school there are many. The age and the cycle have not yet come to that point where the black magician has blossomed, and it is easy to understand why there are perfect white ones. The question is answered in *Bhagavad-Gita* where it says, “At the night of Brahma the Jivanmuktas are not absorbed nor destroyed, but all others are; and at the coming forth of the new creation those Jivanmuktas (white adepts) come forth intact and conscious.”<sup>1</sup> This means that at the preceding pralaya—or dissolution—all the black adepts were destroyed; and as now but the first 5,000 years of Kali Yuga have elapsed, there has not yet been time to evolve enough full black magicians to make a sensible impression upon us. The first part of the question, therefore,—“How are we to treat a black magician”—is premature.

Each one of us may become a black magician if we let selfishness have its course, and hence we should ask ourselves, “How may we

<sup>1</sup>A free translation

prevent the possibility of our becoming black magicians in some future age?"

As to the latter part of the question regarding the treatment to be accorded to these as yet mythical beings, it also is very far ahead of time. If such an adept were to appear to you now, he would laugh your threats to scorn. But the sole and sovereign protection against such things and persons is a pure heart and right motive.

## II

### PRACTICING FOR OCCULT DEVELOPMENT

Several questions have been received on the subject of the best method to be pursued by members of the Theosophical Society for the development of occult powers.

This desire for such development cannot be commended. Such a desire, standing by itself, while seeming to the questioners to be of great importance, is really of the very least consequence for beginners or to the present state of the theosophical movement. The Society was not organized for the purpose of teaching the practice of occult arts, and it has been distinctly stated in a letter from one of the Masters, who are themselves fully acquainted with all the laws of occultism, that our body was never intended to be a hall of occultism or for the training of aspirants to chelaship. But in the face of that declaration and in spite of all that has been said and written in the magazines of the Society, there are numbers of members still thinking that they will be helped in such sort of study and practice, and who have for some time used what leisure they had in endeavoring to cultivate their psychic powers to the exclusion of work upon the lines laid down by the founders of the Society.

Further than this, some of these devoted students have been reading such works upon practical yoga—or Hatha Yogar—as they could procure, and trying to follow the rules laid down, notwithstanding the distinct caution in all such books that the practices should not be pursued by the student unless he has a competent guide and teacher to help and protect him on the way. Now as there are no such guides in the United States—but all here being alike mere tyros, students, or

probationers—it is evident that the very first rules have been violated.

All these practices and studies, so long as they are pursued merely for the powers to be developed, will lead to trouble only and greater ignorance. This is not because there is no truth in practical yoga, but solely from the method adopted and the pure selfishness of the aim before the mind.

WHAT, THEN, IS A SINCERE THEOSOPHIST TO DO? SHALL HE OR NOT PRACTICE YOGA?

We answer by saying that the sincere study of the philosophy and rules of Patanjali's Yoga System may be taken up by any theosophist—on one condition. That is that he shall, as a theosophist, try to carry out the fundamental object of the Society—Universal Brotherhood. In no other way can he receive assistance from any source. Altruism must be made the aim of life, or all practices are absolutely void of lasting effect. We do not speak from a mere theory but from experience; nor do we claim to have perfected altruism in ourselves, but only that, as far as possible, we are trying to make altruism the rule of life.

### THE OCCIDENTAL MIND IS NOT FITTED FOR YOGA

This may be stoutly denied, but what matters it? The fact remains patent to all that among western people there are few persons masters of any part of occult practice. Partial concentration of mind, even—the first step for any practical use of the recondite laws of nature—is conspicuously absent from our people. Altruism has been for so many centuries a dead letter, and individualism has been so much cultivated, that the soil has become almost barren. Western peoples are not even fitted to attain perfection in Black Magic, which is supposed to be easy to pursue, though in fact not so; but we are able to lay the seeds in this incarnation for further development upon the evil side of our nature in future lives. The practice of altruism as far as we can is the only way in which to avoid suffering in the future.

IF STUDENTS BELIEVE THAT ADEPTS ARE BEHIND THE SOCIETY, THEY SHOULD FOLLOW THEIR ADVICE

Those aspirants for whom these words are written have been laboring under a mistake. They have entered a society formed by Beings in whose existence they profess belief, and have not acted upon the instructions given, but have selected such portion of those as suited them. The Adepts have distinctly said that occult powers can be obtained, but They have also said that the Society, *which has Their protection and assistance*, is not for occult development, and that the latter cannot be forwarded by Them unless members will preach, teach, and practice Altruism. There is therefore no sort of obligation upon either the Adepts, or the disciples who do know, to help members whose chief aim is occult development. We must deserve before we can desire.

While we are endeavoring to understand and practice altruism, and while spreading broadcast the doctrines given out by the Adepts respecting man, his status, future fate, and right way of living, each theosophist can devote some of his time to daily meditation and concentration, and all of his time to extirpating his faults and vices; when he has made some progress in this, the good karma he may have acquired by working for the cause of Humanity, which is the same as Universal Brotherhood, will help him to get ready to begin occult practices.

#### WHAT IS THE "DAILY INITIATION?"

It is supposed by some that initiation is always and in every case a set and solemn occasion for which the candidate is prepared and notified of in advance. While there are some initiations surrounded by such solemnities as these, the daily one, without success in which no aspirant will ever have the chance to try for those that are higher, comes to the disciple with almost each moment. It is met in our relations with our fellows, and in the effects upon us of all the circumstances of life. And if we fail in these, we never get to the point where greater ones are offered. If we cannot bear momentary defeat, or if a chance word that strikes our self-love finds us unprepared, or if we give way to the desire to harshly judge others, or if we remain in ignorance of some of our most apparent faults, we do not build up that knowledge

and strength imperatively demanded from whoever is to be master of nature.

It is in the life of every one to have a moment of choice, but that moment is not set for any particular day. It is the sum total of all days; and it may be put off until the day of death, and then it is beyond our power, for the choice has then been fixed by all the acts and thoughts of the lifetime. We are self-doomed at that hour to just the sort of life, body, environment, and tendencies which will best carry out our karma. This is a thing solemn enough, and one that makes the "daily initiation" of the very greatest importance to each earnest student. But all of this has been said before, and it is a pity that students persist in ignoring the good advice they receive.

Do you think that if a Master accepted you He would put you to some strange test? No, He would not, but simply permitting the small events of your life to have their course, the result would determine your standing. // *may be a child's school, but it takes a man to go through it.*

HADJI ERINN

*Path*, August, September, 1889

## QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

M.—I read in the *New York Sun* in October an editorial on the Maha Bodhi Society of Calcutta which designed to restore Buddha-Gya to the Buddhists and spread Buddhism. Although the article was full of chaff yet I thought there must be something underneath. Is that Society a Theosophical Section? Does Buddhism grow in America?

*Answer*—The Maha Bodhi Society is, in my opinion, more of a real-estate venture, for sentiment however and not for gain. Col. H. S. Olcott is its Honorary Director and intended, as a professed Buddhist, to make great efforts towards raising the large sum needed to put the property in Buddhist hands, this being the main object. The Secretary is Dharmapala, an F.T.S. But the Society is not a Theosophical Section. It cannot be successfully held that the getting of property and a temple is Buddhism, for that religion teaches asceticism, poverty and renunciation of material things. Certainly Buddha would not have his followers waste their energies on such a venture. They did not do it in his lifetime.

Buddhism does not grow in America, though many persons call themselves Buddhists. Some doctrines, which are not only Buddhist but also Brahmanic, have been widely spread, and it is easier to say one is a Buddhist than Brahmanical. To be a Brahmin you must be born in that sort of family; to profess Brahmanism and not be able to explain its complicated system is disgraceful. Besides this, the popular poem by Arnold, *The Light of Asia*, has given currency to the term Buddhism all over the land, whereas but few know what the other oriental religions are. The useful doctrines of both Buddhism and Brahmanism are believed in by many as a result of the wide and systematic propaganda of the Theosophical Society in America. Reincarnation, karma, devachan and the rest, are in both religions,

but to believe them does not make a man a Buddhist. And if the people knew fully the superstitions and absurdities of those two old religions they would never call themselves by either name. It cannot be possible that the Buddhism of today will ever be adopted, as such, by any western nation; but the doctrines promulgated by Theosophists will so mould the coming mind that the new religion will be a theosophical one.

Now and then there appears in some newspaper an article giving false statements about Buddhism in America. The writers have heard so much about theosophical doctrines,— which they do not understand and which they label Buddhist because, perhaps, all they ever knew of the religion they obtained from the *Light of Asia*,—that they put down all Theosophists as Buddhists. But were you to consult the agent in New York of the Buddha-Gya movement you would discover how few Buddhists there are here.

As another correspondent asks for the principal reason why the West will not adopt Buddhism, I will reply to that now.

One of the main teachings of Buddha was that any kind of existence is a misery. It is misery to be born either as man or deva, because this involves a perpetual series of reincarnations which may be happy or unfavorable as happens. To escape this, Nirvana is offered. Of course I am not now speaking of other doctrines the educated may understand. This one is for the multitude. Now the western people will not accept this pessimistic view of life, and when they come to know that that is Buddhism they will not take the religion.

*A.P.*—Have you any idea of the proportion between the population of India and the members of the T.S. there?

*Answer*—There are 360 millions of people in India, and there are 90 Theosophical Societies there. As only about 40 of the latter are active we can conclude there are not 3000 F.T.S. in India. The rest of the 360 millions, except those who read English, know nothing of the Society. The major part of the people do not read English. Hence hundreds of millions are uninfluenced by theosophical propaganda. Of course it is the custom for the reports emanating from Adyar to speak of hundreds of Branches there; this is possible by counting in

the hundred and more dead Branches existing only on paper— for the authorities disliked to cut off from the roll the dead ones as is done in America.

W.Q.J.

*T.H.*—I would like to have a concrete practice pointed out to me as something to begin with in self-discipline.

*Answer*—Begin by trying to conquer the habit, almost universal, of pushing yourself forward. This arises from personality. Do not monopolize the conversation. Keep in the background. If someone begins to tell you about himself and his doings do not take first chance to tell him about yourself, but listen to him and talk solely to bring him out. And when he has finished suppress in yourself the desire to tell about yourself, your opinions and your experiences. Do not ask a question unless you intend to listen to the answer and inquire into its value. Try to recollect that you are a very small affair in the world, and that the people around do not value you at all and grieve not when you are absent. Your only greatness lies in your inner true self and it is not desirous of obtaining the applause of others. If you will follow these directions for one week you will find they will take considerable effort, and you will begin to discover a part of the meaning of the saying, “Man, know thyself.”

W.Q.J.

*Path*, November, 1895

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*T.T.*—In the November *PATH* there is a reply about Buddhism. May I ask whether reference was intended to the outside exoteric form of the religion or to the esoteric side?

The answer was intended to refer solely to outer forms of Buddhism, because the esoteric teachings of Buddha, if known, would undoubtedly be found to be the same as those of Jesus and the Brahmins—since we hold that both had secret doctrines for the few. The old Jews had their secret religion—the Kaballah—and Jesus, following his Jewish teachers, taught his disciples many things in private which were not recorded. But there is a good deal of evidence that

that secret teaching was in all probability like Gnosticism. What Buddha secretly taught we do not know.

If all the superstitions and gross absurdities of outer Buddhism were fully known in the West you would see why it will not be adopted; just as you would be convinced that we will not adopt Brahmanism either, with all its idolatry and superstitions.

W.Q.J.

*E.M.*—Has the identity of the Chew-Yew-Tsang been revealed? When I was in London the people in the T.S. centre there were wild about him and some said he was an Adept. What is the truth about this?

Chew-Yew-Tsang was a *nom-de-plume* adopted by Mr. E. T. Hargrove, who is now lecturing for us here. He had some good ideas and sent them to *Lucifer* over that name. Many did go wild over the articles, especially its sub-editor. In time it was divulged who the author was and then the amusing part happened. The disputes about some charges in the Society were raging and Mr. Hargrove sided with the defendant. So those who had admired Chew, almost fallen at his symbolical feet, who had engrossed some of his sentences and hung them on the wall, arose quite angry at being led into praising the writing of such a young man—in fact it was a sort of reunion for the purpose of “eating crow.” If there was any Adept in the matter he was in the far background and has not yet divulged himself. But it remains that the articles by Chew are well written and inspiring.

*B.*—Some of those who refused to agree to our proceedings at Boston Convention are feeling hurt because in the *PATH* they have been slightly referred to, as they think. Is it not better to be as kind as possible to all of them?

It is always best to be as kind as possible to friends and enemies, to those who are with us as to those who remain neutral. If the *PATH* was unkind it sincerely apologizes for such a fault. In going over the ground after a very short struggle in which the small minority is of course beaten, the detailing of facts for information of the great constituency which could not attend the festivities, it is very natural that something unpleasant would take place—for bald facts are sometimes not agreeable. So the *PATH* writer—and it was not the

Editor—merely intended to point out that in some cases the bolting branch would be found to be one of those which had never been of the slightest use—in one case such a branch had been dead a year—and in others that the really earnest and devoted workers were not those who bolted after the Boston vote.

And indeed this magazine was very much milder in the matter than Col. H. S. Olcott himself. He declared it seemed as if all the best brain and energy of the American movement had gone with the vote and with that dreadful person—

W. Q. J.

*P.B.*—The other evening, after a day of great activity, and being very tired, not thinking of my friend X, but rather of the passing business I had been in, I had a vision suddenly of X with whom I seemed to have a long conversation of benefit to both. Now how was this when I had not been thinking of him at all?

In the first place, experience shows, and those who know the laws of such matters say, that the fact of not having thought of a person is not a cause for preventing one from seeing the person in dream or vision. It makes no difference if you haven't thought of the person for twenty years.

Secondly, being wearied and much occupied during the day with absorbing business is in general likely to furnish just the condition in you for a vision or dream of a person or a place you have not thought of for a long time. But extreme and absolute fatigue, going to the extreme, is likely to plunge one into such a deep sleep as to prevent any such experience.

In consequence of bodily and brain fatigue those organs are temporarily paralyzed, sometimes, just enough to allow some of the astral senses to work. We then have a vision or dream of place or person, all depending upon the extent to which the inner astral person is able to impress the material brain cells. Sometimes it is forgotten save as the mere trace of something that took place but cannot be identified. When we are awake and active the brain has such a hold on the astral body that the latter (very fortunately) can work only with the brain and as that organ dictates. And when we fall naturally,

unfatigued, into the state when it might be supposed we would have a vision, it does not come. But the pictures and recollections of the day pass before us because the brain is not tired enough to give up its hold on the astral body. Fatigue, however, stills the imperative brain and it releases its hold.

W. Q. J.

*A. M.*—Who is your authority for the statement in November *PATH* that there are only about 90 active branches in India of which only about 40 have activity?

First, Mr. B. Keightley, who, as General Secretary there, reported—and it was so printed in the *Theosophist*—to the effect stated. In fact his report was even worse. Secondly, a member who had been at Adyar many months helping with reports and accounts. He stated not much over a year ago that it was as I have said. In fact it now is a thoroughly well-known fact that the great parade of branches in India—some hundreds—is all a show, just like counting in your assets and reporting as alive a lot of long dead and valueless bonds or scrip. These other branches have long been dead and ought to have been taken off the record. But the presiding genius likes to parade the names of back numbers so as to make a noise. We and the American public have been too long deluded about this flock of theosophical doves over there which are mere phantasms.

W. Q. J.

*Path*, December, 1895

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*C*—I have heard some members talking about attracting elementals, and of this or that place being full of elementals. Not seeing these beings myself, and not knowing much about it, I would like to know if the phrases used are correct.

*Answer*—It is quite probable that these persons never saw an elemental, and know still less, perhaps, than yourself of the subject and of the laws that may govern such entities. So do not be abashed by their assumption of knowledge. It is incorrect to talk of one place being more full of elementals than another place. We might as well say there is more of space in one spot of space than another.

Elementals are everywhere, just as animalcule fill the air; they obey the laws peculiar to themselves, and move in the currents of ether. If now and then they make themselves manifest, it does not hence follow that an additional number have been attracted to the spot, but only that conditions have altered so as to cause some disturbance.

W.Q.J.

*T.C.* and *F.O.R.*—In some formerly published articles something is said of a future date marking the withdrawal of certain portions of the influence of the Adepts, and that those who have not gotten past the obstacle before that will have to wait until next incarnation. Is it necessary that one should be aware of having passed sufficiently far; must one be conscious of it? If so, I for one, am “not in it.”

*Answer*—It is not necessary to be conscious of the progress one has made. Nor is the date in any sense an extinguisher, as some have styled it. In these days we are too prone to wish to know everything all at once, especially in relation to ourselves. It may be desirable and encouraging to be thus conscious, but it is not necessary. We make a good deal of progress in our inner, hidden life of which we are not at all conscious. We may not know of it until some later life. So in this case many may be quite beyond the obstacles and not be conscious of it. It is best to go on with duty, and to refrain from this trying to take stock and measuring of progress. All of our progress is in the inner nature, and not in the physical where lives the brain, and from which the present question comes. The apparent physical progress is evanescent. It is ended when the body dies, at which time, if the inner man has not been allowed to guide us, the natural record against us will be a cipher, or “failure.” Now, as the great Adepts live in the plane of our inner nature, it must follow that they might be actively helping every one of us after the date referred to, and we, as physical brain men, not be conscious of it on this plane.

W.Q.J.