

THE THEOSOPHICAL MOVEMENT

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LET GO

If ambition rules thy thought in the market-place where gold and silver roll back and forth, let go of ambition and take thy thought to the Temple of Wisdom—thy heavenly head.

If pride rules thy will in the home where wife sings and child smiles, let go of thy pride and take thy will to the Shrine of Love—thy hidden heart.

If vanity rules thy feeling in the garden where friends meet, let go of vanity and take thy feeling to the Fane of Charity—thy hands that give and thy lips that bless.

BOOK OF ITEMS.

Theosophical Discipline enjoins that the aspirant should formulate for himself a few definite ascetic practices.

In adopting them the implications of the teaching that the entire course of evolution runs from within without, have to be taken into account.

The practitioner is called upon to sacrifice the Personal Ego to the Individual Ego, Kama-Manas to Buddhi-Manas.

The aim and purpose of the whole endeavour is to be of service to humanity.

These four propositions are easily understood in theory. In practice they offer innumerable difficulties. Absence of accurate knowledge of his own psychological make-up would render the task well-nigh impossible to the student, and so the preliminary study of the science of Self-Knowledge has to be prosecuted. That he has within himself good and evil—and these in constant struggle—is easily known by the student. But that thoughts and feelings are also distinct categories is not so easily perceived; ideas and emotions are so mixed up that care and time are needed to sift them.

What should the practitioner learn to begin with? This—

The Personal Ego is the *Sosie* or resemblance of the Individual Ego and has to win its immortality through adeptship.

The Personal Ego can only reach or bring itself into communication with Atma through Buddhi-

Manas. This is possible because Lower Manas is the reflection or shadow of Buddhi-Manas, having the *potentialities* of both though conquered generally by its association with Kama elements.

Buddhi-Manas is entirely unable to manifest during its periodical manifestations except through the human mind or Lower Manas. The potentiality of Buddhi locked up in Lower Manas is *the* stepping-stone to immortality.

The activity of the Kama elements engages the attention of the Personal Ego or Lower Manas to such an extent that neither time is left, nor is inclination felt, to attend to this task of supreme spiritual importance. Kama elements are alert and active, and modern education is of little help to us in the task of freeing the mind from their influence and attraction. We are not taught about the potentiality of the Buddhi element residing in the Lower Manas. The Kama elements are like the tentacles of an octopus which grip the Lower Manas in a hundred places and hold on to them very tenaciously. This process so glours the Lower Manas that it forgets the very existence of its parentage, the source from which it rayed forth, and remains ignorant that it carries within itself the potentialities of both the Higher Manas and Buddhi. The viscid stickiness of the Kama elements ruins the chances of many good people, because they take it for granted not only that Kamic propensities are natural to man at his present stage of evolution, but further that no remedy exists against their attacks, nor is there

any way of escape. Theosophy, however, very definitely teaches that not only is such escape possible but also that it is imperative that man should fight this octopus, because it is *really unnatural* for him to submit to its grip.

The primary result of even a slight activation of the potentialities of Manas and Buddhi enshrined in the Personal Ego germinates as Vairagya—in-difference to the life of the senses, loathing of vice, a desire to turn away from the noise, the stench, and the ugliness of this Kali-Yuga. This seed of Vairagya sprouts in the urge to go inwards—not outside to forest or mountain top, but within, to the cave of the heart where the Image of Buddhi-Manas waits to welcome the devotee. Not a few Theosophical aspirants feel the influence of Vairagya, but false, and more often partial, understanding of the Esoteric Philosophy makes them go on wrong paths from which retreat has to be made, or circle round and round unavailingly. One simple rule of practice for the cultivation of the feeling of Vairagya may be expressed in two short words—Let Go.

It is easy to give away outer possessions. Difficult as it may sound to the worldly, an ardent aspirant, full of enthusiasm, can easily write a cheque to charity and choose the life of a pauper—only to find that the step has not taken him very far. To part with outer possessions is comparatively easy. To discard the inner possessions embedded in the Kama elements is very difficult. Moreover, time is necessary—not weeks but months pass ere the practitioner knows what his actual encumbrances are; what forms of lust and of wrath and of greed exist in him. It takes time for one to see his own ugliness, to hear the din and clatter of his own voice, to smell in horror the stench within him. Ugly experiences these are, but none can escape them; ere a man overthrows the enemies, he must face them.

Cultivate the habit to Let Go. The inner mental and moral urges and inhibitions are not to be pandered to. The inner mental and moral aspirations are to be fostered. This is the beginning of the Inner Way.

Do you desire to become wealthy, so that you may do good? Let go.

Do you long to become popular and famous for the sake of the Cause? Let go.

Do you yearn to possess power and feel the sway of it over others? Let go.

Do you want to get love? Let go.

Do you wish to give love? Let go.

Do you long to obtain knowledge, so that you may teach? Let go.

Do you yearn for abnormal powers so that you may help? Let go.

Do you like to be a "guru" to some people? Let go.

Do you like to be a "special chela" to some one? Let go.

Do you like to be a guide, philosopher and friend in your own Lodge? Let go.

Do you like to succeed? Let go.

Do you like not to be frustrated? Let go.

Do you like your own plans accepted? Let go.

Do you like to be praised? Let go.

Do you like not to be criticized, or even to be criticized? Let go.

Do you think of yourself as a "fine fellow" or a "miserable worm"? Let go.

Do you day-dream about your likes or dislikes? Let go.

Do you dwell in imagination on your future growth and glory? Let go.

Let go. Let go. But hold fast to the Image of Buddhi-Manas within yourself and in thinking and feeling, in speaking and acting hour by hour, look for the potentialities of Buddhi-Manas in the Personal Ego, and let them radiate forth beams of service impersonally rendered to all, remembering that Humanity is a great Brotherhood by virtue of the sameness of the material from which it is formed physically and morally. Unless, however, it becomes a Brotherhood also intellectually, it is no better than a superior genus of animal.

UNMERITED SUFFERING

In the correspondence columns of *Lucifer*, Vol. II, p. 415 for July 1888 a discussion took place: objection was taken to the following words used in an article on "Reincarnation" published in *Theosophical Siftings*, Vol. I, No. 6, pp. 7-8.

There must be a certain amount of injustice done, and it is this injustice which meets with compensation in Devachan, or at least forms a part of that so compensated.

In answering the objection the original writer pointed to another sentence of his:—

It [Devachan] is purely a state of bliss, in which man receives compensation for the undeserved misery of the past life.

To this remark H.P.B. added a footnote:—

"Quite correct; but it is not the *injustice* or *mistakes* of Karma which are the causes of such 'undeserved misery,' but other causes, independent of the past Karma of either the producer or the

innocent victim of their effects, new *actions* generated by the wickedness of men and circumstances ; and which arouse Karmic law to fresh activity, *i.e.*, the punishment of those who caused these new *Nidânas* (or causal connections), and the reward of him who suffered from them undeservedly."

Further, H.P.B. closed this discussion with the following Editor's Note :—

"For one acquainted with the doctrine of Karma, and after this explanation, the objection taken by our American correspondent seems to rest on a misconception of Mr. Harbottle's meaning in his article. But no more can the correspondent be taken to task for it. Removed several pages from the said justifying paragraph, and standing by itself, the sentence under criticism did seem to imply and warrant such a construction. One can never be too cautious and too explicit, when writing upon such abstruse subjects. As the defendant has risen and explained, however, the short debate may be closed. Both plaintiff and defendant now stand accused : one of judging too hastily and on appearance ; the other of having written too loosely, and without due caution, upon a subject of the utmost importance. Both, therefore, may be left to their respective *Karma*."

The subject was taken up in full by H.P.B. in *Lucifer*, Vol. III, p. 411, for January 1889 in the article entitled "Dialogue on the Mysteries of the After Life"—which was partially embodied by her in *The Key to Theosophy* (p. 130 *et seq.*, Indian Edition).

Next, in *The Theosophical Forum* for April-May 1890, p. 7, an answer was offered by its editor, Mr. Fullerton. In March 1891 Judge printed the following article in *The Path* :—

"REWARD FOR UNMERITED SUFFERINGS"
Karma as Judge, Guide, and Rewarder.

In the *Key to Theosophy*, on page 161, the author uses a phrase which has been objected to on the ground that a strict construction of it overthrows the whole doctrine of Karma. The words referred to and the contiguous sentence are :

"Our philosophy teaches that Karmic punishment reaches the Ego only in its next incarnation. After death it *receives only the reward for the unmerited sufferings endured during its past incarnation.*" [Indian Ed. p. 133]

The italicised portion is the part objected to, and the objection raised is that, if all that happens to us so happens because it is our Karma, then it cannot be *unmerited* : hence, either the statement is incorrect or Karma is not the law of justice, but

there must be some other one governing man and the vicissitudes of his life.

Let us go further down the same page and see if some sentences in the same paragraph do not bear upon the meaning of the author. She says. "If it may be said that there is not a mental or physical suffering in the life of a mortal which is not the direct fruit and consequence of some sin in a previous existence ; on the other hand, since he does not preserve the slightest recollection of it in his actual life and feels himself not deserving of such punishment, and therefore *thinks* he suffers for no guilt of his own, this alone is sufficient to entitle the human soul to the fullest consolation, rest, and bliss in his *post-mortem* existence. Death comes to our spiritual selves ever as a deliverer and friend."

All students of theosophy known to me believe that Karma is the great governing law, that all suffering and reward come from and through Karma ; and, as I understand from the published and unpublished views of H. P. Blavatsky, she holds the same opinion. Therefore, such being the case, what we have to enquire into is the meaning intended to be conveyed by the passages cited. There is no doubt whatever that the author of the *Key* agrees, except perhaps about hell, with the Buddhist priest who, writing several years ago in the *Theosophist** upon this subject said :

"In this light Karma may be defined as...that irresistible force which drags the criminal into the hell fire amidst his loud lamentations, the powerful hand that rescues the wretch from the merciless hands of the infernal angels and takes him to a happier place for the amelioration of his miserable condition, or the heavenly angel *who bears away, as it were, the enraptured soul to the blissful abodes above* and takes it back after a very long course of heavenly enjoyments to this world, or to hell itself, paying little or no attention to the sorrowful tales of the reluctant soul."

Construing together the sentences in the paragraph from the *Key to Theosophy*, we find that she says, in effect, in the later sentences on the same page, that all suffering is the direct fruit and consequence of some sin committed in a previous existence, but that as the *personality* in the life when the suffering comes has no recollection of the cause which brought it about, the punishment is *felt* by that personality to be undeserved, and another cause is thus set up which has its action in the *post mortem* condition. The difficulty raised by the objection put is that the whole matter has been made objective, and Karma has been looked upon as a material or objective law, and the *post mortem* state placed in the same category. The true Ego neither suffers nor enjoys, and is not bound at any time by Karma ;

* Vol. I *Theosophist*, p. 199.

TWO ANSWERS

but as *Devachan* is a subjective condition in which the Ego therein creates for itself out of its own thoughts the surroundings fit for it, so we may say, without at all interfering with our conceptions of Karma, that after death this Ego receives the reward for the sufferings which *it thought* were unmerited in the life just quitted. The word "unmerited" as written in *The Key* is not to be construed as being used by any Karmic power, but as the conception formed by the Ego during life of the propriety or impropriety of whatever suffering may have been then endured.

For, as we have seen in other studies, *Devachan*—the *post mortem* state under consideration—is a condition wherein no objective experiences are undergone by the Ego, but in which the thoughts of a certain sort had during life act in producing about it, or rather within its sphere, the blissful subjective experiences necessary for the resting of the soul. Hence if when in the mortal frame it considered itself unjustly treated by fate or nature, it set up then and there the causes for bringing about a so-called reward for the suffering which to it seemed unmerited, just so soon as it would be released from the body and the causes be able to act in the only place or state which will permit their action.

This blissful state, as intimated in the quotation made from the *Theosophist*, is Karmic reward in the plane of *Devachan*. The "Karmic punishment" referred to in the *Key* is not the opposite of this, but is the opposite of Karmic reward acting on the plane of objective earth life. For the opposite of devachanic reward or bliss must be on a similar plane, such as the "hell" spoken of by the Buddhist priest, or Avitchi. If these distinctions are clearly borne in mind, there cannot be much difficulty with any of these questions.

To me Karma is not only judge, it is also friend and deliverer. It is essentially just. The conditions are laid down. If I comply, the result inevitably follows. It is my friend because it will, just as inevitably as life and death, give me a rest in *devachan* where the tired soul which needs recuperation as well as the body will find what is best for it. And a mere phrase like "unmerited suffering" invented by me in my ignorance here upon earth will be one of the factors used by this very Karma to bring about my peace and joy, albeit that still again inexorable Karma awaits me at the threshold of *Devachan* to mete out in my next appearance upon this terrestrial stage my just deserts. And thus on and ever on and upward we shall be led from life to life and stage to stage, until at last the conviction has become an inherent portion of our being that Karma is not only just but merciful.

A STUDENT.

In *The Forum* for September 1893, pp. 10-11, the following question and answer appeared :—

Man having free-will, is it not probable that some individuals suffer or enjoy that to which their individual Karma does not entitle them, by reason of the acts of others? If so, is not this temporary surplus suffering or enjoyment balanced by the merit or demerit of succeeding incarnations?

W. Q. J.—It seems to me impossible that any person suffers or enjoys anything whatever except through Karma; whether we are in families, nations, or races, and thus suffer and enjoy through general causes, it is still because of our own Karma leading us to that place. In succeeding incarnations we are rewarded or punished according to the merit or demerit of preceding lives, and wherever it is stated in Theosophic books by competent writers that people are "rewarded for unmerited suffering" it always refers to the fact that a person does not himself perceive any connection between the suffering or reward and his own act. Consequently in *Devachan* he makes for himself what he considers a complete reward for any supposed unmerited suffering, but in his life upon earth he receives only that which he exactly merits, whether it be happiness or the opposite. This is a brief statement of the doctrine, but I think it can be sustained by argument. It seems to me the whole philosophy would fall to the ground if for a moment we admitted that any suffering or reward was not that to which the individual was exactly entitled, for the largeness of the reward which the Ego makes for itself in *Devachan* is something that he is entitled to, inasmuch as it balances the mental attitude he assumed while living and satisfies his individual needs without disturbing anyone else.

Mr. Judge's answer was followed by another from the pen of Mr. Fullerton. In the next issue of *The Forum* (October 1893, p. 7) appeared the following question and answer :—

There seems to be a glaring inconsistency not only between the two answers to the question in *Forum* LI about unmerited suffering and its reward, but between what W. Q. J. says now and what he said when answering a question in relation to the unmerited Karma of some of the people who perished in the Johnstown flood. In his old answer he took for granted the existence of some unmerited suffering, but now he says there is no such thing.

W. Q. J.—Quite possibly the reply made by me in *Forum* LI may not agree with the Editor's, but that is only because my view and his are not the same, and in the T. S. each man is entitled to his own opinion. But I find no inconsistency between my answer and what I said respecting the Johnstown

sufferers ; however, as the question does not say where the Johnstown matter is printed, it may be left on one side.

I do not think any suffering or any enjoyment is unmerited. Whatever we have comes by law and justly. But as this is a world governed by cause and effect, the mental attitude of those who suffer or enjoy must be considered ; it has its force and effect ; it must be provided for. Men in their ignorance do not always see why they suffer, as no connection is visible between the punitive circumstances and the prior cause, which, indeed, had arisen in some long-gone life. Hence, while suffering, the person feels deeply that he does not merit it. This is what is meant by "unmerited suffering." In the mind is lodged the thought that pain has been suffered which was not merited. Devachan provides for this just as it provides for many another supposed ill or injustice. There the person—due to the thought I have spoken of—finds for himself the reward for "unmerited suffering." If he were fully enlightened, of course he would see that all that had happened was just, and no unmerited suffering would exist in that case.

Modern minds are always dwelling on objective modes of thought which constantly ignore the truth that the mind is the source alike of pain and pleasure, of punishment and reward. The Universe is a vast ideation alone, and everywhere we must remember that the mind rules. Until the mind is free, illusion exists on every plane. In Devachan and in Earth-life the illusions are equally great. Inasmuch as the mind is the ruler, the guide, and the standard, it must happen that we will often suppose we have been unjustly treated. Now the mere fact that we were not does not prevent the feeling of unmerited suffering unless the person is fully aware of the fact and accepts it. And as most of us are not fully enlightened, we are constantly subjected to what seems unjust. Criminals often think they have been victims of injustice. This must be taken into account in nature, for their minds and thoughts are as much a part of it as any other mind. Hence a large sum of suffering must exist that is classed as unmerited. This is provided for in Devachan. But in Earth-life exact objective as well as mental results follow. If this "unmerited suffering" is not to be so classed, we will have to find some other word. At present we would have to use a long sentence to express the idea, thus : "In Devachan the person finds compensation for those sufferings which in earth-life were supposed by the sufferer to be unmerited, in consequence of prior causes not being known."

But most certainly every circumstance, all suffering, all pleasure, each reward and every punishment, are the due and exact result of causes set

up by the person who is the experiencer. And the richness or barrenness of Devachan itself is in each case also an exact result of causes set up in the preceding Earth-life, which in turn are the outcome—due to evolved character—of all previous lives.

MANTRAS

Some points of interest to Theosophical students appear in a study by Mr. N. K. Venkatesan (*Quarterly Journal of the Mythic Society*, July-October 1936) on "The Atharva Veda and the Mantra Śāstra," the latter being defined by H.P.B. in the *Theosophical Glossary* as "Brahmanical writings on the occult science of incantations." Mr. T. Subba Row's definition of the Mantrika sakti as "the force or power of letters, speech or music... in all its manifestations" is quoted in *The Secret Doctrine*. (I, 293). It must be remembered that the occult power of any mantra, which "when chanted according to given instructions produces wonderful effects" "does not reside in the words but in the inflexion or accent given and the resulting sound originated thereby."

Mr. Venkatesan refers to "the mystic power of the letter or *akṣara*" and tells us :—

"This stress on *akṣara* took two forms in thought, viz., (i) greatness of the imperishable Brahma represented by *Aum*, the praṇava and (ii) the mystic value of the letters of the alphabet on which the whole Mantra Śāstra is based."

THE THEOSOPHICAL MOVEMENT for September 1936 reprinted Mr. Judge's article on "AUM." We may quote also a significant statement of H.P.B.'s that the great secret of the evocation of the unknown PRESENCE is the supreme mystery of the holy syllable. She adds :—

The AUM contains the evocation of the Vedic triad, the *Trimurti* Brahma, Vishnu, Siva, say the Orientalists ; it contains the evocation of *something more real and objective than this triune abstraction*—we say, respectfully contradicting the eminent scientists. It is the trinity of man himself, on his way to become immortal through the solemn union of his inner triune SELF... It is, when this trinity, in anticipation of the final triumphant reunion beyond the gates of corporeal death became for a few seconds a UNITY, that the candidate is allowed, at the moment of the initiation, to behold his future self. (*Isis Unveiled*, II, 114-5).

Mr. Venkatesan's study convinces him that the Mantra Śāstra is an outgrowth of the Atharva Veda, which he pronounces "as good a Veda as the Yajur Veda or the R̥gveda, in language and import," recalling H.P.B.'s statement in *Isis Unveiled* (II, 415) :—"We can never admit that the three other Vedas are less worthy of their name than the R̥ghymns," which she elsewhere called "the records written by the earliest Initiates of the Fifth (our race) concerning the primordial teachings." (*The Secret Doctrine*, II, 606.)

FORERUNNERS

"We are our own forerunners." KAHILIL GIBRAN

Where shall we turn to find our true Utopia?—that ideal society that some of the great thinkers of the race have visioned for all mankind, where all would have opportunity, not privilege, but the right and the power to provide each his own plenty, to find his own place, and contribute to the common good; where there would be no need for laws, save the great universal laws of nature under which all beings evolve; where each man could develop his own gifts and talents as a contribution to the common energy; where "all for each, and each for all" was the working motto, not hypothesis—where shall we turn to find such a Utopia?

Well, north, south, east or west, we know we cannot find it; but east, west, north and south, we can *found* it.

Can religion help us? Yes, a true ideal binding men together; but not religions. They separate, not unite. Recall how the early disciples of Christ quarrelled—"I am of Paul; and I of Apollos." The history of the Christian Church is full of horrors. The history of its overthrow is likewise full of horrors. Religions have failed man because of their narrow conceptions, their little personal gods, their corrupt beliefs (leading to corrupt practice), their divisions of all men into sheep and goats. Science never did offer a real staff for the mind of man to lean on, because it does not take in the reaches of the spirit. Where then shall we turn? It is not unnatural that man should try to evolve a social order, to build his world nearer to heart's desire by legislation, and so various systems calling themselves parliaments, confederations, republics, states communistic, socialistic, dictatorships, and what not, are tried. Do they answer, any of them? Are men better housed, or fed, or educated in one than in another? In each we find slums of the spirit as well as of the body. Has the soul finer opportunity to learn—to expand—in a democracy or a dictatorship? Our prejudices answer. Is it the right answer?

As long as classes and nations do not realize themselves as parts of a whole, there can be no order, only chaos.

But there is one word, a big fine word, to express a spiritual ideal of a state—the Commonwealth. Even in its lowest aspect, its physical meaning, it is good, but in its higher meanings it is better: the Commonwealth of mind—the Commonwealth of spirit. It means a pooling of joint effort; it means necessities answered, not luxuries for a few, and poverty for a many; it means opportunity for all; also efforts of all; responsibility of all; rewards of all. In its highest sense it is capable of almost in-

finite development. The Commonwealth. But instead, we have the common poverty. Poverty of knowledge, poverty of soul, poverty of body.

What is it that is wrong with us? There must be some root cause. Individuals make nations. Nations now are reaching out towards internationalism. But internationalism implies a right kind of nationalism, in which the citizens of a state *possess the state*, and are not possessed by it. To be possessed by it, is as bad as for an individual to be possessed by his body. If nations make leagues of some nations against others, and thus create division instead of unity in mankind, what shall be done?

We have to ask ourselves.

Have you ever seen a child building a house of blocks and, getting dissatisfied with it, sweep it away, with one wave of the hand? It is a fine gesture. We have to start rebuilding from the foundations. And what are they? So simple one is afraid to say them:

The Whole = The Commonwealth

The Parts = The Give and Take

The right relationship between them = The beings comprised in it.

The Three Fundamentals in short.

When we each understand our own nature, we shall know that of every other soul, and would no more injure it than we would our own. If all self-interest could be put aside for the common weal, there would be no wars, no strifes. We talk of "collective security." We have seen, in bitter humiliation, what a farce it is. It breaks, like the "collective" waves of the sea on the immovable rocks of self-interest. No league of some nations against others will ever achieve it. Humanity is one. Its interests, even, are one. If we could realize this with head and heart combined, all humanity would be in league and pursue its way to its final goal. National and class differences would disappear in the common effort, the common perception, not in a levelling down but in the reaching up of all for the good of all. Intellectual recognition would become spiritual realization.

The way to attain this? Teach reincarnation, teach karma. "Causes sown each hour bear each its harvest of effects." Teach the evolution of the soul through many lives. Tell people—let them know. Make it plain. "Westward the course of Empire takes its way." As Theosophists, we know we have come, as souls, that whole way westward, through brown, yellow and white races, through all classes, and kinds of society, India, Egypt, Greece, Rome, Britain, America. But when the course of Empire has gone as far West as it can go, it must turn East again. Eastward our eyes turn then to the

high table-lands of the Spirit, to the ancient Light that shines on all, for all, to help them individually to recognise, and collectively to become a league of Humanity, a universal brotherhood, a socialism based on moral and spiritual laws, not on economic and political ones.

Many have glimpsed it, seen visions, and dreamed dreams. We have to bring those visions down from the plane of the noumenal to the actual phenomenal world. We can. We are our own forerunners, of those races yet to be, the great oncoming races. Listen to the vision of one mind of our own time, Edward Carpenter :—

I saw a new life, a new society, arise,
 Man I saw arising once more to dwell with Nature ;
 Each one doing the work before him to do, and
 taking his chance of the reward,
 Doubting no more of his reward, than the hand
 doubts, or the foot, to which the blood flows
 according to the use to which it is put ;
 The plentiful common halls, stored with the
 products of
 Art, and History, and Science, to supplement the
 simple household accommodations ;
 The sweet and necessary labour of the day ;
 All these I saw—for man the companion of Nature.
 Civilization behind him now—the wonderful stretch
 of the past ;
 Continents, empires, religions, wars, migrations—all
 gathered up in him ;
 The immense knowledge, the vast winged powers—
 to use or not use—
 He, comparatively indifferent, passing on to other
 spheres of interest.
 The calm which falls after long strife, the dignity
 of rest after toil,
 Hercules, his twelve labours done, sitting as a god
 on the great slope of Olympus,
 Looking out over the Earth—on which he was once
 a mortal.

A PSYCHIC HOTCHPOTCH

Beyond Earth's Fears,* sent us for review, is a quite mediocre mediumistic production. The fathering of most of the very commonplace communications from the "Union of Spiritual Affinities" upon the great Russian novelist, Turgeniev, seems grossly unfair. One is tempted to exclaim with Hamlet, "Alas, poor ghost!" Minor rôles are assigned other defenceless dead celebrities, Karl Marx, Leo Tolstoy, Keir Hardie. Even "the holy devil," Rasputin, announces himself under an alias and we are given assurance that "the absolution and the forgiveness of all his wrong doings have been completed." The book is a hotchpotch of propaganda for Communism and "La Countrie [*sic.*] and

Empire of Russia," and of vague and cloying Sweetness and Light, printed at the request of the "Union" above mentioned. H.P.B. penned innumerable warnings against mediumship. We quote from one :

The pale soulless corpses moving in the trackless fields of "Kama loka," appear to him [the medium] the living images of the "dear departed" ones ; the broken echoes of once human voices, passing through his mind, suggest to him well co-ordinated phrases which he repeats, in ignorance that their final form and polish were received in the innermost depths of his own brain-factory. And hence the sight and the hearing of that which if seen in its true nature would have struck the medium's heart cold with horror, now fills him with a sense of beatitude and confidence. He really believes that the immeasurable vistas displayed before him are the real spiritual world, the abode of the blessed disembodied angels... on the whole, mediumship is most dangerous ; and *psychic* experiences when accepted indiscriminately lead only to honestly deceiving others, because the medium is the first self-deceived victim. (*Raja-Yoga*, pp. 72-3)

In *The Listener* (16th December 1936), Miss Dorothy Macardle appealed for a serious hearing for the influence of the moon on vegetation :—

"The observations on 'moonstruck flowers' by a lady who had made a garden in the tropics should perhaps be regarded as a contribution to practical horticulture and farming, as well as to folklore. Since the same beliefs are found in a place so far from the tropics as Ireland it must surely be presumed that they have a basis in fact. Here, thirty years ago, old farmers would tell you that root-crops, such as potatoes, beets and radishes, should be planted in 'the dark of the moon,' but fruit and vegetables bearing above-ground in 'the light of the moon.' Noxious weeds, such as thistles and nettles, they maintained, must be cut in July and August in the dark of the moon.

"There was reported recently the case of a rice-planter in China who took legal action against people who erected a large neon sign near his plantation, and won it, being able to satisfy the Court that the light ruined his crops by 'keeping the rice awake.' Is it not exceedingly probable that moonlight, as well as electric light, has a definite effect on plants and seeds? And do not such observations as these, taken in conjunction with the age-old traditions of herbalists, deserve to be regarded as something more than records of superstition? Do they not challenge scientific research?"

The influence of the moon upon plant growth is repeatedly mentioned by H.P.B., but it is not, as Miss Macardle seems to imply, a simple case of the effect of the light rays of the moon. Nor is this influence always beneficent. The reader's attention is drawn to a paragraph in our issue of November 1936 (p. 16).

* *Beyond Earth's Fears* By IDA M. EVERETT KEEBLE. (Published for the Authoress by W. E. Harrison and Sons, Ipswich. 1s.)

THE WORLD FOUNDATION

Eighteen prominent publicists—Señor S. de Madariaga, Lord Allen, Sir Norman Angell, Messrs. Gilbert Murray and Ray Lyman Wilbur, Herr Thomas Mann, Monsieur Jules Romains and Signor Guglielmo Ferrero, among others—have published a remarkable brochure entitled *The World Foundation*, which elaborates a plan for “fostering the world spirit.”

The underlying conception and purpose of the Foundation shall be the realization of the fact that the world is one [the very phrase recently reiterated month after month in *The Aryan Path's* series of articles under that main heading], i.e. that no community can remain unaffected by important events in any other country.

The proponents of the World Foundation rightly attribute the present grave crisis of the world to “disharmony between its inherent unity and the mental, moral and emotional disunity which actually prevails.” They recognize that the change in considering world problems “from the point of view of any one of these nations or races to the prejudice of the others” to “the point of view of their inherent harmony... cannot be brought about solely by political means. The change required is in its essence a moral and mental one and the means of achieving it must be to a large extent moral and educational.”

There is therefore an urgent need for a new power, a new impulse, at the service of the feeling and of the idea of world unity, so that gradually this feeling and this idea shall be developed in the leading men of the leading countries, and through them finally permeate a sufficient number of people to put in world affairs the modicum of conscious co-ordination which they require.

The “main purpose is to leaven and stimulate living minds, particularly those of men in key positions, such as educators, public men, leader-writers—in short, leaders of public life.”

The founders visualize the task of the World Foundation as twofold, consisting, on the one hand, of research in such general fields as world economic, financial and political organization and population distribution, and, on the other, of dissemination and education. Practical plans include the establishment of international headquarters and of local centres “as ‘relays’ of mental energy for the transmission of the world unity impulse to the local environment in an appropriate form,” and the holding of an annual World Affairs Conference. It is proposed to invite to the latter key-men from all over the world to share the educational experience of surveying the ground covered by research carried on from the point of view of world unity.

If we apply to the World Foundation as outlined by its sponsors H.P.B.'s criterion for judging

social efforts:—“Will the proposed action tend to promote that true brotherhood which it is the aim of Theosophy to bring about?” (*The Key to Theosophy*, p. 198), it appears unquestionably an undertaking to which every Theosophical student owes his sympathy and his moral support. “Theosophists are of necessity the friends of all movements in the world, whether intellectual or simply practical, for the amelioration of the condition of mankind.”

The endeavour to spread the realization of the unity of all mankind is a Theosophical endeavour.

There is, however, a flaw which should not be altogether overlooked. Examined from the Theosophical point of view, the World-Foundation seems to us to be somewhat weak in its Asian and African wings. Are not the promoters starting out wrong? The League which is now moribund and whose place the Foundation may well bid to occupy started out with a similar defect. We shall not be surprised if it fails to evoke enthusiasm on these Continents and the absence of any mention of their peculiar problems may fail to evoke even hopes which the League once raised.

Another defect in the concept of world unity set forth in the prospectus definitely circumscribes the undertaking's possibilities for good. A clause on the opening page reveals the weakness of the first link of the chain, i.e., “The world has become a unit.” In other words, the unity recognized is a conglomerate brought about by modern developments, notably by the recent progress in communications mental and physical; not the organic unity of the manifested world in general and of humanity in particular, as set forth in Theosophy.

Mankind is essentially of one and the same essence, and that essence is one—infinite, uncreate, and eternal, whether we call it God or Nature—nothing, therefore, can affect one nation or one man without affecting all other nations and all other men.

All the same, many who would turn a deaf ear to this proposition and to its implications for their own responsibility to purify and elevate their own nature, will hear and heed the appeal to “enlightened self-interest” implicit in this project.

It would be a step forward for humanity if, in economic and political decisions, the good of all were to be placed ahead of the good of the particular national group, but the individual is the key to that consummation.

No lasting political reform can be ever achieved with the same selfish men at the head of affairs as of old.

The enduring achievement of the World Foundation will be in terms of its success in awakening a spirit of genuine altruism in the natural leaders of thought.

NUMBER 18

The Poona Orientalist (October 1936) devotes thirty-seven pages to Professor O. Stein's article on "The Numeral 18," which declares :—

Among the numerals by which a multitude of concrete objects, a line of abstract ideas, a number of traditional texts or part of a discipline are summed up, the numeral eighteen is often used in Indian literature.

Professor Stein disclaims "asserting any hidden sense behind that fact or calling 18 a 'holy number,'" but he brings forward innumerable examples of its use, from the eighteen discourses of the *Bhagavad-Gita* to Buddhist literature where "the numeral eighteen is met with in canonical literature, in Commentaries, and in the non-canonical works of Buddhism also." Also in Jainist literature "the number 18 has been used to classify subjects of the doctrine or of cultural life."

On the face of it such a study might seem chiefly of academic and scholastic interest, but some of H. P. B.'s statements about numbers lend it significance. We append two pertinent reprints from *The Theosophist* of June 1881 (Vol. II, p. 198 *et seq.*), both from her pen. The first is an Editor's Note on an article on astrologers by Darasha Dosabhai and the second is a complete article in itself.

ASTROLOGY

Our esteemed Brother and correspondent was unlucky in his astrological researches, and that is all he can say. Because half-educated astronomers in one country may fail to correctly predict an eclipse, is it a reason why its inhabitants should decry astronomy and call it a visionary science? Besides the great neglect into which astrology has fallen during the last two centuries, it is a science far more difficult to master than the highest of mathematics; yet, notwithstanding all, we assert again that, whenever studied conscientiously, it proves the claims of its proficients correct. No more than Mr. Darasha Dosabhoj do we believe astrology capable of predicting every *trifling* event in our life, any accidental illness, joy or sorrow. It never claimed as much. The stars can *predict* (?) no more *unforeseen* events than a physician a broken leg to a patient who never stirs from his house. They show a lucky or unlucky life, but in general features, and no more. If our friend was unsuccessful with every astrologer he met, we know at least a dozen of well-educated men who were forced to believe in astrology as its predictions came to pass in every case. A large volume would be necessary to explain in detail the understanding of this ancient science, yet a few words may serve to correct one of the most glaring errors concerning it, not

only current among the masses, but even among many who understand and practise astrology, namely, *that the planets make us what we are*, their good and evil aspects causing fortunate and unfortunate periods. Says a Professor of Astrology, W. H. Chaney :—"Take to the unphilosophical astrologer the horoscope of a boy born with Sagittarius rising, Jupiter in the same, on the ascendant, in exact trine to the Sun and Leo, with other favourable configurations, and instantly he would declare that the boy would become a great man, a Prince, a President,—and so would I. But the astrologer might insist that all this good fortune was *caused* by the boy having been born under such fortunate aspects, whereas I should look *beyond* the birth for the *cause*, and should probably discover, that, before his conception, his parents had been away from each other for weeks or months, during which both lived a life of perfect chastity; that they were very harmonious, in excellent bodily health, their intellects clear, their minds cheerful, and their moral natures strong."

The Egyptian episcopo ("overseer;" our English word "Episcopal" is derived from the name of this ancient pagan star-gazer) discovered that in the morning shortly before sun-rise, in June, he could see in the east the brightest fixed star in the heavens, and immediately after thus seeing this star the Nile would overflow. Having witnessed the phenomena for many successive years, he laid it down as an axiom that this star *indicated* the overflow of the Nile, no one thinking of disputing him; for the cause should be traced to the melting of the snow in the mountains of Africa. Now suppose some one—a sceptic—had heard of this idea of a star *causing* the Nile to overflow, what an opportunity it would have afforded for heaping scorn and ridicule upon the poor episcopo? Yet the episcopo would have continued to observe the same phenomena year after year; and being called "moon-struck," a "fool," etc., would not have changed his opinion in the least. Now all the hubbub on this point would arise from ignorance on the part of the sceptic just as nine-tenths of all the disputes and quarrels arise. Teach the man that the appearance of that star at a particular time and place in the heavens *indicated*, not *caused* the overflow of the Nile, and he would have ceased to call the episcopo an idiot and liar.

The intelligent reader must now see the point at which we aim—namely, that in astrology the stars do not *cause* our good or bad luck, but simply *indicate* the same. A man must be a psychologist and a philosopher before he can become a perfect

astrologer, and understand correctly the great Law of *Universal Sympathy*. Not only astrology but magnetism, theosophy and every occult science, especially that of attraction and repulsion, depend upon this law for their existence. Without having thoroughly studied the latter, astrology becomes a *superstition*.

The article "Stars and Numbers" which follows was written before we received the above letter. We draw our esteemed correspondent's attention to it.—
ED. THEOS.

STARS AND NUMBERS

Ancient civilization saw nothing absurd in the claims of astrology, no more than many an educated and thoroughly scientific man sees in it to-day. Judicial astrology, by which the fate and acts of men and nations might be foreknown, appeared, nor does it even now appear, any more unphilosophical or unscientific than does natural astrology or astronomy,—by which the events of so-called brute and inanimate nature (changes of weather, etc.), might be predicted. For it was not even prophetic insight that was claimed by the votaries of that abstruse and really grand science, but simply a great proficiency in that method of procedure which allows the astrologer to foresee certain events in the life of a man by the position of the planets at the time of his birth.

Once the probability, or even the simple possibility, of an occult influence exercised by the stars upon the destiny of man admitted—and why should the fact appear more improbable in the case of stars and man than in that of the sun-spots and potatoes?—and astrology becomes no less an exact science than astronomy. The earth, Prof. Balfour Stewart, F.R.S., tells us—"is very seriously affected by what takes place in the sun" . . . a connection "is strongly suspected between epidemics and the appearance of the sun's surface."*

And if, as that man of science tells us, "a connection of some mysterious kind between the sun and the earth is *more than suspected*" and the problem is a most important one "to solve," how much more important the solution of that other

* One of the best known vegetable epidemics is that of the potato disease. The years 1846, 1860, and 1872 were bad years for the potato disease, and those years are not very far from the years of maximum sun-spots . . . there is a curious connection between these diseases affecting plants and the state of the sun A disease that took place about three centuries since, of a periodical and very violent character, called the "sweating sickness" took place about the end of the fifteenth and the beginning of the sixteenth century . . . and this is exactly the sun-spot period . . . (*The Sun and the Earth*, Lecture by Prof. Balfour Stewart).

mystery—the undoubted affinity between man and the stars—an affinity believed in for countless ages and by the most learned among men! Surely the destiny of man deserves as much consideration as that of a turnip or a potato . . . And if a disease of the latter may be *scientifically* foretold whenever that vegetable crops out during a "sun-spot period," why should not a life of disease, or health, of natural or violent death be as *scientifically* prognosticated by the position and appearance of the constellation with which man is as directly connected and which bears the same relation to him as the sun bears to the earth?

In its days, astrology was greatly honoured, for when in able hands it was often shown to be as precise and trustworthy in its predictions as astronomical predictions are in our own age. Omens were studied by all imperial Rome, as much, if not more than they are now in India. Tiberius practised the science; and the Saracens in Spain held star-divination in the greatest reverence, astrology passing into Western Europe through these, our first civiliziers. Alphonso, the wise king of Castile and Leon, made himself famous in the thirteenth century by his "Astrological Tables" (called Alphonsine); and his code of the *Siata Purtidas*; and the great astronomer Kepler in the seventeenth, the discoverer of the three great laws of planetary motions (known as Kepler's laws) believed in and proclaimed astrology a *true science*. Kepler, the Emperor Rudolph's mathematician, he to whom Newton is indebted for all his subsequent discoveries, is the author of the "Principles of Astrology" in which he proves the power of certain harmonious configurations of suitable planets to *control human impulses*. In his official capacity of Imperial astronomer, he is *historically* known to have predicted to Wallenstein, from the position of the stars, the issue of the war in which that unfortunate general was then engaged. No less than himself, his friend, protector and instructor the great astronomer Tycho de Brahe, believed in, and expanded, the astrological system. He was forced, moreover, to admit the influence of the constellations on terrestrial life and actions quite against his will or wish, and merely because of the constant verification of *facts*.

Closely related to astrology is the *Kabala* and its system of *numerals*. The secret wisdom of the ancient Chaldees left by them as an inheritance to the Jews relates primarily to the mythological science of the heavens and contains the doctrines of the hidden or occult wisdom concerning the cycles of time. In the ancient philosophy, the sacredness of numbers began with the great FIRST, the ONE, and ended with the naught or Zero, the symbol of the infinite and boundless circle, which represents the

universe. All the intervening figures, in whatever combination, or however multiplied, represent philosophical ideas relating either to a moral or a physical fact in nature. They are the key to the archaic views on cosmogony, in its broad sense, including man and beings, and relate to the human race and individuals spiritually as well as physically. "The numerals of Pythagoras," says Porphyry, "were hieroglyphical symbols, by means whereof he explained all ideas concerning the nature of all things" (*De Vitā Pythag.*). In the symbolical *kabala*—the most ancient system left to us by the Chaldeans,—the modes of examining letters, words and sentences for hidden meaning were numerical. The *gemantria* (one of the three modes) is purely arithmetical and mathematical, and consists in applying to the letters of a word the sense they bear as numbers—letters being used also for figures in the Hebrew as in Greek. Figurative Gemantria deduces mysterious interpretations from the shapes of letters used in occult manuscripts and the Bible.

Thus, as shown by Cornelius Agrippa, in *Numbers* (x. 35) the letter *Beth* means the reversal of enemies. The sacred anagrams known as *Zeruph* yield their mysterious sense by the second mode named *Themura*, and consists in displacing the letters and substituting them one for another and then arranging them in rows according to their numerical value. If, of all operations in the occult sciences there is not one that is not rooted in astrology, arithmetic and especially geometry are a part of the first principles of magic. The most recondite mysteries and powers in nature are made to yield to the power of numbers. And let this not be regarded as a fallacy. He who knows the relative and respective numbers or the so-called correspondence between causes and effects will alone be able to obtain of a certainty the desired result. A small mistake, a trifling difference in an astronomical calculation and—no correct prediction of a heavenly phenomenon becomes possible. As Severinus Boethius puts it, it is by the proportion of certain numbers that all things were formed. "God geometrizes" saith Plato, meaning creative nature. If there are so many occult virtues in natural things, "what marvel if in numbers which are pure and commixed only with ideas, there should be found virtues greater and more occult?" ask Agrippa. Even Time must contain the mystery number; so also does motion, or action, and so, therefore, must all things that move, act, or are subjected to time. But "the mystery is in the abstract power of number, in its rational and formal state, not in the expression of it by the voice, as among people who buy and sell." (*De occulta Phils.* cap. iii. p. cii.) The Pythagorians claimed to discern many things in the numbers of names. And if those who having under-

standing were invited to "compute the number and name of the beast" by the author of "St. John's *Revelation*, it is because that author was a Kabalist.

The wiseacres of our generations raise daily the cry that science and metaphysics are irreconcilable; and facts prove as daily that it is but one more fallacy among the many that are uttered. The reign of exact science is proclaimed on every housetop, and Plato who is said to have trusted to his imagination is sneered at, while Aristotle's method built on pure reason is the one accepted by Science. Why? Because "the philosophical method of Plato was the inverse of that of Aristotle. Its starting-point was universals, the very existence of which is, "a matter of faith" says Dr. Draper, and from these it descended to particulars, or details. Aristotle, on the contrary, "rose from particulars to universals, advancing to them by inductions" (*Conflict between Religion and Science*). We humbly answer to this, that mathematics, *the only exact and infallible science* in the world of sciences—proceeds from UNIVERSALS.

It is this year especially, the year 1881, which seems to defy and challenge sober, matter-of-fact science, and by its extraordinary events *above as below*, in heaven as upon earth, to invite criticism upon its strange "coincidences." Its freaks in the domains of meteorology and geology were prognosticated by the astronomers, and these every one is bound to respect. There is a certain triangle seen this year on the horizon formed of the most brilliant stars which was predicted by them, but none the less left unexplained. It is a simple geometrical combination of heavenly bodies, they say. As to that triangle, formed of the three large planets—Venus, Jupiter and Saturn—having aught to do with the destinies of either men or nations—why that is pure superstition. "The mantle of the astrologers is burnt and the predictions of some of them, whenever verified, must be attributed to simple and blind chance."

We are not so sure of that; and, if permitted, will further on tell why—meanwhile we must remind the reader of the fact that Venus, the most intensely brilliant of the three above-named planets, as was remarked in Europe and for all we know in India also—suddenly parted company with its two companions and slowly moving onward, stopped above them, whence it goes on dazzling the inhabitants of the earth with an almost preter-natural brilliancy.

The conjunction of *two* planets happens but rarely; that of three is still more rare; while the conjunction of four and five planets becomes an event. The latter phenomenon took place in historical times but once, 2449 years B.C., when it was observed by the Chinese astronomers and has not

recurred since then. That extraordinary meeting of five large planets forebode all kinds of evils to the Celestial Empire and its peoples, and the panic then created by the predictions of the Chinese astrologers was not in vain. During the following 500 years, a series of internal broils, revolutions, wars, and changes of dynasty marked the end of the golden age of national felicity in the Empire founded by the great Fu-hi.

Another conjunction is known to have happened just before the beginning of the Christian era. In that year three large planets had approached so closely together as to be mistaken by many for one single star of an immense size. Biblical scholars were more than once inclined to identify these "three in one" with the Trinity, and at the same time with the "star of the wise men of the East." But they saw themselves thwarted in such pious desires by their hereditary enemies—the irreverent men of science who proved that the astronomical conjunction took place a year before the period claimed for the alleged birth of Jesus. Whether the phenomenon forebode good or evil is best answered by the subsequent history and development of Christianity, than which, no other religion cost so many human victims, shed such torrents of blood, nor brought the greater portion of humanity to suffer from what is now termed the "blessings of Christianity and civilization."

A third conjunction took place in 1563 A.D. It appeared near the great nebula in the constellation of Cancer. There were three great planets and according to the astronomers of those days—the most nefarious: Mars, Jupiter and Saturn. The constellation of Cancer has always had a bad reputation; that year the mere fact of its having in its neighbourhood a triune conjunction of evil stars, caused the astrologers to predict great and speedy disasters. These did come to pass. A terrible plague broke out and raged in all Europe, carrying off thousands upon thousands of victims.

And now, in 1881, we have again a visit of three other "Wanderers." What do they forebode? Nothing good; and it would seem, as if of the great evils they are likely to pour on the devoted heads of hapless humanity, the fatal prelude is already being played. Let us enumerate and see how far we are from the truth. The nearly simultaneous and certainly in some cases unexpected deaths of great and the most remarkable men of our age. In the region of politics, we find the Emperor of Russia, Lord Beaconsfield, and Aga Khan;* in that of

* H. H. The Aga Khan was one of the most remarkable men of the century. Of all the Mussulmen, Shiah or Soonis, who rejoice in the green turban, the Aga's claims to a direct descent from Mahomet through Ali

literature, Carlyle and George Eliot; in the world of art, Rubinstein, the greatest musical genius. In the domain of geology—earthquakes which have already destroyed the town of Casamiceiola on the island of Ischia, a village in California and the Island of Chio which was laid entirely waste by the terrible catastrophe—one, moreover, predicted for that very day by the astrologer Raphael. In the domain of wars, the hitherto invincible Great Britain was worsted at the Cape by a handful of Boers; Ireland is convulsed and threatens; a plague now rages in Mesopotamia; another war is preparing between Turkey and Greece; armies of Socialists and red-handed Nihilists obscure the sun of the political horizon in Europe; and the latter thrown into a violent perturbation is breathlessly awaiting the most unexpected events, future—defying the perspicacity of the most acute of her political men. In the religious spheres the heavenly triangle pointed its double horn at the monastic congregations and—a general *exodus* of monks and nuns—headed by the children of Loyola followed in France. There is a revival of infidelity and mental rebellion, and with it a proportionate increase of missionary labourers (not labour), who like the hordes of Attila destroy much and build but little. Shall we add to the list of signs of these *nefasti dies*, the birth of the *New Dispensation* at Calcutta? The latter though having but a small and quite a local importance, shows yet a direct bearing upon our subject, *i.e.* the astrological meaning of the planetary conjunction. Like Christianity with Jesus and his Apostles the *New Dispensation* can henceforth boast of having had a forerunner in starry heaven—the present triune conjunction of planets. It proves, moreover, our kabalistic theory of periodical cyclic recurrences of events. As the Roman sceptical world of 1881 years ago, we are startled by a fresh revival of mendicant Ebionites, fasting Essenes and Apostles upon whom descend "cloven tongues like as of fire," and of whom we cannot even say as of the Jerusalem twelve, "that these men are full of new wine" since their inspiration is entirely due to water, we are told.

The year 1881, then, of which we have lived but one third, promises, as predicted by astrologers and astronomers, a long and gloomy list of disasters on land, as on the seas. We have shown elsewhere

rested on undeniable proofs. He again represented the historical "Assassins" of the Old Man of the Mountain. He had married a daughter of the late Shah of Persia; but political broils forced him to leave his native land and seek refuge with the British Government in India. In Bombay he had a numerous religious following. He was a high-spirited, generous man and a hero. The most noticeable feature of his life was that he was born in 1800—and died in 1881, at the age of 81. In his case too the occult influence of the year 1881 has asserted itself.

(*Bombay Gazette*, March 30, 1881) how strange in every respect was the grouping of the figures of our present year, adding that another such combination will not happen in the Christian chronology before the year 11811, just 9,930 years hence, when—there will be no more a “Christian” chronology we are afraid, but something else. We said: “Our year 1881, offers that strange fact, that from whichever of four sides you look at its figures—from right or left, from top or bottom, from the back by holding the paper up to the light—or even *upside down*, you will always have before you the same mysterious and kabalistic numbers of 1881—It is the correct number of the three figures which have most perplexed mystics for over eighteen centuries. The year 1881, in short, is the number of the great Beast of the *Revelation*, the number 666 of St. John’s *Apocalypse*—that Kabalistic Book *par excellence*. See for yourselves: $1 + 8 + 8 + 1$ make eighteen; eighteen divided thrice gives three times six, or placed in a row, 666, “the number of man.”

This number has been for centuries the puzzle of Christendom and was interpreted in a thousand different ways. Newton himself worked for years over the problem, but, ignorant of the secret Kabala, failed. Before the Reformation it was generally supposed in the Church to have reference to the coming Antichrist. Since then the Protestants began to apply it in that spirit of Christian charity which so characterizes Calvinism to the Latin Popish Church, which they call the “Harlot,” the “great Beast” and the “scarlet woman,” and forthwith the latter returned the compliment in the same brotherly and friendly spirit. The supposition that it refers to the Roman nation—the Greek letters of the word *Latinus* as numerals, amounting to exactly 666—is absurd.

There are beliefs and traditions among the people which spring no one knows from whence and pass from one generation to the other, as an oral prophecy, and an unavoidable fact to come. One of such traditions, a correspondent of the *Moscow Gazette* happened to hear in 1874 from the mountaineers of the Tyrolian Alps, and subsequently from old people in Bohemia. “From the first day of 1876,” says that tradition, “a sad, heavy period will begin for the whole world *and will last for seven consecutive years*. The most unfortunate and fatal year for all will be 1881. He who will survive it, has an *iron head*.”

An interesting new combination, meanwhile, of the year 1881 in reference to the life of the murdered Czar may be found in the following dates, every one of which marks a more or less important period in his life. It proves at all events what important and

mysterious a part, the figures 1 and 8 played in his life. 1 and 8 make 18; and the Emperor was born April 17 ($1+7=8$) in 1818. He died in 1881—the figures of the year of his birth and death being identical, and coinciding, moreover, with the date of his birth $17 = 1 + 7 = 8$. The figures of the years of the birth and death being thus the same, as four times 18 can be formed out of them, and the sum-total of each year’s numerals is 18. The arrival at Petersburg of the late Empress—the Czar’s bride—took place on September 8; their marriage April 16—($8+8=16$); their eldest daughter, the Grand Duchess Alexandra, was born August 18; the late Czarevitch Nicolas Alexandrovitch, on September the 8, 1843; ($1+8+4+3=16$, i.e., twice 8). The present Czar, Alexander III., was born February 26, ($2+6=8$); the proclamation of the ascension to the throne of the late Emperor was signed February 18; the public proclamation about the Coronation day took place April 17 ($1 + 7 = 8$). His entrance into Moscow for the Coronation was on August 17 ($1 + 7 = 8$); the Coronation itself being performed August 26 ($2 + 6 = 8$); the year of the liberation of the Serfs, 1861, whose numerals sum up 16—i.e., twice 8!

To conclude, we may mention here a far more curious discovery made in relation, and as a supplement, to the above calculation, by a Jewish Rabbi in Russia—a Kabalist evidently from the use he makes of the *Gemantria* reckoning. It was just published in a St. Petersburg paper. The Hebrew letters as stated have all their numerical value or correspondence in arithmetical figures. The number 18 in the Hebrew Alphabet is represented by the letters—“HETH” = 8, and “JOD” = 10, i.e., 18. United together Heth and Jod form the word “khai,” or “Hai,” which literally translated means the imperative—*live* and *alive*. Every orthodox Jew during his fast and holy days is bound to donate for some pious purpose a sum of money consisting of, and containing the number 18 in it. So, for instance, he will give 18 copecks, or 18 ten copeck bits, 18 rubles or 18 times 18 copecks or rubles—according to his means and degree of religious fervour. Hence, the year 1818—that of the Emperor’s birth—meant if read in Hebrew—“khai, khai”—or *live, live*—pronounced emphatically twice; while the year 1881—that of his death read in the same way, yields the fatal words “Khai-tze” rendered in English “*thou living one depart*”; or in other words “life is ended.” . . .

Of course, those sceptically inclined will remark that it is all due to blind chance and “coincidence.” Nor would we much insist upon the contrary, were such an observation to proceed but from uncompromising atheists, and materialists, who, denying the

above, remain only logical in their disbelief, and have as much right to their opinion as we have to our own. But we cannot promise the same degree of indulgence whenever attacked by orthodox religionists. For, that class of persons while pooh-poohing speculative metaphysics, and even astrology—a system based upon strictly mathematical calculations, pertaining as much to exact science as biology or physiology, and open to experiment and verification—will, at the same time, firmly believe that potato disease, cholera, railway accidents, earthquakes and the like are all of *Divine origin* and, proceeding directly of God, have a meaning and a bearing on human life in its highest aspects. It is to the latter class of theists that we say : prove to us the existence of a *personal* God either outside or inside physical nature, demonstrate him to us as the external agent, the Ruler of the Universe ; show him concerned in human affairs and destiny and exercising on them an influence, at least, as great and reasonably probable as that exercised by the sun-spots upon the destiny of vegetables and then—laugh at us. Until then, and so long as no one is prepared with such a proof and solution, in the words of Tyndall—“Let us lower our heads, and acknowledge our ignorance, priest and philosopher, one and all.”

CORRESPONDENCE

WHAT IS CHARITY?

In the January THEOSOPHICAL MOVEMENT, a fellow-student takes sword in hand to point out the defects of an article entitled “Theosophist and Buchmanite.” We appreciate his sincerity. But Truth is like a diamond with many coloured facets, each reflecting but partial light to the one who sees only that facet, yet a ray of the white colourless Light behind. H.P.B. makes this clear in her definition of Maya in *The Secret Doctrine*, I, 39-40. It is the task of the student to be ever ready and eager to transcend the veil of Maya, which clouds his way and his vision.

Let us then examine the question as we think would Madame Blavatsky, our Teacher. She never hesitated to denounce any evil, superstition or false belief which could harm the soul's integrity, whatever might be the feelings of her readers. Her mission was to stir minds and hearts and awaken them to think for themselves. She certainly had a compassionate heart as our friend shows in citing the

personal incident of her voyage. But impersonally, she never hesitated when the Principles she served were involved. It stands to reason that her example of service holds a lesson for us all.

Now the question is : *Is the Oxford Movement a spiritual one, able to help man to progress?* The answer is obviously in the negative. Some of its followers are doubtless very good, kind hearted, sincere men and women, but will this turn the falsehood they follow into truth—this falsehood which, if followed, must cause them to lose their most precious faculty, the Soul's discrimination? Should we remain silent on the obvious dangers involved because some of its votaries are good and kind hearted? Goodness is not synonymous with spirituality. These good people, moreover, are germs for enslaving other good people who otherwise might continue to think for themselves and so come nearer the truth. When we see a man heading for a precipice in the darkness, do we hesitate to give him warning, if not directly, at least through questioning to see if he knows his route?

The doctor who refuses to operate because of the suffering he knows his patient must endure would be neither charitable, nor a good doctor. We cannot act without causing an awakening in ourselves and in others in one direction or in another. Often we err because of our ignorance, but if we remain faithful to the fundamental principles laid down in our philosophy and do our best, we can do no more.

T.

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May I express disagreement with the critic of “Theosophist and Buchmanite,” which appeared in THE THEOSOPHICAL MOVEMENT for October? Imagine a person putting almost his full weight upon a rotten staff that may let him fall at any moment. Does the fact that he is doing so at the edge of a precipice make the advice to shift his weight to his own two feet any less necessary or any more unkind in the true sense? Be it noted, moreover, that the Theosophist in the dialogue in question did not stop with the negative warning ; he pointed his interlocutor to the one unfailing source of strength—“faith in one's own divine nature and powers.”

Which would serve the little man in better stead in his venture into an unknown land—blind faith in a Being which had no existence outside of his own imagination, or reasoned reliance on the Law and the Divinity within? Is it a disservice to a blind man to remove his cataracts and let him see?

E. M. H.

IN THE LIGHT OF THEOSOPHY

A Book of Proceedings of the World Congress of Faiths held in London last July is issued under the title *Faiths and Fellowship*. Another Congress is being organized to be held at Balliol College, Oxford, from the 23rd to the 27th July, 1937, and the particular theme to be discussed is the World's Need of Religion. Man certainly needs Religion, not religions—the Religion of Life, the Way to Right Living.

In this modern age—especially in the Western world—many people are unwilling to give without expecting some return. What is left over from the expenses of a Charity Ball goes to some selected Institution no doubt, but the “charitable” subscribers have had their *quid pro quo* in the shape of a pleasant evening. In an article by Howard R. Kunkle (*Magazine Digest*, December) we read of the very undignified methods resorted to by American churches to raise funds. Raffles one is accustomed to, not that they are moral; but “Pony show, snake show, girl show. The Methodist church will serve a supper. Tickets 40 cents,” is somewhat startling. A “Pork and Sauerkraut supper—65 cents,” seems to have been a feature of a Lutheran church. An episcopal church had a lucrative picnic, and even the Roman Catholics were not behindhand in the good work.

The united societies of the Most Precious Blood church will give a benefit keno party Saturday night at 8-30. Two attendance prizes will be awarded.

Apart from these efforts to defray church expenses or benefit charitable institutions, we read of a church celebrating its fifth birthday by means of a huge birthday cake, which was cut and distributed during the service among the congregation; also of a wedding in a brewery, “the beer foaming about the feet of the principals, beer kegs for an ‘altar.’” One further picture:—

Think soberly of the figure of the Nazarene in the background of the welter of American religion. How devotional it is to come to the end of a hymn of adoration of the Godhead, and then immediately be told from the chancel (the place of the celebration of the Holy Eucharist at God's altar) about the fish fry Monday night, the card party Wednesday afternoon, and the annual picnic to be held week after next. And some member of *homo sapiens* remarks: “My, what an active parish!”

Mr. Kunkle has rightly entitled his article “Cheap Religion.”

Support is given by Mr. C. Phillips Cape, in a recently published letter to the axiom enunciated by the Buddha:—“Evil is done by self alone, by self alone is one stained; by self alone is evil left

undone, by self alone one is purified. Purity and impurity depend on one's own self.” (*Dhammapada*, v. 165)

On the basis of his own observation Mr. Cape writes:—

For about ten years I lived in India on constant and intimate terms with a tribe of registered criminals. Many of the men were habitual criminals. I spoke their language and their argot. All I knew of them inclined me to reject the findings of Lombroso... I discovered no moral imbecile. The criminal was not a species apart. No one was a congenital criminal. There was no evidence that the criminal habits of ancestors had been passed on by only “true biological transmission.” There was the evidence of Sanskrit writings that this tribe had been criminals for at least eight centuries. A child of this tribe, with such an ancestry, placed in a wholesome environment, discloses no “kink in the mind,” no particular bias towards crime. These people, who largely lived by crime, did not “usually exhibit certain physical and mental characteristics which distinguished them from normal citizens.” There was certainly no particular criminal physiognomy. Hereditary factors, in my view, operate only indirectly through impaired intelligence and—to use the words of Dr. Burt—“an excitable and unbalanced temperament, or an overdevelopment of some single primitive instinct.” Crime, as such, is not “in the blood.”

This is striking testimony to man's free will and to the teaching of Theosophy that heredity is only the servant of Karma and that neither Karma nor heredity can predetermine a man's choices and actions.

Rehabilitation of the standing of the olfactory sense seems to be promised by the establishment in London of the *Smell Society* (*News Chronicle*, 28th December 1936). The founder of this society, Mr. Ambrose Appelbe, a young lawyer, points out that while there are hundreds of descriptive words for shades of colour, the language is very weak in adjectives describing scents. One purpose of the new organization is to evolve a new vocabulary to describe distinct odours such as mimosa, tar, wool, etc. Another aim of the society (which G. B. Shaw and H. G. Wells are reported to have joined) is the collection of evidence on the value of smell as a determining factor in the diagnosis of disease.

The student's attention may be drawn to the article on “Sound and Scent” which appeared in THE THEOSOPHICAL MOVEMENT for September 1936, to “Ends and Sayings” in *The Aryan Path* for March 1931 and to Correspondence on “The Odour of Substances” in the November 1931 issue.

The indispensability of freedom to cultural advance is well brought out in a letter from the eminent German *émigré*, Thomas Mann, to *The*

New York Times (12th December, 1936) about the German Academy recently founded in New York to foster and to unite German cultural forces outside of Germany.

We are living in an age which, among some potent disadvantages, possesses the virtue that it leads our experience back to the roots of things—to fundamental truths, fundamental facts, and again renders noteworthy the eternal realities of which we have more or less lost sight because of their very obviousness. One such simple truth—a truth to be experienced as new and deserving of new expression—is that the spirit must be free if it is to possess any interest or evoke any curiosity.

A regimented, commanded, terrorized spirit is not worth a shot of powder; it will not tempt a dog from the hearth. It is a nonentity about which no one will bother because it does not deserve any confidence; because it lacks every prerequisite of true creativeness, of human relationship to the universal spirit, and because it cannot clear itself of the suspicion that all of its utterances are the products of evasion, of compliance and of oppressed makeshift. That is completely unavoidable. It has nothing to do with political polemics; it is a simple fact which even those who have brought it about cannot gainsay. Freedom and spirit are one and the same thing. Free spirit is a pleonasm and unfree spirit is a contradiction in terms. A "Life of the Spirit" in the compulsory service of a political power concentration, under the dictatorial thumb and in dictatorial leading-strings, is devoid of all moral credit; it exists only in quotation marks.

Freedom indeed is necessary for the sake of culture, but it is even more necessary for the sake of the individual. Human progress takes place by self-induced and self-devised efforts. Without freedom to choose, enslavement of the mental and moral faculties ensues. The totalitarian State not only hinders literary and artistic creativeness, but further it atrophies the very soul of man. It stands in humanity's path to-day.

"Capital Punishment from the Christian Standpoint," a pamphlet just published by the National Council for the Abolition of the Death Penalty, contains the Roy Calvert Memorial Lecture delivered by the Reverend James Barr, B.D., M.P., November 12th, 1936. The disgraceful part taken by many Christian clergymen in recent centuries in upholding the death penalty, admitted by the speaker, stands out in sharp contrast to the picture he gives of the attitude of the early Christians, who "refused to serve as magistrates or prefects because these offices involved taking part in passing capital sentences or inflicting capital penalties." Origen and Cyprian wrote forcibly against the death penalty. Among modern Christians the Society of Friends is given deserved honourable mention for their consistent opposition to capital punishment as contrary to "the whole spirit and consequences of Christ's teaching and example." A valuable feature of the lecture was the assembling of editorial comment from

leading English periodicals upon a Bill introduced in 1930 which provided for the experimental abolition of the death penalty for a five-year period.

Theosophy bases its opposition to capital punishment primarily upon the sacredness of all life, a teaching emphasized by the Buddha centuries before Jesus; but further upon knowledge of post mortem conditions, which recognizes an executed criminal as only half-dead and a greater menace to the community than when alive in his physical body. Readers' attention may be drawn to two articles in *The Aryan Path*, Vol. I, p. 717 *et seq.*,—"Abolition Succeeds," by Charles Duff and "Theosophy and Capital Punishment," by W. Q. Judge.

Students of Theosophy who become convinced that the deleterious effects of meat-eating are not confined to diseases which may follow in the wake of excessive protein intake but include also the coarsening effect of meat on the human body and the transfer to man of some of the physiological characteristics of the animal whose flesh is eaten—not to mention the ethical aspect of unnecessarily destroying life in higher forms—naturally desire to adopt a purer diet. Some who may hesitate to take the step from apprehension of possible ill effects upon health will be reassured by the answer of a leading American authority upon diet, Professor E. V. McCollum of Johns Hopkins University to the question: "Can the highest degree of health and vigour be developed and maintained on a diet excluding meat?" His reply, quoted by D. H. Kress, M. D., in "The Folly of Flesh-Eating" (*The Vegetarian News*, December 1930) was:—

Yes, all evidence from both animal experimentation and human experience supports, in a manner which can never be broken down, the viewpoint that meat is not necessary in the human diet. It also supports the conclusion that the best type of diet is a lacto-vegetarian diet. I am convinced that anyone who eats the average amount of meat consumed in this country, will improve, rather than suffer, by cutting it all out of his diet. Meats greatly increase intestinal putrefaction. There is no other class of foods which so greatly tends to promote intestinal putrefaction and unwholesome decomposition products.

Dr. Kress remarks:—

It is well known that those who live to a useful old age are either very moderate users of meat, or else they are total abstainers.

It is encouraging to read that meat consumption in America has declined during the past few years to an extent which has alarmed meat-packers, who have tried to stimulate demand by large advertising expenditure.

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The United Lodge of Theosophists

DECLARATION

THE policy of this Lodge is independent devotion to the cause of Theosophy, without professing attachment to any Theosophical organization. It is loyal to the great founders of the Theosophical Movement, but does not concern itself with dissensions or differences of individual opinion.

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

It holds that the unassailable *Basis for Union* among Theosophists, wherever and however situated, is "*similarity of aim, purpose and teaching*," and therefore has neither Constitution, By-Laws nor Officers, the sole bond between its Associates being that *basis*. And it aims to disseminate this idea among Theosophists in the furtherance of Unity.

It regards as Theosophists all who are engaged in the true service of Humanity, without distinction of race, creed, sex, condition or organization, and

It welcomes to its association all those who are in accord with its declared purposes and who desire to fit themselves, by study and otherwise, to be the better able to help and teach others.

*"The true Theosophist belongs to no cult
or sect, yet belongs to each and all."*

Being in sympathy with the purposes of this Lodge as set forth in its "Declaration," I hereby record my desire to be enrolled as an Associate; it being understood that such association calls for no obligation on my part other than that which I, myself, determine.

The foregoing is the Form signed by Associates of the United Lodge of Theosophists. Inquiries are invited from all persons to whom this Movement may appeal. Cards for signature will be sent upon request, and every possible assistance furnished to Associates in their studies and in efforts to form local Lodges. There are no fees of any kind, and no formalities to be complied with.

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