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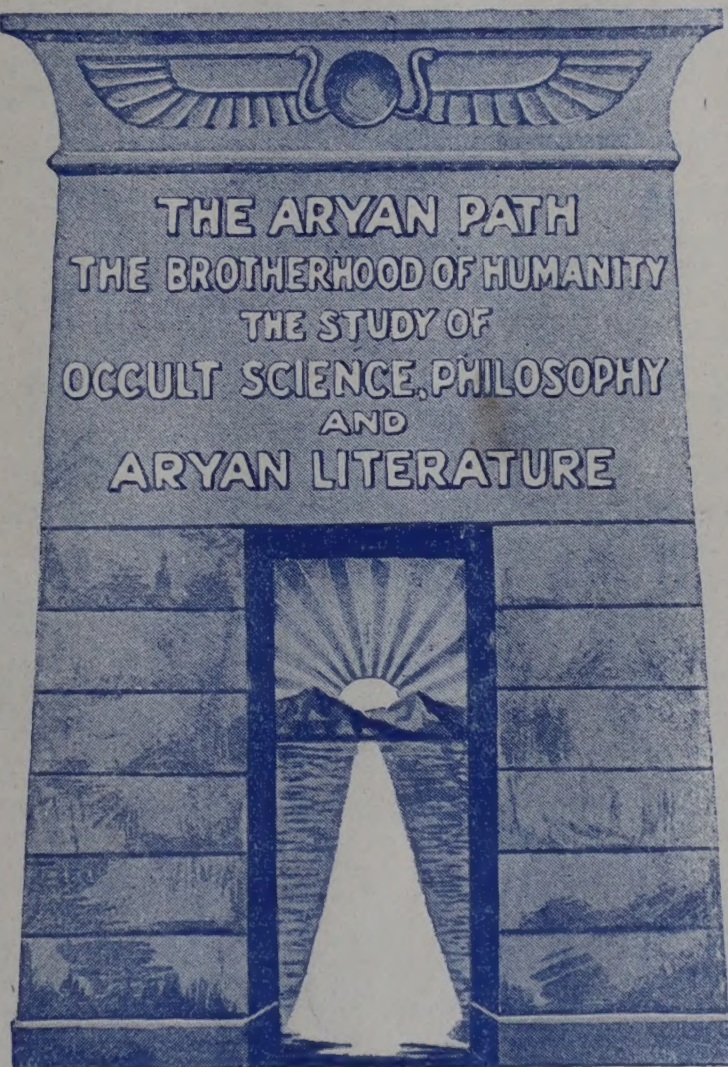
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THE
THEOSOPHICAL MOVEMENT

A MAGAZINE DEVOTED TO



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

Vol. XXII No. 2

December 17, 1951

As the white ray of light is decomposed by the prism into the various colors of the solar spectrum, so the beam of divine truth, in passing through the *three-sided* prism of man's nature, has been broken up into vari-colored fragments called RELIGIONS. And, as the rays of the spectrum, by imperceptible shadings, merge into each other, so the great theologies that have appeared at different degrees of divergence from the original source, have been connected by minor schisms, schools, and off-shoots from the one side or the other. Combined, their aggregate represents one eternal truth; separate, they are but shades of human error and the signs of imperfection.

—H. P. BLAVATSKY

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- (b) The study of ancient and modern religions, philosophies and sciences, and the demonstration of the importance of such study ; and
- (c) The investigation of the unexplained laws of nature and the psychical powers latent in man.

सत्यान्नास्ति परो धर्मः ।



There Is No Religion Higher Than Truth

BOMBAY, 17th December 1951.

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AUM

THE THEOSOPHICAL MOVEMENT

BOMBAY, 17th December 1951.

VOL. XXII. No. 2

GREETINGS—1951-1952

O, Lift up the gates of the cloud world !

Spread golden-wrought banners, and sing

The song of the Star of the Morning

Who lighteth the path of the King.

—MARY WIGHT

LEARNING TO READ

Students often misunderstand instructions or the teachings received owing to the influence of their early education or of the trend of the life that surrounds them. They read a sentence and for some reason one word stands out and colours their interpretation, thus throwing them off their balance without their knowing it. Many a time the confusion ascribed to the so-called inconsistency of the teachings is due to this influence.

An instance of these queer-twists of understanding is found in the questions that so often arise about the injunction given in *Light On The Path* to "test all experience." The word "all" leaps forward and the student sees himself passing from one experience to another, going everywhere with all the world as his country, constantly on the lookout for new impressions, new situations, good, bad or indifferent, so that he may test them. Is that what is required of the aspirant, he asks himself? It never strikes him that he may have misunderstood the simple words of his text. How about laying the emphasis on the word "test" instead of on "all"? That would certainly throw another light on the matter.

The above possibility should give the earnest student pause. Are we not all subject to the effects upon us of environment, past and present? And therefore apt to be "ceaselessly self-deceived"?

Under the circumstances the above instance may furnish us a most useful and practical guide to better understanding. The first conclusion leapt at should be carefully considered before it is accepted as true, however clear and unequivocal it may seem. "All quick thinkers are hard to impress," wrote one of the Masters once, "in a flash they are out and away in 'full cry,' before half understanding what one wants to have them think." So, too, we may say that those who are too quickly convinced that they comprehend may, in their self-assurance, range themselves unconsciously with those who "know not and know not that they know not," and end in a blind alley.

Hence the value of group study. From a comparison of the various interpretations of the different students something may emerge more nearly approaching the truth than any single participant could achieve alone.

QUESTIONS ANSWERED

AT AN INFORMAL "OCEAN" CLASS

CHAPTER IV

Q.—On p. 35, it says that the quaternary or lower man is a product of cosmic and physical laws and substance; it has been evolving during the lapse of ages, like any other physical thing, from cosmic substance, and is therefore subject to physical, physiological and psychical laws which govern the race of man as a whole. Will you please explain what is meant by this?

Ans.—Not knowing what is in the questioner's mind, it would be difficult to explain what is meant, except by saying: Study more thoughtfully the sentence used. It carries its own explanation. The spiritual man is an individual being progressing through self-induced and self-devised efforts, whether in a body or out of a body; but the physical man, the mortal temporary man, the combination of the four lower principles, is not an individual entity progressing through self-induced and self-devised efforts. There is the great problem of the psychologists. In this, they are just like the religionists. No matter how materialistic our biologists or psychologists may be, they none the less take the same view of the matter that the religionists do; they consider the mortal, physical man with his senses, his human mind, his memory and imagination, to be the whole man. Now, if that is the only man they know, they are quite logical in their view. The physical man, the mortal man, the lower man, the *human being*, is a result or effect of causes produced. The mortal man is therefore a creature; there was a time when he was not; there will come a time when he will cease to be. But the real man—Atma-Buddhi-Manas, the spiritual man—is a creator, and never was the time when he was not, nor shall he ever hereafter cease to be.

There the problem lies for us all—a conflict with the race mind and the race views. We are all too apt to regard man as a creature and to apply Theosophical teachings to the man whom we see and know and mix with. That man is

just as mortal as an animal; only, he lasts longer. But the Fourth Chapter calls very clearly to our attention that not only is the mortal man a creation; and not only is the combination of which he is made up a compound to be dissolved at death or soon after; but the very principles themselves which compose the human being—the personal or mortal man—those very principles themselves are subject to dissolution. Not merely the combination of principles in the thinking man, but also the very elements that compose him, are subject to dissolution. The reverse is the case with spiritual man, the creator—Manas.

Q.—The teaching is that man never was an animal. On the other hand, the teaching is also that all animals and all the lower forms, too, will some time be men; they are going through evolution and will at some time in a future Round, a future Manvantara, be men. How about this?

Ans.—The statement is made that the animals will some day be men. The statement is made that man never was an animal. The statement is also made that man was an animal. How are we to reconcile these statements? Turn to this Fourth Chapter. What is this body? A flock of lives of a certain grade of intelligence, a flock of embryonic centres of intelligence. Now, what is the astral body? A collectivity of lives of a higher grade of intelligence. And what is the kamic principle? A collectivity of lives of a still higher grade of intelligence. And what is Lower Manas? The same thing. What is Manas? A self-conscious life. And what is Buddhi? The collectivity of self-conscious lives.

Now, these lives aggregate and disperse both in their own class and in combinations of classes. Our perfect analogy is to look out in space. We can see a blank; that is unconditioned, unmanifested, imperceptible space, and, since we can't

speculate on the unmanifested and imperceptible, we just say, *It is*. But we see the very beginnings of physical manifestation in space, the starry nebulae, and then slowly the successive stages from the nebulae, the comet, the sun, the planet and the moon, down to meteors and down to dust, disseminated throughout space—the dissociated remains of what once were moons, planets, solar systems, nebulae. Apply the same thing metaphysically, and the problem ceases to be a problem. The animal, however regarded, is a combination of lives.

When we say "^{MAN}Man" we mean that all the seven principles in the life or soul or spiritual being have been aroused to some degree of activity. When we say "animal" we mean that only three of them have been awakened to partial activity. When we say "vegetable," we mean that there is less activity and, in the "mineral," still less. We see that, whether we use the expression *elemental, vegetable, mineral, animal, or human*, we are in fact giving names to stages through which passes this spiritual life itself, whether asleep or awake or dreaming. Remember, the analogy in the stages through which the new-born child passes. We say babyhood, childhood, youth, middle age, old age. Now, does babyhood become childhood? No. The life that dwells in the baby form, by slow degrees, as that form changes, is seen to be dwelling in a child form—the second stage in the development of a body. Now go on. Does the child body become the youth body? We know that it does not; but the same ego or soul or Manas that is in that body—which was in the baby body and in the child body—will be in the youth body.

We have, then, to distinguish between mind, which, as a general, unvarying term, and unless coupled with an adjective, means a self-conscious life; and form, which is conscious life. A self-conscious life was never a non-self-conscious life. But there again "it stands to reason"; that is, we have to think it out ourselves.

Put it this way: All of us are familiar—although it would perhaps be difficult for us to formulate a definition—with what is meant by the word *Instinct*, and all of us are familiar to some extent with what is meant by the word *Intuition*.

Suppose we call Kama the energizing principle in matter, and by matter we mean all lives which are non-self-conscious. Kama, then, is the intelligence active in the kingdoms below man, the ruling intelligence in the kingdoms below man. Kama always acts by direct perception, but it is not conscious of the fact that it is so acting. Direct perception without self-consciousness is what is meant by the word *Instinct*. *Instinct*

Now, take the self-conscious being—the spiritual man in his own world. Manas is the energizing principle of that world spiritual, just as Kama is the energizing principle of the world physical. On the plane of the three spiritual worlds, Manas also acts by direct perception, but it is conscious that it is so acting. So the only difference in the world between intuition and instinct—both being direct perception—is that the being acting by instinct is not self-conscious, is not able to modify or direct his own instincts. They rule him; he does not rule them. But in the world spiritual, Manas is the energizing principle, in conjunction with Buddhi—direct perception—and the Ego is fully conscious of when, where and how to use it. When Manas incarnates, when Manas is "lighted up," to use the familiar phrase, the energizing principle of the world spiritual at its lowest arc of activity comes into union with the energizing principle of matter at the highest arc of its activity; that union, which lasts for the cycle of a personal life, is the Manas we know; that is the man we know. We are under two influences, the influences from the world spiritual—our good motives, our good intentions, our aspirations, our intuitions, our good resolutions—and, at the opposite pole, we are equally subject to the influences of the world physical, because those opposite or contrasted forces or influences or energizing principles are both active in us. We have reason because we have the comparison of the two.

Q.—In the Fourth Chapter of the *Ocean*, it says that the real man is the trinity of Atma-Buddhi-Manas. It is also taught in Theosophy that man is none of his principles. Would you please explain?

Intuition

Ans.—Well, all that we can study, that we can experience, that we can speculate about in any way, and therefore all that we can give names to, refer to manifestation and something manifested. Man, in the sense of Atman, is the forever non-manifested Self. Buddhi-Manas is so much of the Self as can be perceived in the manifested universe. There is on that subject a great statement in the *Secret Doctrine*, that the One Principle does not manifest or cause evolution, whether consciously or unconsciously, but only periodically exhibits aspects of Itself, to the perception of finite minds. Now, when we contrast the world infinite with the world finite, we can see that “finite” represents not only the seer but also that which is seen; but “infinite” represents the unmanifested *and* the manifested. Thus, it is perfectly correct, from the standpoint of manifested existence, to speak of the seven principles. Principles of what? Principles of manifestation. That’s what the seven principles mean—not the principles of non-manifestation but the principles of manifestation, all these principles being in the Self, the Unmanifested, the Nameless, the One.

Q.—What is the cause of the various degrees of longevity among men and among races, the

older races having been said to have lived for hundreds of thousands of years?

Ans.—What causes such differences in the length of life, not so much amongst races as amongst individuals? Here is a baby born who dies in five minutes. Here is another, who dies in a few months. In fact, it may be a good average to say that of all the babies born, two-fifths of them die before they are five years old. They represent failures of nature—that is, failures to gain incarnation. The average of life amongst civilized peoples is said to be now somewhere in the neighbourhood of forty years, but if an average were to be had of *all* the peoples of the earth, it would be lower than that. Yet, there are people who live to be a hundred or more. What is the cause? It depends on the use made of the elemental lives. Some come back with a perfect astral body that remains the same to the end of the Manvantara: they have so dealt with the lives that composed their astral body that an indissoluble union takes place among the astral lives and the form persists. The majority of the race have to have a new astral body every time they are born. The explanation is the different affinities set up, different uses made of the elemental lives. Once there was no death, no sickness. That was before we had had time to corrupt the lives..

THE MISSING SOUL OF MODERN SCIENCE ANCIENT ASTRONOMICAL KNOWLEDGE

The Chaldees nor yet our old Rishis had either your telescopes or photometers; and yet their astronomical predictions were faultless, the mistakes, very slight ones in truth—fathered upon them by their modern rivals—proceeding from the mistakes of the latter. (A Master of Wisdom to A. P. Sinnett in 1882.)

Who but a dullard or the slave of amusement has not been inspired by a quiet clear view of the starry heavens? Many have written about it. More have spoken of it. Others remain silent witnesses.

All who give any serious thought to the subject agree at least on one point. Petty concerns and earthly troubles often fade into relative in-

significance in the contemplation of the serenity and ordered grandeur of the drama of the skies. The idea of other worlds than this, inhabited by widely varied orders of beings suggests infinite possibilities. The reign of law and order in the Cosmos presents a striking contrast to the chaotic doings of uncontrolled impulsive human nature. Yet the best of human efforts must surely win their reward as the meanest bring their own retribution. The same eternal law of compensation operates everywhere. How else could the universe be consistent? And who can justly say it is not so, even in the face of man-made inconsistencies?

One of the many delusions of modern times is

contained in the all-too-common expression: "No one knows!" How can anyone be sure of that even which is close at hand, not to speak of the infinite possibilities of a boundless universe? Is it genuine logic that prompts the proud denial, or is it ignorance and egoism? The teachings of the ancients are still regarded by many as having sprung from ignorance. Modern learning is still assumed to be progressively advancing far beyond anything the ancients ever knew. Is it so? The astronomer and the atomic scientist, the archaeologist and the philosophical researcher from time to time encounter evidences of ancient knowledge that should have a shattering effect on this conceit of the age.

At the Christmas season a favourite subject in modern planetaria is the Star of Bethlehem. There has been considerable speculation as to whether it was the triple conjunction of Saturn, Jupiter and Mars seeming to shine as one bright star in the year 6 B.C., or whether it was a comet or a brilliant supernova. It seems that at the conclusion of one such lecture, with an accompanying demonstration of the conjunction of planets, someone suggested that the Star of Bethlehem might have been a "mystery star." Materialistic prejudice against any superphysical idea, which materialism neither wants nor understands, was revealed at the following demonstration when the same lecturer caustically remarked: "We need no 'mystery stars' in our planetarium!"

Whether or not there was a "mystery star" at the birth of Jesus, contempt for the possibility of mysteries in Nature that may be inquired into is unjustified by the true scientific spirit. It is due in part to the natural reaction against religious dogmas that allow of no inquiry, and, for the rest, to the soul blindness of disbelief in anything superphysical. The materialistic mind has a terrible struggle to awaken to any spiritual truth and real knowledge.

Every star is, in fact, a "mystery star" to modern science. Countless observations through ever more powerful telescopes have revealed some physical truths, but not the metaphysical ones upon which these depend. Such observations alone have not enabled the observers to fathom either the true nature of the stars or their func-

tion and purpose in the Cosmos. Consequently, even many of the physical truths remain obscure. Speculation still goes on as to whether the universe is expanding. With the new giant telescope on Mount Palomar it is hoped to solve some of the mysteries, among which are the lines marked out on Mars. What about life and intelligence on or in the stars? Could they not be the dwelling-places of living beings, of gods even, as the ancients affirmed? Neither the true nature of the stars nor what they symbolize has been fathomed by modern science, but metaphysical truths in nature are explained in the Wisdom of the Ages, restated in modern Theosophy.

The star under which a human Entity is born, says the Occult teaching, will remain for ever its star, throughout the whole cycle of its incarnations in one Manvantara. But *this is not his astrological star.* The latter is concerned and connected with the *personality*, the former with the *INDIVIDUALITY*. (*The Secret Doctrine*, I. 572-3).

That "star" is verily a symbol for the spiritual soul of man. This is a mystery to materialism, but a sublime truth of initiation. Everything in the material world is a shadow or a symbol of something in other spheres of being. The Christmas season itself is a symbol of the possible birth of the Christos spirit in man. But what does materialism know of the light of spiritual knowledge in the darkness of a winter's night, the night of materialistic negation? The turning of the Sun, or rather of the Earth in relation to the Sun, signalizes a beginning or the regeneration of Nature. So the Star of Bethlehem, like the stars connected with great Souls down the ages, symbolizes also the guiding light of Their Wisdom.

The appearance of an eclipse never fails to attract the attention of astronomers and laymen alike. Men of science avail themselves not only of the opportunity for making scientific observations, but also for learned discussions followed by lectures and articles. Such occasions are also frequently used to indicate scientific advances in knowledge as contrasted with ancient "ignorance." For countless ages the ancients kept records of eclipses as of other celestial phenomena. Only a very few of these records have reached modern science. Their language differs from that of the

moderns. The ancients employed many symbols drawn from the whole of Nature and especially from the animal kingdom. Learned men laugh at the superstition that depicts an eclipse as the sun being swallowed by darkness, symbolized by a mythical monster. Why do they choose to overlook that other fact that wise men among the ancients themselves pointed out the follies of superstition? What is more, they showed the truths which underlay them. Thus, Sankaracharya, said by H.P.B. to have been "the greatest of the historical Brahmin sages" (*Theosophical Glossary*, "Adwaita") said:—

Because the sun appears to be swallowed by the darkness of eclipse, they say it is swallowed, misled, not knowing the truth. (*The Crest Jewel of Wisdom*. Translated by CHARLES JOHNSTON).

The Egyptian hierophants depicted portions of the Truth they knew. The Chaldeans and the Babylonians were renowned astronomers and astrologers. Their knowledge had Ancient India as its source of wisdom and inspiration. That the ancients could have had astronomical knowledge amounting to anything beyond what can be seen with the ordinary naked eye and without giant telescopes is thought by modern scientists to be impossible. That latent faculties and potentialities for acquiring such knowledge evolve naturally in men with altruistic motives and by soul discipline is currently regarded as a fanciful supposition. That any living beings on this earth could actually have undergone such evolution and acquired such insight is generally considered either a wild flight of the imagination or a pretence. Yet these are Theosophical propositions substantiated by Wisdom of an antiquity of which modern science as yet does not even dream.

From the remotest antiquity down to the story of Jonah and the whale, animal symbols for the signs of the Zodiac, the constellations and the motions of the heavenly bodies have contained profound truths for those who, with an open mind and a pure heart, have learned to read and understand the mystery language of the Ancient Wisdom. Mr. Judge applied this key in *The Ocean of Theosophy*:—

"Jonah" is in the constellations, and when that astronomical point which represents man reaches a point in the Zodiac which is directly opposite the belly

of Cetus or the whale on the other side of the circle, by what is known as the process of opposition, then Jonah is said to be in the centre of the fish and is "thrown out" at the expiration of the period when that man-point has passed so far along in the Zodiac as to be out of opposition to the whale. (Second Indian Ed., p. 130)

The modern genius for devising ever more efficient instruments is bifurcating into constructive and destructive applications. So-called "scientific analysis" appears to make no real distinction between the two. There is a vast distinction between them from the Theosophical point of view, a distinction fraught with no less vast a difference in the consequences to man. On the constructive side, this genius can be turned to good purposes if rightly directed.

The "First Photos Through Palomar's Giant Eye" and an article entitled: "Behold the Universe!" by David O. Woodbury were published in *Collier's Magazine* for May 7, 1949. Undoubtedly the skill and precision with which this huge telescope was built make it an outstanding achievement of modern engineering. Mr. Woodbury writes: "The Palomar giant is the culmination of the devoted labour of scientists working for centuries all over the world." It is hoped to learn from photographs taken with it "how big the universe is and what it is made of." Also, "how this universe began, and when, and what it did through the awesome span of æons that have since passed by." He suggests: "We may even dare to predict what it will do next, and how it may finally end." The thoughtful student of Theosophy and Science knows that this is wishful thinking. Telescopes and photographs can supply very significant information, but it takes far more than these to answer such questions truly.

The author of the article believes that "the promise of such vast new information should humble the most arrogant." This overlooks the distinction between information and realization. The arrogant have not yet been humbled by the figures already given for distances so vast that they are indicated in "astronomical" numbers of light years. Humility will come only through soul striving, resulting in experiences of consciousness that bring some degree of spiritual awakening to Truth.

The author opines that "all of us may gain new spiritual dimensions from what they [the astronomers] find." This has been so in the past only where the findings have been examined in the light of great spiritual truths discovered by those who have searched the soul of things and not merely the outward appearances. This is not meant to decry the value of physical observations, but only to point out that, if they are taken alone, their worth is limited. *The Voice of the Silence* teaches the lesson that "even ignorance is better than Head-learning with no Soul-wisdom to illuminate and guide it." The emphasis, of course, needs to be placed, not on ignorance, but on the need for Soul-wisdom.

For those who make astronomical observations and who are interested in the subject, "the growing certainty that there is order and plan out there, no matter how far we go, is a tremendous aid to human faith." This observation of the author of "Behold the Universe!" is very good as far as it goes. It may be well, however, to supplement his philosophical observation with the advice of the astronomer Harlow Shapley, who wrote in *The Scientific American* for September 1950 :—

Astronomers must keep their eyes and ears open, watching and listening to the physicists, engineers, philosophers, geologists and chemists.... Already we see the glimmers of a strange dawn....

The search demands patient work, imagination, freedom to inquire and scepticism about dogmas, about preliminary measures and especially about one's own hunches.

"Listening to philosophers" is a significant suggestion; among the advances envisioned by Harlow Shapley for the future are included philosophical ideas. This is a good sign of the times. The full significance of it, however, was far more clearly brought out years ago by Mr. Judge in his observations on the ancient Aryan philosophy :—

It is only by an acceptance of this philosophy, that we will ever comprehend the facts of nature which our science is so laboriously noting and classifying.

Although philosophy seems dry to most people, and especially to minds in the Western world who are surrounded by the rush of their new and quite undeveloped civilization, yet it must be taught and understood. (*Notes on the Bhagavad-Gita*, pp. 13 and 40)

The ancient philosophy is the missing soul of modern science, which can illumine the latter and purge away the dross of fanciful and absurd speculations to reveal the living Truth.

THE ETHER HYPOTHESIS

From time to time scientists have found it necessary to postulate the existence of an ether, a subtle medium interpenetrating all matter and pervading all space. H.P.B. wrote of this hypothesis:—

Ether, this *hypothetical* Proteus, one of the "representative *Fictions*" of modern Science—which, nevertheless, was so long *accepted*—is one of the lower "principles" of what we call PRIMORDIAL SUBSTANCE (Akasa, in Sanskrit), one of the *dreams* of old, and which has now become again the dream of modern science. It is the greatest, just as it is the boldest, of the surviving speculations of ancient philosophers. For the Occultists, however, both ETHER and the Primordial Substance are a reality. (*The Secret Doctrine*, I. 326)

The hypothesis has been necessary to explain certain phenomena such as the travelling of light through empty space. None the less, Science has never been able to detect the presence of an ether and its existence has remained a mere figment of scientific imagination. H.P.B. made use of a number of quotations from contemporary scientists on the subject from which the following by S. Laing has been selected:—

Ether is not actually known to us BY ANY TEST OF WHICH THE SENSES CAN TAKE COGNIZANCE, but it is a sort of mathematical substance which WE ARE COMPELLED TO ASSUME in order to account for the phenomena of light and heat.—(S. D., I. 669)

The properties with which this ether was endowed tended to vary from time to time and even from scientist to scientist. Sometimes it was continuous and sometimes discontinuous and so on. This aspect of the theory was also discussed by H.P.B. with the aid of contemporary statements. (*Vide S.D., I. 485-7*) She concluded by writing:—

Official Science *knows nothing to this day of the constitution of ether.* Let Science call it matter, if it likes; only neither as *akasa* nor as the one sacred Æther of the Greeks, is it to be found in any of the states

of matter known to modern physics. It is MATTER on quite another plane of perception and being, and it can neither be analyzed by scientific apparatus, appreciated, nor even conceived by "scientific imagination," unless the possessors thereof study the Occult Sciences. (p. 487)

She wrote in another context:—

The septenary gradation, and the innumerable subdivisions and differences, made by the ancients between the powers of *Ether* collectively, from its outward fringe of effects, with which our Science is so familiar, up to the "Imponderable Substance," once admitted as the "Ether of Space," now about to be rejected, has been ever a vexing riddle for every branch of knowledge. (S. D., I. 331)

Today the ether of space has been rejected and its place taken by the space-time continuum of Einstein. The change is little more, however, than one of language and mathematical notation. Neither "exist"; both are mental concepts—this being the name for a pattern of relationships among events and among objects—and the part once played by the ether is now taken over by the new concept.

A recent development in the ether hypothesis is of interest. Viscount Samuel, President of the Royal Institute of Philosophy, in his recent address to the British Association for the Advancement of Science, submitted that the ether existed, that it consisted of energy and was a continuum, and that it was the sole constituent of the material universe. He suggested that just as water could exist as a solid, a liquid or a gas, so energy might exist in a quiescent or in an active state; and that the existence of material objects was a manifestation of the transition of energy from one state to the other.

H.P.B. wrote:—

For ÆTHER, in Esotericism, is the very quintessence of all possible energy, and it is certainly to this universal agent (composed of many *agents*) that all the manifestations of energy in the material, psychic and spiritual worlds are due." (S. D., I. 508)

LAO TSE'S "TAO-TE-KING"

[The lecture which we publish here in somewhat condensed form was delivered at the United Lodge of Theosophists, Bombay, on May 29th, 1950.—EDS.]

Madame H. P. Blavatsky in her Introductory to *The Secret Doctrine* (I. xxv) states that the *Tao-te-king* is the heart of Lao Tse's doctrine. It is, today, all that remains of his writings in the exoteric world, 999 of the books that he is said to have written having apparently been removed so that they would be inaccessible not only to the common man, but also to the learned man of China as well as to the research worker. Of Lao Tse's books 70 are said to have been on magic and the remainder on ethics and religion. It is not a new story that exoteric knowledge has had to be recalled and become esoteric or secret wisdom, reserved for the initiated. Under cyclic law the whole of mankind, or portions of it, become unworthy of the great truths. When inferior and selfish egos preponderate among those incarnated, rather than have dire results accrue from the misuse of the spiritual truths that are in the public world, most of the writings that contain them are withdrawn. Those that remain are left so that the searchers for truth may still have a guide and be able, through them, to reach the teachers and "silent watchers in the night."

The *Tao-te-king* has come down to us today as a veiled representative of what the *Tao-te-king* was for some 3 centuries. Down the ages there have always been witnesses pointing to the immemorial Wisdom Religion; and as one such we find the *Tao-te-king*. Veiled yet whole, with its details obscure but its principles easily discernible, it is still a competent guide on the road of Spiritual endeavour for those who would study and understand.

It is needless to mention the difficulties of Sinologists in making translations of things about which they were in the dark. Prof. Max Müller says that "the text is unintelligible without commentaries, so that Mr. Julien had to consult more than sixty commentators for the purpose of his translation." We propose to use no commentaries of the learned Chinese—the only ones now in existence date from the year 163 B.C.—and little from

any modern ones, but to pursue the study in the light of Theosophy.

"*Tao-te-king*" is translated "The Way of the Heart" and "The Way of Virtue."

Tao is as difficult a word to understand the full significance of as is Aum in Sanskrit. It is a generic term; meaning the highest, that which we cannot conceive of, but know only that IT IS, *i. e.*, the Absolute. It is the One; the first Logos is its first radiation; Space and Motion are its symbols and the Law of the Universal Mind is an aspect of IT. It is that which has no name. The *Tao-te-king* says:—

The Tao that can be told of
Is not the Absolute Tao;
The Names that can be given
Are not Absolute Names. (1)¹

Each time "Tao" is used one must discover in which way it is being used. Except that *never* has it been used in the sense of a Personal God. It is the Principle of the First Fundamental Proposition of *The Secret Doctrine*, of which the Buddha said: "Say nought!"

Tao is the Background of everything visible and invisible, down to the minutest speck and out into the infinitudes of space. After having established this PRINCIPLE or Absolute or THAT (*Tat* in Sanskrit), the *Tao-te-king* goes on to say

The Nameless is the origin of Heaven and Earth
The Named is the Mother of All Things. (1)

Heaven and Earth represent the two opposites: Heaven represents Spirit while Earth represents Matter. These two are the source of all that exists.

These two (the Secret and its manifestations)
Are (in their nature) the same;
They are given different names
When they become manifest. (1)

Before the Heaven and Earth existed
There was something nebulous:

¹ Numbers refer to sections in the *Tao-te-king*, DR. LIN YUTANG's rendition in *The Wisdom of Lao-tse* (The Modern Library, Random House, New York, 1948) being followed unless otherwise indicated.

Silent, isolated,
 Standing alone, changing not,
 Eternally revolving without fail,
 Worthy to be the Mother of All Things.

I do not know its name

And address it as Tao.

If forced to give it a name, I shall call it "Great."

Being great implies reaching out in space,

Reaching out in space implies far-reaching,

Far-reaching implies reversion to the original point. (25)

Here the "Great Breath" is implied when, by spreading from within outward manifestation takes place and whatever begins must end, so the drawing in or inbreathing has to follow, and that which was manifested becomes non-manifested, or returns to the original state.

Manifestation and Pralaya are referred to when it is said:—

Not by its rising, is there light,

Nor by its sinking, is there darkness.

Unceasing, continuous,

It cannot be defined,

And reverts again to the realm of nothingness. (14)

and

The myriad things take shape and rise to activity,

But I watch them fall back to their repose.

Like vegetation that luxuriantly grows

But returns to the root (soil) from which it springs. (16)

Tao is the cause of all things. Yet a cause is the result of a previous cause so Tao, being that before which there is nought, has to be the *Causeless Cause*. It is said in the *Tao-te-king*:—

The Tao never does,

Yet through it everything is done. (37)

Pythagoras explains the primeval differentiation by the use of numbers; Lao Tse does the same:—

Out of Tao, One is born;

Out of One, Two;

Out of Two, Three;

Out of Three, the created universe. (42)

The numerals of Lao Tse may be described, as Porphyry described those of Pythagoras, as "Hieroglyphical symbols, by means whereof he explained ideas concerning the nature of things," or the origin of the universe. Numbers best represent the laws of harmony of the Universe. The key to the Pythagorean numbers and therefore to Lao Tse's is the "general formula of unity in multiplicity, the one evolving the many and

pervading the many. This is the ancient doctrine of emanation in a few words."

In this verse Lao Tse refers to what Plato, about 100 years later, echoing Pythagoras, who had his knowledge from India, taught as the Tetrad. The triangle is the first geometrical figure, the *one* indivisible point of the apex emanating the *two* lines, positive and negative, spirit and matter, the base being the Universal plane of productive Nature. By mystic permutation they become the Tetrad or Tetraktys, described by Madame Blavatsky in her *Theosophical Glossary* as

The sacred "Four" by which the Pythagoreans swore, this being their most binding oath... has a very mystic and varied signification, being the same as the Tetragrammaton. First of all it is Unity, or the "One" under four different aspects; then it is the fundamental number Four, the Tetrad containing the Decad, or Ten, the number of perfection....

.	1
.	2
.	3
.	4
.	—
	10

Finally, she shows, "the Tetraktys signifies the primeval Triad (or Triangle) merged in the divine Monad," explaining that

The One is the impersonal principle "God"; the Two, matter; the Three, combining Monad and Duad and partaking of the nature of both, is the phenomenal world; the Tetrad, or form of perfection, expresses the emptiness of all; and the Decad, or sum of all, involves the entire Kosmos.

Significantly, Mr. I. Myer has shown that "the sacred Tetrad of the Pythagoreans appears to have been known to the ancient Chinese."

Again, H. P. Blavatsky says in *The Secret Doctrine* (I. 278) that in India and Chaldea "these three Universes were allegorized, in exoteric teachings, by the three trinities emanating from the Central eternal germ and forming with it a Supreme Unity: the *initial*, the *manifested*, and the *Creative Triad*, or the three in One."

Lao Tse also has 3 categories which blend in one:—

Looked at, but cannot be seen—

That is called the Invisible (*yi*).

Listened to, but cannot be heard—

That is called the Inaudible (*hsf*).

Grasped at, but cannot be touched—

That is called the Intangible (*wei*).

These three elude all our inquiries
And hence blend and become one. (14)

Elsewhere he exclaims:—

How the universe is like a bellows!
Empty, yet it gives a supply that never fails;
The more it is worked, the more it brings forth. (5)

The Duad has been further explained by Lao Tse under its Chinese terms *Yang* and *Yin*.

Everything carries the *yin* on its back;
And the *yang* on its front;
And is harmonized by an intermediate
breath. (42)²

Yang, the masculine Active Potency, is represented by one vertical line and *Yin*, the feminine Passive Potency, is represented by two short vertical lines, one above the other. Translators have used the term Father for the positive masculine energy and "Mystic Female" or "Abyss-Mother" for the negative potency. Madame Blavatsky writes of the "centripetal and the centrifugal forces, which are male and female, positive and negative, physical and spiritual, the two being the one *Primordial Force*." (*The Secret Doctrine*, I. 282)

H.P.B. explains that Parabrahm is the *nought*; Brahma is the first (neuter), still the non-existent, and the duad; Brahmâ, the manifested Logos, is symbolized as male-female, as in Manu's account of Brahma separating his body into male and female, thus becoming also Vâch. This is comparable, she suggests, with the esotericism of *Genesis*. (Chapters II, III and IV)

Law, as an impersonal harmonizing principle of the universe, is portrayed when the *Tao-te-king* says, in still another rendition:—

To those who are good I am good and to those who are not good I am also good—and thus all get to be good. With the sincere I am sincere, and with the insincere I am also sincere and thus all get to be sincere. (49)

In another place it is said:—

To return to the root is Repose;
It is called going back to one's Destiny.
Going back to one's Destiny is to find the Eternal Law.
To know the Eternal Law is Enlightenment.
And not to know the Eternal Law
Is to court disaster.

² Rendition of the *Tao-te-King* in *The Speculations on Metaphysics, Polity and Morality of "The Old Philosopher," Lao-Tsze*, translated by JOHN CHALMERS, A. M. (Trübner & Co., London. 1868)

He who knows the Eternal Law is tolerant;
Being tolerant, he is impartial;
Being impartial, he is kingly;
Being kingly, he is in accord with Nature;
Being in accord with Nature, he is in accord with Tao;
Being in accord with Tao, he is eternal,
And his whole life is preserved from harm. (16)

In Indian thought, as well as in Theosophy, the word Karma is used for this law. Karma is good even to the evil-doers for it holds no grudge; it is absolute justice. The results that a man might get by upsetting harmony, he is likely to call evil or bad Karma, but that is a misnomer. Man usually learns only from upsetting circumstances, so, even though he may call them evil, they are in reality good. This law is the return to the centre of disturbance, thereby effecting a restoration to tranquillity and repose. When men understand this law of Karma to an increasing extent then nations will abandon wars and also capital punishment. Lack of knowledge is the cause of the increase of crime, because capital punishment lets loose the forces of man in the kamalokic plane, the plane of passions and desires. Thus it is said in the *Tao-te-king*:—

There is some advantage and some disadvantage.
(Even if) Heaven dislikes certain people,
Who would know (who are to be killed and) why?
Therefore even the Sage regards it as a difficult question.
Heaven's Way (Tao) is good at conquest without
strife,
Rewarding (vice and virtue) without words,
Making its appearance without call,
Achieving results without obvious design.
The heaven's net is broad and wide.
With big meshes, yet letting nothing slip through. (73)

Even Sages find it difficult to judge another. If we were to put ourselves into the identical physical, mental, moral and spiritual condition of the other whom we are blaming, we might do worse than he. So why not trust to the net of Karma which is broad and wide and know that, though Karma tarry long it grinds exceeding fine? Lao Tse says:—

Supposing that the people are afraid of death,
And we can seize and kill the unruly,
Who would dare to do so?
There is always the Great Executioner.³

³ The rendering of this line by WALTER GORN OLD in *The Simple Way: Lao-tze (The "Old Boy")* (Philip Welby, London, 1905) is substituted for Dr. Lin Yutang's rendering.

And to take the place of the executioner
Is like handling the hatchet for the master carpenter.
He who handles the hatchet for the master carpenter
Seldom escapes injury to his hands. (74)

The "Great Executioner" is Karma. We often unwittingly usurp the place of the "Great Executioner." Let us return to capital punishment as an example. What of the human executioner? What is the effect on him? He is doing just as great a wrong as the man whom he is killing has probably done. This reminds us of Jesus' saying, "All they that take the sword shall perish with the sword." The only way that the evil can be stopped is by right knowledge of the merciful justice of the law of Karma. We find an echo of Jesus' saying in the *Tao-te-king* where it says:—

Others have taught this maxim,
Which I shall teach also:
"The violent man shall die a violent death."
This I shall regard as my spiritual teacher. (42)

By the way, this goes to prove that Lao Tse knew himself as one who followed in the footsteps of his predecessors.

So far we have seen what the *Tao-te-king* has to say about capital punishment; now let us turn to war. It is the same message that has been sounded by Gandhiji, that of non-violence. The *Tao-te-king* counsels the spiritual adviser of a king that

He who by Tao purposes to help the ruler of men
Will oppose all conquest by force of arms.
For such things are wont to rebound.
Where armies are, thorns and brambles grow.
The raising of a great host
Is followed by a year of dearth. (30)

Are we not still undergoing rationing? And the climatic conditions of the world are so upset that all are fearing the lack of adequate food. Yet we talk of a Third World War!

...(violence) would be against the Tao.
And he who is against the Tao perishes young. (30)

Soldiers are weapons of evil.
They are not the weapons of the gentleman.
When the use of soldiers cannot be helped,
The best policy is calm restraint. (31)

This "calm restraint" would seem to be Gandhiji's *Satyagraha*.

Even in victory, there is no beauty,
And who calls it beautiful
Is one who delights in slaughter.

He who delights in slaughter
Will not succeed in his ambition to rule the world. (31)

The history of men of military genius—Caesar, Napoleon, Hitler—goes to prove that they did not live to enjoy their winnings. Let us see that wars are wrong, and encourage no one to believe that they can ever be right. Let us become men of peace. Lao Tse has written

The brave soldier is not violent;
The good fighter does not lose his temper;
The great conqueror does not fight (on small issues):
The good user of men places himself below others. (68)

The soldiers, fighters and conquerors here referred to are not the men who still live after a bloody war, but men and women who have succeeded in gaining the victory over their lower, passionate natures.

Here we are reminded of a Chinese story told by Dr. Lin Yutang.

Chishengtse used to raise fighting cocks for the king. After ten days had passed, the king asked if his cock was ready for a fight.

"Not yet," replied Chishengtse, "the cock is still very impulsive and haughty."

After another ten days the king asked again, and Chishengtse replied, "Not yet. He still reacts to noises and shadows."

After another ten days had passed, the king asked again and the reply was, "Not yet. His eyes still have an angry look, and he is full of fight."

Another ten days passed and Chishengtse said, "It is about ready. When he hears other cocks crow, he does not even react. You look at him and he appears to be a wooden cock. His character is whole now. No other cock will dare to fight him but will run away at first sight."

When a man is whole because he has Tao in his hands, he does not contend with others but lives his own life and leads others to follow their own duties. He appears as nothing in the eyes of men.

Therefore the Sage embraces the One,
And becomes the model of the world.
He does not reveal himself,
And is therefore luminous,
He does not justify himself,
And is therefore far-famed.

He does not boast of himself,
 And therefore people give him credit.
 He does not pride himself,
 And is therefore the chief among men. (22)

In the words of *The Voice of the Silence*:
 "Give up thy life, if thou would'st live."

These are the marks of the true saviours of humanity. Jesus did not go telling the world from the housetop that he was the promised Messiah; But some deluded mortals who followed H.P.B. proclaimed themselves her successor!

The wise do not proclaim themselves. "By their fruits ye shall know them."

Therefore the Sage is good at helping men;

For that reason there is no rejected (useless) person.
 He is good at saving things;

For that reason there is nothing rejected.

—This is called stealing the Light. (27)

Nature is the great economist. Every animate and so-called inanimate object is useful. Therefore the Sage working with nature will not reject anything. The Sage is like a magnet. The magnet does not throw away the things that it does not attract; it merely does not attract them. The Sage is a focus of power and attracts those beings, no matter how sinful, who want to improve. When these people strive and yet all they have to give is a leaf, a flower, or a drop of water, the offering is accepted. No matter how few may be the qualities of the humble soul, those that he has can be made use of, if he will offer them. The Sage never withdraws from the individual; it is the individual who withdraws from the Sage.

The Sage does not accumulate (for himself):
 He lives for other people,
 And grows richer himself;
 He gives to other people,
 And has greater abundance. (81)

Give to receive is an esoteric teaching. Knowledge will spring up spontaneously in the course of time when devotion is complete.

The "Resist not evil" of the Sermon on the Mount is expressed in the following verse:—

Therefore the Sage says:—

"Who receives unto himself the calumny of the world
 Is the preserver of the state.

Who bears himself the sins of the world
 Is the king of the world." (78)

Who are those who have done this, taken upon themselves the sins of the world? All the Pro-

phets down the ages did so when they took on a physical body to teach the lost truths again. This taking on of a physical body signifies the taking on of the karma of the nation or race to which they come. There are other stories of this too. Shiva drinking the poison which came out of the churning of the ocean. Jesus bearing the cross of matter. Buddha taking on all his brothers' woes. Lao Tse says:—

It has been said that he who is a good preserver of his life
 Meets no tigers or wild buffaloes on land,

Is not vulnerable to weapons in the field of battle.

The horns of the wild buffalo are powerless against him;

The paws of the tiger are useless against him;

The weapons of the soldier cannot avail against him.

How is it so?

Because he is beyond death. (50)

The perfected human being repulses the things which are not in accord with his being as one pole of a magnet does the other. There are numerous traditions attributing this power to various teachers.

Patanjali's *Yoga Aphorisms* say the same thing: "When harmlessness and kindness are fully developed in the Yogee (him who has attained to cultivated enlightenment of the soul), there is a complete absence of enmity, both in men and animals, among all that are near to him."

The *Tao-te-king* says further of the Sage:—

In his dwelling, (the Sage) loves the (lowly) earth;

In his heart, he loves what is profound;

In his relations with others, he loves kindness;

In his words, he loves sincerity;

In government, he loves peace;

In business affairs, he loves ability;

In his actions, he loves choosing the right time.

It is because he does not contend

That he is without reproach. (8)

This last is very important: "Because he does not contend... he is without reproach." We must act for and as the Self of all creatures; then we shall not be contending.

When a man is enlightened he

Learns that which is unlearned,

And restores what the multitude have lost.

That he may assist in the course of Nature

And not presume to interfere. (64)

This is what *The Voice of the Silence* wants man to do, "Help Nature and work on with her; and Nature will regard thee as one of her creators

and make obeisance." Man can be Nature's ally and co-worker, thereby winning the right to master all the powers and potencies of Nature.

In two verses Lao Tse has traced the descent of man into matter, and also traced the cycles of *adharma* followed by *dharma* which remind us of what Krishna says in the *Gita* (IV. 7-8):—

On the decline of the great Tao,

The doctrines of "humanity" and "justice" arose.

When knowledge and cleverness appeared,

Great hypocrisy followed in its wake.

When the six relationships no longer lived at peace,

There was (praise of) "kind parents" and "filial sons."

When a country fell into chaos and misrule,

There was (praise of) "loyal ministers." (18)

The second reads:—

After Tao is lost, then (arises the doctrine of) humanity,
After humanity is lost, then (arises the doctrine of)
justice,

After justice is lost, then (arises the doctrine of) *li*
(Social order, control, good manners).

Now *li* is the thinning out of loyalty and honesty of heart.
And the beginning of chaos. (38)

If we look around us and hear what is being said, we hear people of different castes speaking of the inhumanity of others, politicians talk of "justice," children speak of "kind parents," and fathers and mothers of "filial sons," the voting public of "loyal ministers" and all act in accord with or criticize others in reference to social order, good and bad manners. The atom and hydrogen bombs mark the beginning of chaos.

The evolution into matter was not a degradation. It is a necessary experience that man has to go through. This descent into matter is needed to make of all of us self-conscious divine beings. The "fall" of man as given in the Christian world is meant to convey this idea. But it has been grossly misunderstood until today it is represented as a great sin. It was not. It was a voluntary entering of the school of matter to learn the lessons it had to teach. That we have become forgetful of our divinity and will have to regain the knowledge of it is in the course of evolution.

The *Tao-te-king*, though full of metaphysical concepts, is predominantly an ethical book, showing the way to spirit, purity and soul virtue. Its very brevity and logic appeal to our higher in-

stincts, and we instinctively understand it without completely comprehending all that it implies. As Lao Tse puts it:—

My teachings are very easy to understand
and very easy to practise,

But no one can understand them and no one
can practise them. (70)

As we read the *Tao-te-king* we find many ideas presented which are similar to those given in the *Bhagavad-Gita*, *The Voice of the Silence*, *Light on the Path*, *The Dhammapada*, in certain parts of the Bible, and in other ancient scriptures.

While the *Gita's* refrain is "Stand up and fight," the *Tao-te-king* says "Be spontaneous."

The correct concept about *sanyasa* is given in the *Tao-te-king* as it is given by Krishna; Lao Tse says:—

Retire when your work is done,
Such is Heaven's way. (9)

The doctrine is not to retire when you are bored with the world and you are tired with your duties to family, race or nation. "When your work is done." This would eliminate most present-day *yogis* and *sanyasis*, wandering all over India.

Again, like the *Gita*, where Krishna wants all actions to be performed as duties, as sacrifices without a view to their reactions, the *Tao-te-king* says that the Sage "acts without presuming on the result" (2)⁴ or, as another translation has it, "He acts without regard to the fruit of action." (2)⁵

As to the aspect of sacrifice, the *Tao-te-king* says:—

Nature is unkind:

It treats the creation like sacrificial straw-dogs.

The Sage is unkind:

He treats the people like sacrificial straw-dogs. (5)

Here "unkind" is used from our point of view. To reach perfection one must act in accord with Nature and all Nature is interdependent; therefore the benefit is for the whole, and man has to sacrifice his individual selfish actions to the action of the whole universe. Both Nature and the Sage expect this of man and man is capable of living up to this expectation.

⁴ Chalmers's rendition.

⁵ Old's rendition.

Going back to sacrifice: Krishna tells us, "Beings are nourished by food, food is produced by rain, rain comes from sacrifice, and sacrifice is performed by action" (III. 14). The same thing is voiced in the *Tao-te-king* :—

If kings and barons can keep (this unspoiled nature),
The whole world shall yield them lordship
of their own accord.
The Heaven and Earth join,
And the sweet rain falls. (32)

When a majority of men and women act according to their unspoiled nature, which is in accord with the forward motion of the world, their actions will be sacrifices. Sacrifice is the meeting of the highest Heaven and the action in matter—Earth.

There are two places in the *Tao-te-king* where the subtle bodies of men and things may be taken to be referred to. In Theosophical language this "force body," the existence of which certain scientists have found a useful hypothesis, is called the astral body. It is that which is the model for the material particles to gather upon. Lao Tse says :—

The softest substance of the world
Goes through the hardest.
The-which-is-without-form penetrates that-which-has
-no-crevice; (43)

and

Without stepping outside one's doors,
One can know what is happening in the world,
Without looking out of the windows,
One can see the Tao of Heaven. (47)

This refers to a function of the astral world which, because of its subtlety, is so sensitive that it keeps the record of all that happens. The astral penetrates everything and carries the records of the past and the present and, to a certain degree, the events of the future. The perfected man would not be perfect if he were not perfect on this plane of consciousness too. He can therefore read this record.

There is a portion of the *Tao-te-king* which deals with property and ownership :—

Therefore Tao gives them birth,
Teh fosters them,
Makes them grow, develops them,
Gives them a harbour, a place to dwell in peace,
Feeds them and shelters them.
It gives them birth and does not own them,

Acts (helps) and does not appropriate them,
Is superior, and does not control them,
—This is the Mystic Virtue. (51)

If this were correctly understood by all who call anything their own, it would put an end to the questions of economics and nearly all legislation. We should all be good trustees, not owners.

One verse in the *Tao-te-king* strikes a healthy note in regard to horse-racing :—

When the world lives in accord with Tao,
Racing horses are turned back to haul refuse carts.
When the world lives not in accord with Tao,
Cavalry abounds in the countryside. (46)

Straight is the Path, says Lao Tse :—

If I were possessed of Austere Knowledge,
Walking on the Main Path (Tao),
I would avoid the by-paths.
The Main Path is easy to walk on,
Yet people love the small by-paths. (53)

Lao Tse says to us :—

Reveal thy simple self,
Embrace thy original nature,
Check thy selfishness,
Curtail thy desires. (19)

Having presented some of the teachings of Lao-Tse (for his teachings on government you should go to the *Tao-te-king* itself), let us consider before we close something of Lao Tse himself.

H. P. Blavatsky has called him a God-like being and placed him among those high and exalted ones, Buddha, Krishna and Jesus, who became "Gods on earth."

Lao Tse's mission was greater than that of Confucius. And Confucius, H.P.B. says, was a "Fifth Rounder." To understand Lao Tse's greatness, then, we shall first have to know what a Fifth Rounder is.

In *The Secret Doctrine* (I. 162) H.P.B. explains how Man, or the higher three principles, descend into grosser forms of matter, then to ascend, through self-induced ways and means, back to spirit. This descent and ascent has been marked off into 7 stages, called Rounds. Man as he is now constituted is in the 4th Round, and therefore is starting on the upward journey. Confucius belonged to the stage ahead of us, namely, the 5th Round. So he was already, spiritually and mentally, morally and psychically, a whole evolu-

tionary stage ahead of us, and Lao Tse was more developed than that. To understand better the stage of development reached by a 5th Rounder we should read Plato's *Republic*. Confucius was a "codifier" while Lao Tse wrote his own books.

There are some quaint records of conversations between Lao Tse and Confucius that show their relative positions. One such, reported by Lin Yutang, describes how a disciple of Lao Tse was gathering fire-wood one day when he met Confucius.

He returned and told his master, "There is a man out there who is tall on top and squatty below. His back stoops and his ears are set backwards. He has a look in his eyes as if he was going to manage the whole universe. I don't know whose son he is."

"That is Ch'iu (Confucius)," said Lao Tse. "Ask him to come."

When Confucius arrived, Lao Tse said, "Ch'iu, forget your pride and your look of wisdom. Then you may look like a gentleman."

Another time there came to Confucius a man of the Lu State who had been mutilated, by the name of No-toes. He had come walking on his heels to see Confucius; but Confucius said, "You were careless, and so brought this misfortune upon yourself. What is the use of coming to me now?"

"It was because I was inexperienced," said No-toes, "and careless with my body that I injured my feet. Now I have come with something more precious than feet, and it is this that I am

seeking to preserve. There is no man, but Heaven shelters him; and there is no man, but the Earth supports him. I thought that you, Master, would be like Heaven and Earth. I little expected to hear these words from you."

"Pardon my stupidity," said Confucius. "Why not come in? I shall discuss with you what I have learned." But No-toes left.

When No-toes had left, Confucius said to his disciples, "Take a good lesson. No-toes is mutilated, yet he is seeking to learn in order to make atonement for his previous misdeeds. How much more should those seek to learn who have no misdeeds for which to atone?"

No-toes went off to see Lao Tse and said, "Is Confucius a Perfect One or is he not quite? How is it that he is so anxious to learn from you? He is seeking to earn a reputation by his abstruse and strange learning which is regarded by the Perfect One as mere fetters."

Lao Tse answered: "Why do *you* not make him regard life and death, and possibility and impossibility as alternations of one and the same principle, and so release him from those fetters?"

Lao Tse says of himself and his teaching in the *Tao-te-king*:—

In my words there is a principle.

In the affairs of men there is a system.

Because they know not these,

They also know me not.

Since there are few that know me,

Therefore I am distinguished.

Therefore the Sage wears a coarse cloth on top

And carries jade within his bosom.

(70)

IN THE LIGHT OF THEOSOPHY

An editorial in *The Christian Science Monitor* for 23rd October on "Overprivileged Youth" draws the moral from the recent case of three girls in their teens who had taken the savings (over \$18,000) which one of them had found in the home of a doctor for whom she was "baby-sitting" and managed to spend and to lose them in a 36-hour whirl in New York. They had all come from fairly comfortable homes with parents who had tried to impose certain safeguards though one of them had had numerous trips and visits to night clubs with an indulgent aunt. One complained that she had to be at home by 10 p.m., another that she was not allowed to smoke, and the third that life at high school was dull. Not until after their arrest did it, apparently, occur to them that they had done an injury by taking someone else's savings.

The *Monitor* points the obvious moral, remarking that

problems arise not only from squalor and poverty but also amid conditions in which life is made easy for youngsters, enjoyment appears the main objective, and concern for others is secondary, if not forgotten. *If children receive only a material scale of values, nothing satisfies.* (Italics ours)

There are several lessons to be drawn from the incident. For one thing, it underlines the Theosophical teaching that poverty is not necessarily worse Karma than wealth. (See *U.L.T. Pamphlets, Nos. 6 and 30* and "Advantages and Disadvantages in Life" in *Vernal Blooms*, p. 8).

But the most important lesson seems to be the indispensability of parents' gaining for themselves the conviction of human solidarity and of individual responsibility, as also of the working of the Moral Law, and inculcating by example as well as by precept ideals of integrity and of service to their fellow-men. There is no more dangerous bequest than the idea that the enjoyment of the objects of desire is the supreme good.

"Dowsing Is Nonsense," declared Thomas M. Riddick in *Harper's Magazine* for July. A consulting engineer and chemist in the water-works field, Mr. Riddick devoted seven pages to the

attempt to discredit "The Unexplained Mystery of Water Divining." Prof. A. M. Low, had recently dealt respectfully with the phenomenon and his paper, prepared for a Discussion Meeting of the Indian Institute of Culture at Basavanagudi, Bangalore, was published in *The Aryan Path* for May 1951. The butt of Mr. Riddick's attack is the book by the American historical novelist Kenneth Roberts, *Henry Gross and His Dowsing Rod*, but, though he presents several facts of interest to water-works engineers, which he charges both Mr. Roberts and Mr. Gross with being ignorant of, he fails to disprove either dowsing in general or the supernormal faculties of Mr. Henry Gross, to which Mr. Roberts is not the only one to bear witness.

Mr. Brooks Shepard's "Firsthand Report on Dowsing" in *Harper's Magazine* for September describes a sceptical approach to the subject followed by complete conviction of the possession of the dowsing faculty by several individuals, including his own son. He was, moreover, an eyewitness to some of Mr. Gross's most spectacular displays of a remarkable clairvoyance, demonstrated in connection with the search for water on Mr. Shepard's own farm. His predictions showed an accuracy completely unaccountable on any physical hypothesis, as Mr. Shepard's article makes abundantly plain. See "Dowsing—One of Man's Hidden Powers" in our pages for May 1951.

Daisy L. Hobman, who writes on "The Need for Stillness" in the October *Hibbert Journal*, describes the seclusion of 44 years' duration chosen in the late 16th century by Henry Welby, an educated Englishman of means, and the five months of complete solitude spent in the line of duty but by his own choice by August Courtauld, member of a British Surveying Expedition to the Arctic in the winter of 1944-45. The writer believes that this "Need for Stillness" is one which some feel more intensely than others but she sees it as a universal need, believing that

solitary contemplation...at some time or another must appear necessary to most if not all human beings.

The need of solitude and of silence at certain periods, to enable Nature herself to speak to the man who comes to her for instruction, is imperative for those who are trying to tread the spiritual path. The writer's suggestion is a good one, that places of natural beauty be retained as places of quiet, to which men may retire "for refreshment and renewal of the spirit, and of peace in nature." Such retreats can, indeed, help to raise the consciousness.

She recognizes also, however, that it is possible, as Yeats found it, even in everyday life to be conscious on occasion of peace, "like 'lake-water lapping with low sounds by the shore.'"

While I stand on the roadway, or on the pavements gray,

I hear it in the deep heart's core.

The Roman Emperor Marcus Aurelius put it even more specifically, some 1800 years ago, when he wrote:—

It is the custom of people to go to unfrequented places and country places and the sea-shore and the mountains for retirement; and this you often earnestly desired. But, after all, this is but a vulgar fancy, for it is in your power to withdraw into yourself whenever you desire. Now one's own mind is a place the most free from crowd and noise in the world, if a man's thoughts are such as to ensure him perfect tranquillity within, and this tranquillity consists in the good ordering of the mind.

Dr. Arnold J. Toynbee, the British historian, challengingly predicts in *The New York Times Magazine* for October 31st that our century will be remembered 300 years hence as "Not the Age of Atoms but of Welfare for All." The ideal of "extending the benefits of civilization to the common man" is, however, "new" only as the implementation of a very old and widely spread ideal. Mechanical power has, no doubt, been harnessed more effectively to technology in our century than in the historical past. The growing sense of world unity, moreover, encourages the hope of the extension of a measure of material well-being to the under-privileged millions of Asia and of Africa, though how far this in itself will conduce to "the good life" remains to be demonstrated.

The avoidance of ideological imperialism of

any stamp in connection with this extension of help is important. Dr. Toynbee does well to urge that adherence to the Western political pattern should not be required of those seeking help in promoting the common welfare. But he considers severe regimentation and discipline necessary for such a forced march as economically backward peoples must make to catch up with the rest, and urges that help should not be denied even to Communist régimes provided they oppose Russian domination. They may be expected to choose liberty when they consider that they can afford it! Meanwhile the prospects for human rights seem rather bleak.

Faith in industrialism may be held to cover a multitude of political divagations, but would Dr. Toynbee's formula of allowing each people to work its way towards the common objective of the common good "along a freely chosen course of its own" admit a like economic latitude? Would he concede that a nation which rejected industrialization should be helped, as, say, in developing the village-based economy of Gandhiji's dream? If not, may not economic conformity be too high a price for political toleration?

Paternalism must bear part of the responsibility for the drift to a regimented world. Even when the motive is purely disinterested, helping others with their consent may weaken their independence and resourcefulness, while doing so against their will contravenes their fundamental right to self-determination. A man's right to determine what treatment he will have for his own body has not gone unchallenged. It is flouted in the imposition of compulsory vaccination. It is proposed to flout it further in the United States by introducing fluorides into public drinking water to help reduce decay of children's teeth.

The Christian Science Monitor for 30th October, protesting vigorously against this proposal, mentions that even doctors do not agree as to the effects, but even if they did, the step would still be indefensible. The *Monitor*, rightly demanding that the drive for fluoridation should be halted at once, points out the danger of such a precedent:—

Citizens in many parts of the United States are being asked to accept this form of compulsory medica-

tion without fully appreciating how it infringes on individual rights. Once this kind of treatment is accepted there can easily be heavy commercial pressures for putting other medicines into the public water supply.

Truly in our day more than ever, "eternal vigilance is the price of liberty."

Dr. Robert J. McCracken, Minister of the Riverside Church, New York City, made a stirring contribution to the debate in a Forum Session. On "The Rôle of Dissent in a Democracy," reported in the *New York Herald Tribune* for October 28th. Speaking on "The Peril of Conformity," he arraigned the imitative instinct that makes men "adapt themselves chameleonlike to their environment," so that they "are moulded by society when they ought to be its moulders." He saw a danger that individuality of expression and independence of judgment might become lost arts, so much had standardization gained sway. The Western world, he declared, sorely needed the type of person who "saw with eagle eye the evils of his day and had no mind to tolerate them or hold his peace about them."

Dr. McCracken recalled Voltaire's remark that "every man must be either the hammer or the anvil," adding that mankind did tend in general to fall into the class of those who made history or the larger class of those who were made by it, adding:—

One thing is incontestable. Those who have done most for the world and lifted the level of life in their generation have been the dissenters and non-conformists. They have been persons of resolute purpose and staunch principle. They have had standards and kept them, no matter what the cost. They have been ready to face criticism, ridicule, ostracism, impoverishment. They have not run along with life. They have taken hold of it firmly....

Dr. J. R. Smythies presented "The Present Crisis in Psychology" in *The Aryan Path* for November, showing what a challenge the findings of para-psychology offer to the accepted materialistic conception of man as a complex physico-chemical mechanism, and of the mind as bearing "the same relation to the brain as the digestion does to the viscera." Dr. Smythies traced the

changing concept of man and the world from the Middle Ages on. Psychology had fallen far behind the physical sciences in importance, until it had suddenly come to life in the last century, the pioneers having been the neurologists. There had been attempts to claim psychology as a branch of biology and the Behaviourists had tried to show human behaviour as conditioned and predetermined, while, that bodies move under "the known laws of physics, together with a few not yet discovered but similar" was the belief held by most scientists today. Into such follies had ignorance of man's true nature betrayed Western thinkers in general. There were a few to protest against the scientific method's adequacy to solve all psychological problems. Jung, Henri Bergson, William McDougall, and recently Sherrington had declared:—

The physical basis of mind encroaches more and more upon the study of mind, but there remain mental events which seem to lie beyond any physiology of the brain.

Dr. Smythies suggests additional dimensions of space for accounting for para-psychological happenings, plus a psychical mechanism, organized and material, which bears a resemblance to the astral body of Theosophy.

The Self controls this mechanism and through it the brain and so orders its thoughts and actions.... We experience in our consciousness, not our brain, but the interior of our psychical mechanism.

Dr. Smythies quotes Boehme's reply to the question, "Where does the soul go after death?" "There is no need for it to go anywhere." This can be better understood from the Theosophical teaching of the various principles and vehicles of man and the world interpenetrating each other, being "in co-adunition but not in consubstantiality," than from the suggestion of different dimensions of space. The search for another characteristic of matter, corresponding to the next sense, "normal clairvoyance," already foreshadowed in the phenomena of para-psychology, will, we suggest, be more fruitful than the attempt to conceive of the difference in terms of dimensions, which apply properly only to the characteristic of matter known as extension. (*The Secret Doctrine*, Vol. I, pp. 251-2)

"Emerson and Eastern Values" is the subject of Chidambaram Swami in *The Aryan Path* for November, where he brings out how Emerson had been attracted to the East even in his teens. He quotes the verse from Emerson's poem "Brahma," which so closely parallels Verse 19 in Chapter II of the *Gita*, where we read, in Mr. Judge's rendition:—

The man who believeth that it is this Spirit which killeth, and he who thinketh that it may be destroyed, are both alike deceived; for it neither killeth nor is it killed.

Emerson wrote:—

If the red slayer think he slays,
Or if the slain think he is slain,
They know not well the subtle ways
I keep, and pass, and turn again.

The author draws a number of interesting parallel illustrations of the ancient Indian scriptures and Emerson's presentation of the same ideas from Swami Paramananda's *Emerson and Vedanta*, which amply confirm the great contribution which Emerson made to the understanding by the West of Eastern values. They prove Emerson beyond a doubt to have played an important rôle as a forerunner of the Theosophical Movement of our era.

We may quote from the article of Chidambaram Swami what Emerson wrote on Transmigration and on Maya in confirmation of this fact:—

It is the secret of the world that all things subsist and do not die, but only retire a little from sight, and afterwards return again.

And again,

The rushing metamorphosis,
Dissolving all that fixture is,
Melts things that be to things that seem,
And solid Nature to a dream.

Writing in the November *Aryan Path* on "Gandhiji's Non-Violence and the Doctrine of Lao-Tse," Mr. Wu Shih-chang, Lecturer in Chinese at Oxford University, brings out how opposed to war the ancient Chinese sage was, as well as the modern Indian saint. Lao-Tse was convinced that war could never stop war, but could only produce new wars. He declared in the *Tao Té Ching* that "arms are often boomerangs." He warned that war brought calamity:—

Where the troops are, thorns and brambles grow,
After the raising of great armies, there will be
famine and disaster.

Lao-Tse had proclaimed the power of the weak and the wealth of the lowly, illustrating his point by water, being the most pliable and soft of all substances, and yet being able to undermine mountains.

Mr. Wu asks whether Lao Tse's question and answer: "Who can offer the 'too much' he has to the world? He must be the one who grasps the truth" sounds like Marxism or like *Satyagraha*. In the light of Acharya Vinoba Bhave's one-man land-gifts campaign in India, this ancient echo is particularly appropriate in the present context.

Lao-Tse also, he brings out, advocated, as Gandhiji would do, the requiting of resentment with kindness.

To teach beleefe in good and still devotion
To preach of Heavens wonders, and delights
Yet when each of us, in his own heart lookes,
He finds the God there, faire unlike his Bookes.

—FULKE GREVILLE, LORD BROOKE

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The work it has on hand and the end it keeps in view are too absorbing and too lofty to leave it the time or inclination to take part in side issues. That work and that end is the dissemination of the Fundamental Principles of the philosophy of Theosophy, and the exemplification in practice of those principles, through a truer realization of the SELF; a profounder conviction of Universal Brotherhood.

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