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THEOSOPHY

A MAGAZINE DEVOTED TO



THE THEOSOPHICAL MOVEMENT
THE BROTHERHOOD OF HUMANITY
THE STUDY OF OCCULT SCIENCE AND PHILOSOPHY
AND ARYAN LITERATURE

Vol. XXVIII, 1939-40

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- (c) The investigation of the unexplained laws of nature and the psychical powers latent in man.

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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 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.

Correspondence should be addressed to

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A U M

The better is one thing, the dearer is another thing; these two bind a man in opposite ways. Of these two, it is well for him who takes the better; he fails of his object, who chooses the dearer.

—KATHA UPANISHAD.

THEOSOPHY

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No. 1

THE GREAT OBJECTIVE

TO sow germs in the hearts of men, which may in time sprout, and under more propitious circumstances lead to a healthy reform, conducive of more happiness *to the masses* than they have hitherto enjoyed": this, in the words of H. P. B., is the main, the fundamental object of Theosophical work.

It was for this that she gathered around her some of the most intelligent men and women of her generation, in the hope that they, taking *to heart* the teachings she brought, would become sowers of those germs, spreading far and wide the seed of better and happier times for the whole human family. The masses, she said, need only practical guidance and support, but the educated, the natural leaders of the masses, have need of philosophy, of the metaphysics and true mysticism which bring the burning conviction of knowledge. Only the enthusiasm of conviction can arouse others to action.

H. P. B. cared little for anything but the great work she had come to do. As a general in the field, persons were to her but means toward that end—lived and participated in her life only as they died as persons to be born as working souls. Yet such is the nature of the Holy War, that in undertaking the Cause of H. P. B., her fellow warriors, her lieutenants, and even the humblest soldier in the ranks, grew close to her in soul. The disregard of self that H. P. B. felt, the sacrifices she made, and the sacred hope and longing for all that live that was the spiritual blood of her life on earth—these qualities are the very stuff of H. P. B. To take her position, to do the work she did in the way she saw it must be done, is to assimilate her nature.

Such workers are really more than "students"; they are "strivers for perfection"; and while but one in a million may reach the goal in this life, the striving of those whose time is not yet here is never lost. If so few win the glorious heights, and still the Masters send their Representatives among men, then the unremitting effort of only one in a thousand must be enough for Them. Victors there will be, but the rare flower of solitary achievement is supported by the many who will try, and failing, try again. The spirit of striving is the only "saving grace"; achievement, as men think of it, is but the static record of the past. Striving is the breath of the eternal One Life. Men are divided by their achievements as beings, united in their common struggle. The figure of the tortured Prometheus is more inspiring to mankind than the Gods on high Olympus.

But what can one man in a thousand do for the masses? The answer lies in what a few out of many millions have *done*. The Great Teachers have all left ineffaceable marks on the history of humanity—broad currents of influence bringing help and hope to many who knew not even the names nor the existence of the Great Ones. But the work of the Teachers would have been barren of result without the living power of their teachings in the hearts of men—of individual men who became strivers for perfection. Buddha was the Light of Asia because others carried the fire throughout the land. Plato became the father of western civilization because there was an Academy to spread his civilizing philosophy. And how many were these true followers, compared to the myriad of souls to whom they brought the light? Were these striving disciples even one in a thousand?

In this age, the work of Companions is clear. Only the few will or can become "strivers for perfection." But *all* men can understand the broad truths of Karma and Reincarnation. These two ideas can save the western world. They are the roots of a practical philosophy of life that can be lived by everyone. The masses need only guidance and support, but the right kind of guidance and support will be from those who can guide without dictating, who can support without sapping the self-reliance of the multitude. True exemplars on the path of striving are what is needed.

ANCIENT LANDMARKS

FROM PLATO TO THE NEOPLATONISTS

DURING the lifetime of Plato there was little if any dissension among his pupils. But after his death in 347 B. C. a decided breach occurred. Aristotle set up his own school in opposition to the Platonic Academy, his pupils recognizing him as Plato's successor. Meanwhile the loyal pupils of Plato endeavored to carry on his teachings along the lines laid down. But in the course of time even in that school, which was known successively as the Old Academy, the Middle Academy and the New Academy, the spiritual ideals of the Teacher grew dim, until they were revived by the Neoplatonists.

The *Laws* of Plato, a work not made public until after his death, shows how Plato gravitated more and more toward the Pythagorean doctrines in his later years. The Old Academy, therefore, is distinguished by its interpretation of Plato's theory of Ideas in accordance with the number theory of Pythagoras.

The guidance of the Platonic School passed from Plato to his nephew Speusippus, who, according to Diogenes Laertius, received his appointment directly from the Teacher. Speusippus developed the Pythagorean aspect of the Platonic teachings, and the world is indebted to him for defining and expounding many things which Plato had left obscure in his doctrine of the Sensible and the Ideal.

Speusippus was followed by Xenocrates, who continued the Pythagorean and Platonic line without a shadow of turning. The teachings of Xenocrates also show a strong Oriental influence, and many of his ideas may be traced directly to their Eastern origin. He taught that there are three degrees of knowledge—thought, perception and envisagement (knowledge by intuition). The source of these divisions is found in that part of the *Mânava Dharma Shâstra* which describes the creation of man. Brahmâ, or *Mahat*, the Universal Soul, draws from its own essence the Spirit, the imperishable immortal breath in every human being. To the lower soul Brahmâ gives *Ahânkara*, the consciousness of the Ego. To this is added "the intellect formed of the three qualities"—Intelligence, Conscience, and Will, answering to the Thought, Perception and Envisagement of Xenocrates.

The relation of numbers to Ideas was developed by Xenocrates still further than by Speusippus, and according to H. P. B. he sur-

passed even Plato in his definition of the doctrine of Invisible Magnitudes. Xenocrates regarded the soul as a "self-moving number" and maintained the doctrine of intuition and innate ideas. He revived the ancient Buddhistic and Hermetic teachings by declaring that, as the World-Soul permeates the entire Cosmos, even the beasts have something of divinity in them. Building his whole theory of cosmogony on the theory of the World-Soul, he taught that Space is filled with a successive and progressive series of animated and *thinking* beings. This is a faithful reflection of the doctrine of Manu, who endows even the tiniest blade of grass with a living soul.

Xenocrates forbade the eating of animal food, not solely because of the cruelty inflicted upon the animals, but also "lest the irrationality of animal souls might thereby obtain a certain influence over us." This theory was elaborated 1800 years later by Paracelsus. It is a clear indication that Xenocrates, like Pythagoras, had the Hindu Sages for his Masters and Models. Cicero speaks of his stainless character and Zeller records his statement that "Purity, even in the secret longings of our heart, is the greatest duty, and only Philosophy and Initiation into the Mysteries help toward the attainment of this object."

Herakleides, friend of Plato and member of the Academy, continued the Pythagorean and Platonic doctrines in all their purity. The unknown author of the *Epinomis*, a Platonic treatise, says that only knowledge of numbers can prove immortality, and that the soul must be understood before the Spirit can be comprehended. Iamblichus said the same thing five hundred years later, adding, however, that the mystery of immortality is a secret belonging to the highest initiation. The *Epinomis* considers the universe as a living organism, every star having a soul of its own. This, again, is merely a repetition of the ancient Hermetic doctrine that every atom in the universe, being impregnated with the divine influx of the World-Soul, is a living entity which feels, suffers and enjoys life in its own way.

With the passing of Athenian independence, a change took place in the attitude and emphasis of Greek philosophy. The social philosophy represented in Plato's *Republic* gave way to the individualism which seems always to emerge in times of political disintegration. Whenever possible, the true philosopher strives to make his principles the basis of common constructive activity, but during a period of rapid social decline, often his only course is to demonstrate that there is no need for the individual to suffer moral and cultural death along with the community. He can be an exemplar as a

single man when the temper of the day makes the application of social ideals impossible. Such an objective naturally produces an especial emphasis on *conduct*, as distinguished from the metaphysical doctrines which provide the rational basis for right action. Thus, we find the "practical" philosophies of the Stoics, Epicureans and Skeptics becoming the leading patterns of thought after Greece had succumbed to the Macedonian and Roman conquests.

Zeno, the founder of the Stoics, was at one time a pupil of Xenocrates. About 310 B. C. he founded a school in Athens. Because of his habit of teaching in the Painted Porch, or *Stoa*, it became known as the Stoic School. Basing his teachings on the Socratic axiom that knowledge is virtue, Zeno made the pursuit of knowledge synonymous with the cultivation of virtue. Combining that axiom with the Aristotelian idea that all knowledge comes from sense-perception, the Stoics have come down in history as the greatest materialists of ancient days.

Although the Stoics maintained that the material alone is real, distinguishing corporeal and incorporeal being as coarser and finer degrees of matter, an examination of Zeno's doctrines reveals the fact that the Stoics were acquainted with the three fundamental propositions of Theosophy. They acknowledged the presence of an invisible Principle, or Divine Energy, which permeates nature, and spoke of matter as but the passive agent through which that Principle expresses itself. They taught the emanation of the visible world from the invisible, and the final absorption of the universe into its original source. Seneca, one of the later Stoics, asked: "What is God? The Mind of the Universe. Where is He? In everything you see and everything you do not see." They likewise taught that all is governed by the Law of Cause and Effect and that nothing happens by chance. They considered the soul of man as a spark of Deity which at death is returned to its original essence. They therefore trained themselves to be indifferent to death, to pleasure and pain, and to exercise their philosophy in the form of altruism and compassion. "Nature bids me to be good to mankind," Seneca wrote. "Wherever there is a human being, there is an opportunity for benefit." The Stoics also practiced the "nightly review" which formed part of the discipline of the Mysteries. Epictetus has left us the ethical standard adopted by the Stoic: ". . . that he censures no one, praises no one, blames no one, says nothing about himself as being anybody or knowing anything." Seneca added that "the Stoic view of life is to be useful and helpful, and not to look after

ourselves, but after the individual and common interests of mankind."

The Epicureans differed sharply from the Stoics in their answer to the problems of life. The *personality* of Epicurus was almost worshipped by his pupils. His words were memorized down to the smallest detail and accepted without question. Pleasure, said Epicurus, is the highest virtue, and virtue is impossible without pleasure. Although he admitted that intellectual pleasures are the most satisfying, he did not direct the intellect toward any soul-disturbing search for fundamental truths. His message was, like that of Rousseau, a summons to return from the complexities of civilization to the natural pleasures of life. His philosophy appealed to the average man. It was, as Cicero says, at best a bourgeois philosophy, demanding neither heroism nor sacrifice, appealing primarily to a world-weary society whose ideals had already been dulled by indolence and corruption.

But despite these general tendencies, there were, as H. P. B. says, no Atheists in those days of old; no disbelievers or materialists, in the modern sense of the word, as there were no bigoted detractors. Writing in *Isis Unveiled*, she makes clear that even Pyrrho, the great skeptic, was not the extreme denier that he seems to modern scholars.

He who judges the ancient philosophies by their external phraseology, and quotes from ancient writings sentences *seemingly* atheistical, is unfit to be trusted as a critic, for he is unable to penetrate into the inner sense of their metaphysics. The views of Pyrrho, whose rationalism has become proverbial, can be interpreted only by the light of the oldest Hindu philosophy. . . . Notwithstanding that he and his followers are termed, from their state of constant suspense, "skeptics," "doubters," inquirers and ephectics, only because they postponed their final judgment on dilemmas, with which our modern philosophers prefer dealing, Alexander-like, by cutting the Gordian knot, and then declaring the dilemma a superstition, such men as Pyrrho cannot be pronounced atheists. No more can Kapila, or Giordano Bruno, or again Spinoza, who were also treated as atheists; nor yet, the great Hindu poet, philosopher, and dialectician, Veda-Vyasa, whose principle that all is illusion—save the Great Unknown and His direct essence—Pyrrho has adopted in full. (II, 531.)

Side by side with the decline of Athens, a new center of culture was arising on the southern shore of the Mediterranean. Two years before the death of Plato, Philip, the young King of Macedonia, had married a young novice in the Mystery School of Samothrace,

and from their union sprang Alexander the Great. In 331 B. C. the walls of Alexandria were marked out, and within a comparatively short time the spirit of Athens reincarnated in the Egyptian city. The first Ptolemy, like Alexander, had been a pupil of Aristotle, and started out with the aim of making Alexandria a second Athens. The Museum, founded by Ptolemy Soter, became the world's most famous University, and the library contained all that was best in Grecian, Roman, Jewish, Persian, Babylonian, Phoenician and Hindu literature. There were found the works of Hesiod and Homer, of Pythagoras and Plato, of Aeschylus, Sophocles and Euripides, as well as the large library which had once belonged to Aristotle. Ptolemy maintained a vast army of scholars in the Museum, who spent their time studying and translating the ancient texts. In addition, the Museum supported numerous lecturers who drew students from every part of the world. This brought about a new phase of philosophical thought, in which an attempt was made to unite the philosophies of the East and the West by showing their similarities and thus proving their common origin.

The larger Mystery Schools were by this time gradually declining, being replaced by smaller *gnostic* groups, each of which concentrated upon some special phase of the *gnosis*, or ancient wisdom. In Ephesus there was a great gnostic College, where Buddhism, Zoroastrianism, and the Chaldean system were taught side by side with the Platonic philosophy. In Aegea another gnostic school devoted itself to the doctrines of Pythagoras. Egypt was full of these gnostic schools, many of which were affiliated with Judaism. The Egyptian Mysteries were being perpetuated by the Essenes in their "greater" and "lesser" Mysteries. There was also a Pythagorean branch of the Essenes, known as the *Koinobi*, as well as the Gymnosophists. In Alexandria a Pythagorean group called the *Therapeutae* spent their lives in contemplation upon the higher problems of philosophy. In addition to these various Jewish-Pythagorean groups, there were also many individual Jews who tried to show the close relationship between the Hebrew and Greek teachings. Aristobulus pointed to the similarity between the ethics of Aristotle and the Laws of Moses. Philo Judaeus sought to reconcile the Pentateuch with the Pythagorean and Platonic philosophy. The translation of the Old Testament known as the *Septuagint* brought the Hebrew Scriptures within the reach of Greek scholars.

It was in some of these gnostic schools—all of which were remnants of the Mysteries—that Jesus received his knowledge. By establishing connection with the *Koinobi*, the Pythagorean branch

of the Essenes, he was initiated into the secrets of the Egyptian Mysteries. All of the sayings attributed to Jesus are in the Pythagorean spirit, when not verbatim repetitions. An interesting corroboration of this statement will be found in *Isis Unveiled* II, 338. After his years of study in Egypt, Jesus returned to Judea, where he was initiated into the Chaldean Mysteries by the Nazars, or Magi, who built the ancient city of Nazara (afterward Nazareth) where they held their secret rites of initiation. The stories of Jesus' birth, baptism, crucifixion and resurrection are all allegories belonging to the Mysteries. Even his title of *Chrestos*, or *Christos*, comes from the same source. In the days of Homer the city of Chrisa was mentioned as celebrated for its Mysteries, and the word *chrestos* was used to describe a disciple on probation. The same word is frequently found in the works of Plato, Demosthenes, Euripides, Aeschylus and Herodotus, clearly showing that it is not of Christian origin. In the Mysteries, when a *chrestos* had successfully passed through his probationary period, he was anointed with oil and given the title of *Christos*, the "anointed" or "purified." Two Initiates followed after Jesus, each in his own way trying to perpetuate the Mystery Teachings. The first was Paul, who was partially, if not completely initiated. This is shown by his language, his peculiar phraseology, and the use of certain expressions known only in the Mysteries. His hair, shorn because he had taken a vow, shows that he was initiated into the Chaldean Mysteries, where the neophyte was obliged to sacrifice his locks on the altar. His calling himself a "Master Builder" indicates that he was also initiated into the Eleusinian Mysteries, where the *epoptae* were known by that title. If the first five verses of the twelfth Chapter of Second Corinthians are read carefully, they will be found to contain a cautious description of Paul's initiation into the Mysteries.

The other great Initiate of the first century A. D. was Apollonius of Tyana, who studied first with the Pythagorean group at Aegea, then with the Persian *Magi*, and finally with the great Sages of Kashmir. Upon his return to Europe, he revitalized the great occult centers by lecturing on the Island of Samos, where Pythagoras was born, by speaking in the garden where Plato had taught, and by giving instruction in the Temple of Apollo in Delphi and in the Temple of Serapis of Alexandria. By thus keeping alive the Wisdom-Religion in the western world Apollonius prepared the way for Ammonius Saccas and the Neoplatonic Movement.

PERSEVERANCE

EVERYONE has experienced moments when his highest ideals and aspirations appear unreal and meaningless. Doubt creeps in as to whether the great Cause is as worthwhile as it was once felt to be. But experience proves that these feelings of depression are only temporary, coming at cyclic intervals. While undergoing them, to know that they will pass away is well, but it is not enough. Too frequently while subject to such feelings does a man relax his efforts to live the life, and the work for Theosophy must needs suffer.

Those who have a glimpse of the real goal for all beings are forever assured by reason and intuition that the goal is worthy of every effort. Man's feelings alone are the Karmic obstacle that cause him to falter and stumble. When the desires of the personal man conflict with the needs of the Real Man, a battle must ensue. During the fray the warrior frequently becomes dejected and would like to withdraw. The problem then is, how can a man travel consistently and persistently on the path of evolution without these unnecessary weakenings of resolve?

When enthusiasm for work lags because of lack of right feeling, the healthy and practical action for a man to take is first to place blame where blame is due. He must realize that the goal itself has not changed, that man himself is the only variant. Clouds of illusion may temporarily befog his vision, but the path and goal ahead are still there. The second step is to go on with the work; push on in the light of the confidence had in the Teachers, even if his whole nature appears to urge retreat. Masters see with perfect clarity the meaning and purpose of life; man sees as "through a glass darkly." Who then could better advise of the heights to be scaled than those who have already reached the mountain peak? Is it logical to suppose They would be willing to return, as They do, to our midst—a veritable hell—where They have nothing more to learn, and then work ceaselessly for ages without number that man too may realize the great goal; — that They would do all this if the objective was not worthy of the struggle?

With a firm attitude held with regard to the end in view, the cycles of lassitude and dullness will gradually lose their power to retard man's efforts, and he will learn to "persevere as one who doth forevermore endure."

ABSTRACTION AND REALITY

OUR knowledge, it is said, "begins with differentiation." From the point of view of earthly, waking life, the more material or differentiated the object of perception, the greater the psychological certainty in our feeling of knowledge about it. Here is rooted the confidence men have in the method and conclusions of physical science. Abstraction, we think, is remote from reality, and science, dealing with the concrete, reveals indisputable truths which anyone can recognize.

But curiously, the more inclusive and significant a science becomes, the more it invades the realm of abstraction. When a science attempts to explain the *principles* of things, it merges imperceptibly with metaphysics, becoming finally a species of philosophical speculation. Thus, if the ultimate principles which govern natural phenomena are the highest reality, the more specifically they are considered the less we sense of the real in conclusions arrived at. Astronomy is perhaps the best illustration of this anomaly, having reached its "philosophical" stage earlier than other branches of science.

The empiricists, who desire to "check" every theory in the laboratory of physical experience, dislike metaphysics because to them abstractions represent hypotheses which are incapable of proof. This attitude is a materialistic version of the principle that a philosophy must be lived for its truth to be known. The same verity emerges in educational doctrine in the familiar phrase, "Learn by doing." Both the empiricist and the progressive in education may be described as "adepts" of a sort, the former in the ways of matter, the latter in certain necessary activities of "life," to which modern education gives special emphasis. Both have learned that knowledge is *functional*, but both are unaware that there are levels of perception and experience which, although "abstract" to the ordinary man, are nevertheless real. Evolution, from this point of view, consists in altering our *idea* of reality until it *corresponds* to the truly real. Then, by living this idea, what was only correspondence gradually becomes realization.

Theosophists, as all members of the race, are governed by this process in their development. The advantage students of Theosophy have lies in the fact that the abstractions of their philosophy accurately correspond to the metaphysical reality perceptible on higher planes of consciousness. The most universal idea conceivable to

man, that of the One Self, — The Absolute, — is at the same time the fullest and the most empty conception he can entertain. It is full of reality, empty of relativity. For beings whose knowledge begins with differentiation, or relativities, such an idea offers no "hold" to the mind. It is impossible, says H. P. B., for the human mind to go beyond the first manifestation and supreme causality. "It will take all our limited intellect to vaguely understand even the latter; try as we may, we can never, limited as we are, approach the Absolute, which is to us, at our present stage of mental development, merely a logical speculation, though dating back to thousands and thousands of years." (*Transactions*, p 21.) Writing on the causes of existence, she speaks of the primeval *desire* to exist, an outcome of Nidana and Maya.

According to esoteric teaching, the real cause of that supposed desire, and of all existence, remains forever hidden, and its first emanations are the most complete abstractions mind can conceive. These abstractions must of necessity be postulated as the cause of the material Universe which presents itself to the senses and intellect; and they underlie the secondary and subordinate powers of Nature, which, anthropomorphized, have been worshipped as God and gods by the common herd of every age. It is impossible to conceive anything without a cause; the attempt to do so makes the mind a blank. This is virtually the condition to which the mind must come at last when we try to trace back the chain of causes and effects, but both science and religion jump to this condition of blankness much more quickly than is necessary; for they ignore the metaphysical abstractions which are the only conceivable cause of physical concretions. These abstractions become more and more concrete as they approach our plane of existence, until finally they phenomenalise in the form of the material Universe, by a process of conversion of metaphysics into physics, analogous to that by which steam can be condensed into water, and the water frozen into ice. (*The Secret Doctrine* I, 44-5.)

Abstractions are grasped by the mind through analogy and correspondence. The satisfaction we feel in an abstract explanation of phenomena results from an *intellectual* understanding, which, while not knowledge, is a step toward knowledge. *Knowledge* is direct soul-perception of the thing itself, without the mediation of intellect. Too often, however, we mistake the abstract representations of reality in our mind for knowledge. It is as though we suppose that a two-dimensional drawing is in fact the perfect image of a three-dimensional object, or is that object itself. Thus it is said that mind is the slayer of the Real.

The difficulty of conceiving that the essential nature of an object of

perception may be comprehended by an individual mind arises only in western philosophy, which thinks of individuals as *separate* from all the rest. But manifestly, knowledge of universal truths is possible only to universal beings. This is really the secret of the mystery of the monad. Monads are changeless and eternal expressions of reality in that at all times they are potentially capable of reflecting the knowledge of—of *being*, that is—the whole universe.

H. P. B. repeatedly shows that the highest states of consciousness must, to the consciousness of our plane, seem to be states of *unconsciousness*. The seven principles of man form an apt illustration of this fact. We readily grasp the reality of the lower principles. Body is self-evident. We have a tangible and undeniable perception of the existence of body. The opposition of reason and desire is similarly evident to thoughtful men, although for those whose lives are devoted to the satisfaction of desire, all their intellectual energies being bent to that end, the conflict between the rational nature and the emotions seems not to exist. In the latter case, the idea of these two principles as different bases of action must appear to be an unreal abstraction. This would be true also of predominantly Sattvic natures, where desire and reason are unconsciously linked and move together toward a common end.

Actually, for all except the Adept, the doctrine of the seven principles must be partially abstract. It is often accepted because of its logical necessity in connection with other tenets of the philosophy. Reincarnation, for example, demands some such division of man, otherwise numerous facts of existence such as the relation between heredity and character, the peculiarities and aberrations of genius, and the several sorts of memory would remain without rational explanation. Similarly, the Theosophical account of the phenomena of spiritualism is dependent on the teaching of the principles. In various ways we see intellectually that these abstract ideas are "the only conceivable cause of physical concretions."

This, however, is only recognition of the doctrine as logically necessary. *Knowledge* of the principles means far more than accepting them as metaphysical abstractions. Knowledge means conscious experience of the principles as both objects and instruments of our consciousness. There are, for example, several kinds of fatigue. Physical exhaustion is quite familiar, mental exhaustion less so. Yet a man may be very tired physically while remaining alert in mind. How would this be explained in terms of the principles? In meeting people, a man will experience many nuances of feeling, some faint, some strong. There are different sorts of "attraction" and currents

of antipathy. What chords on the seven-stringed Aeolian harp of the human constitution do these winds of influence play? Music arouses similar reactions, and colors too. Is aesthetic appreciation merely a matter of liking and disliking, or of following orthodox canons established by the "best opinion"? Or would true aesthetics be based on a knowledge of the principles which are affected by an artistic production?

What is the feeling of "annoyance"? Is there a mechanics of pleasant and unpleasant sensations? What is the rationale of a quick tendency to label a thing "good" or "evil"? How much of our judgment is merely a reflection of race-mind attitudes? When is a man's mind "his own"? Does dispassion mean lack of enthusiasm? What is the difference between the feeling aroused by a mob-leader, a religious fanatic, a singer of beautiful love songs, a patriot?

One who begins to ask these questions has ceased to regard the principles of man's nature as abstractions. Soon fundamental considerations arise, such as the idea of the combined action of the principles. Serious thought has to be given to statements like the following: "Though there are seven principles in man, there are but three distinct Upadhis (bases), in each of which his Atma may work independently of the rest." (*S. D.* I, 158.)

Perhaps the first conclusion to which the student comes is that his knowledge of the teaching is not knowledge at all, but a more or less coherent and consistent body of abstract ideas. This may be discouraging, but it is also a fruitful discovery. To recognize the mind as the slayer of the real is the first step in progress toward the real.

By the act of realizing that the intellect is far from the highest principle in man, and by beginning to use it in right relation to other departments of our being, this principle becomes an aid to the understanding of the real, instead of its "slayer." Almost useless as guide, intellect is an indispensable tool in evolution. Given the spiritual orientation which springs from an all-embracing love of humanity, the mind-principle *organizes* action for effective service.

The drive of motive and the feeling of certainty are the intuitive elements in human thought. Without them, the analyzing and comparing faculties of mind are nothing. But let us remember that, at the present stage of race evolution, reason is a necessary participant in the formation of judgments. It was not some scientific critic, but H. P. B. herself, who wrote, "there is no *infallible* intuition." Again, according to Mr. Judge, "If we have a bigoted religion or a

non-philosophical system we are likely to prevent ourselves from hearing our conscience. And in those cases where men are doing wrong according to what they call their conscience, it must be true that they have so warped their intuition as not to understand the voice of the inward monitor."

True knowledge belongs to the whole man. When the Adept lives in spirit, he does not lose his knowledge of matter; when he moves on the plane of manifested existence, his spiritual perceptions are not left on high. By means of the mind, we *conceive* the possibility of such knowledge. Metaphysics or abstract philosophy gives to our present consciousness a structural representation of the invisible universe of planes and principles. The value of such abstractions lies solely in their *approximate* correspondence to the reality they represent. But why only "approximate"? Simply because refined subtleties which are clear to the unobstructed vision of the soul can not be put into the words of common language of the present day. Nor could a race untrained in philosophy understand them, even were the words available. Indeed, the literature of Theosophy is itself a means for the gradual elevation of philosophic investigation in the West, so that in the future more can be given out with less danger of materialization and corruption. But even the metaphysics of Theosophy only approximates the ideal reality. As Mr. Judge wrote of the sevenfold division of man's principles in the *Epitome*:

The real division cannot be understood, and must for a time remain esoteric, because it requires certain senses not usually developed for its understanding. If the present seven-fold division as given by Theosophical writers is adhered to strictly and without any conditional statement, it will give rise to controversy or error.

The difference between the abstractions taught by Theosophy and those of science is that the former are the instruction of Wise Men who know the manifold reality of all planes of being, who understand the degree of intellectual and moral development achieved by the race, and who have offered their philosophy in a form that can be initially grasped and finally translated into self-knowledge by those who will. Scientific abstractions, however, are but logical searchlights sweeping the dark heavens of the metaphysically unknown, constructed from erroneous premises, and proving in most cases to be confusing when not tragically misleading.

The Theosophical philosophy is the guide to conscious Manasic experience. The study and application of its metaphysical teachings will lead to that union of *Buddhi* and *Manas* which brings to birth the Divine Ego.

IN AND OF ONESELF

THERE are really no "identical twins" in nature. Although we all face much the same old problems, we bring to them a different basis of experience, a different need. How willingly would we have others profit from our mistakes, and take our word for it that a certain course of action will bring a solution to the very problem *we* have solved! Yes, to decide for another—to insure his success and prevent his failure—is one of the dearest errors of men. Our motive may be praiseworthy, yet the assumption of responsibility for another's course of action is so desperate a folly that the only hope for us is that our hearts may be forced by continued anxiety and sorrow to grow weary of loving tyranny over others.

Theosophists should know the dire consequences of performing the duty of another, and consciously set at rest their pre-occupation with others' moral failure or success. One man may give up all his possessions and friends to be the better able to help others. The loss of position, of fame, of worldly power, may bring a new field of widened spiritual opportunity for him. For another, the whole process may be reversed. Upon a sure theosophical foundation, he may partake of all that the other voluntarily gave up.

Within the family circle are those whom we cherish, whose virtues strengthen our own better tendencies, whose character and circumstances seem to assure their peace and happiness. Yet they confide that they are filled with a sense of failure, that they are merely "treading water," they don't know what it's all for! They fill their lives with small acts of service for others, because it keeps them occupied, gives "something to think about," and brings some pleasure.

Take another type: one who has had as his philosophy the belief that "advancement" is most easily attained by doing for others. He has been meticulous in doing his best wherever it was required of him by social dicta, and he boasts that no one can convict *him* of "selfishness"; he has always done his duty. Now, having followed the path he visioned best, he admits that all is ashes in his mouth. He continues to give to others, but no longer feels that his actions are carrying him to the desired goal, or that they give any meaning to his existence. He wants to get back his old feeling about things—the departed "zest for life." Theosophical ideas fail to give him the "lift" he wants. They are too impersonal, far-off. Immortality never bothered him any, and re-incarnation "simply

doesn't ring a bell." What he wants is an immediate justification and satisfaction here, now, and in his lifetime, for the line he has followed and the efforts he has made.

Sad as this man's case is, the sadder he becomes, the more capable is he of analyzing his ailment and prescribing for it. He now begins to see that his "duty" has been to keep wife and children well-dressed and fed, with a "standard of living" as good as the next fellow's; that they were never denied any pleasure; that he always gladly gave to any one who asked a "boost"; that he never "hurt any one's feelings." But only when he sees that all these are inadequate aims indeed for a whole human life, will he begin to search for higher objectives. We may think we "understand" this man, yet, of the thousands of threads which make up his life, can we say which one will turn him from this tragic sterility? If we offer him the principles of Theosophy, *without attachment* to results, we shall be able to quell our desire and anxiety that he may see the light, as *we* see it. The suffering, the futility, the failure—is the karma of a soul. His individual karma is also part of the universal gate of opportunity and learning for us, and no more important nor unimportant than our own seemingly "superior" karma.

Again, type three: the amiable person just entering on the path of calculated selfishness. He is determined to make every act and every person help him up the ladder of his ambition. Because he sees he will need help to get there, he hides his ambition under acts of kindness, but he never gives quite as much as he receives. He gives what costs him nothing—smiles, flattery, and promises, to be broken when it becomes profitable. He pretends to listen to principles, and agrees with them, sophistry speaking always in the other ear, to convert the unselfish admonition into a selfish pretext. Here, too, it must be hands off! No violence of tongue or act on our part can save him from his chosen course. Our concern, anger, sadness, are the very stuff to breed his opposition; our opposition is a shut gate against a reversed flow.

Then, there are those who regard themselves as "failures," yet who have definitely taken the decision to live a selfless life. They find themselves now fired by an altruistic contemplation of all things, now battling with fears and fancies. If they want success, they want it not for themselves, but for the mass of men so much more miserable than they can ever be again. Traitor to them and to himself is he who gives force to ideas of failure. Any man can stand apart from his own success or failure. If a man can be stern and hard with himself for selfish ends, and force himself ahead wherever he

will, on a grim lone road with no love in it, — how much more strongly should a selfless man be able to gird himself for purity and altruistic service. He will find companions and trusted friends, where the other finds only rivals and suspicious associates. But, even for this man, the battle is *not* fought unless it is fought by himself. No other can win it for him.

KARMA AND REINCARNATION

Karma neither punishes nor rewards; it is simply *the one* Universal LAW which guides unerringly and, so to say, blindly, all other laws productive of certain effects along the grooves of their respective causations. When Buddhism teaches that "Karma is that moral Kernel (of any being) which alone survives death and continues in transmigration" or reincarnation, it simply means that there remains nought after each personality, but the causes produced by it, causes which are undying, *i. e.*, which cannot be eliminated from the Universe until replaced by their legitimate effects, and so to speak, wiped out by them. And such causes, unless compensated during the life of the person who produced them with adequate effects, will follow the reincarnated Ego and reach it in its subsequent incarnations until a full harmony between effects and causes is fully re-established. No "personality"—a mere bundle of material atoms and instinctual and mental characteristics—can, of course, continue as such in the world of pure spirit. Only that which is immortal in its very nature and divine in its essence, namely, the Ego, can exist for ever. And as it is that Ego which chooses the personality it will inform after each Devachan, and which receives through these personalities the effects of the Karmic causes produced, it is, therefore, the Ego, that *Self*, which is the "moral Kernel" referred to, and embodied Karma itself, that "which alone survives death."

—H. P. B.

SCIENCE AND THE SECRET DOCTRINE

THE FADING BOUNDARY

I

THE years 1937-39 have been marked by peculiarly rapid developments in the scientific search for resolution of the question "What is life?" Vitalism, which affirms the existence of a mysterious and non-mechanical "Life Force," loses ground with each new biochemical discovery and has so far vanished from the picture that it is now seldom seriously discussed. From the Theosophical point of view this might almost be an occasion for regret, since Vitalism, for all its hiatuses of logic and its over-simplified dualism, at least stands in opposition to the gross assumption that "life is the motion of matter." But while the new discoveries are far from reaching the clear conception of *universal life* as taught by Theosophy, they have rendered the loss of such a weak ally somewhat unimportant. Finally and unequivocally, the eyes of science have been opened to the fact that the rigid separation of the "living" from "non-living" was only an illusionary scum of ignorance frozen over the Sea of Being. Scientific skating on this artificial film has come to an end rather suddenly, for while an imaginary surface will support the wildest of speculations, it cannot sustain for long the heavy tread of experiment.

The developments in physics following the famous *Secret Doctrine* prophecy of 1888,¹ which led to almost full vindication of the statement that "It is on the doctrine of the illusive nature of matter, and the infinite divisibility of the atom, that the whole science of Occultism is built,"² have been closely paralleled in biology by the research into the divisibility of "living" matter. It is only a few years since the existence of "filterable viruses" was deduced from their apparent effect as disease producers, though they are invisible to the microscope. The minute size of these agents, together with properties which seemed difficult to classify as between chemical and quasi-bacterial, had led to much discussion as to whether these agents are inorganic or "alive." Among other "living" qualities they appeared under certain conditions to have the power of reproduction and even of hybridization.³

¹ See *The Secret Doctrine* I, 611-12.

² *Ibid.* I, 520.

³ See Prof. Manwaring's views for connection with the subject of serums and vaccines (*THEOSOPHY* XXI, 30).

The early uncertainty regarding the nature of these viruses is illustrated by an article in *Science* for Feb. 5, 1937. On the tobacco mosaic virus, we find:

The isolation of this typical virus in crystalline form and its recognition as a high molecular weight protein are without question a fundamental discovery, the far-reaching significance of which can probably only be partially grasped at the present time. Infection by the virus may be regarded as due to the introduction of a few molecules of the virus protein into a susceptible host. These few molecules apparently have the ability to so disarrange the normal metabolic reactions as to cause the cell to manufacture more of the virus protein. The work has also indicated that in the production of the virus protein by the host *new strains may arise, through perhaps the chance production of one or more molecules of a slightly different structure, thus giving mutation of the virus.* As Stanley has pointed out, the virus can not be regarded as simply an autocatalytic agent but must be regarded as a new type of super-catalyst, being able to cause the cell to produce more molecules in its own likeness.⁴

But why assume that the virus causes the cell to produce more molecules of its own kind, rather than that the virus reproduces itself? And if the above description of the process is correct, is this not an outright hybridization between the virus and the cell, in which the "mutations" may have more the aspect to be expected from hybridization? It is strongly indicated in *The Secret Doctrine* that most of the infectious diseases (which are probably all mutations of an ancestral syphilis) originated with such ultramicroscopic hybridization, the latter being a karmic reflex of the sin of Atlantis. The hybrid species which resulted from the sexual union between early man and animals were, perhaps, macroscopic prototypes for the alien races of germs which today degrade the cell population of the human organism.⁵

The further present bearing of these dangerous virus "mutations" upon the serums and vaccines is obvious, the danger being the greater in that such effects would be long-delayed and masked. *Tobacco mosaic is of the nature of a plant cancer.*

The *Science* article continues:

As Dr. Stanley has stated, "It is now possible to list protein molecules along with living organisms such as bacteria, fungi and protozoa as infectious disease-producing agents." Dr. Stanley well recognized, however, that all the disease-producing agents, now classified as viruses, may not all turn out to be high molecular weight proteins but that some might prove to be truly living bodies and that at this early

⁴ *Op. cit.*, p. 132.

⁵ *S. D.* II, 187.

stage of our knowledge different types of filterable disease-transmitting agents may have been classified under the one heading of viruses.

Inherent in this article, therefore, is the doubt whether a molecule, even of protein, can be regarded as "alive." A *Science News* report in the same volume gives an account of experiments showing a basic similarity—almost an identity—between the biological reactions of this same virus and the equally invisible *genes*. And certainly, if anything in the world can be considered alive, the "genes" (or whatever units or powers this term represents as descriptive of the transmitters of hereditary characters), ought to fall in that class!

In *Science* for Feb. 3, 1939, in the *News* section, the following passage appears in an account of the applications of the new electron microscope:

. . . Some of these molecules have weights 25,000,000 times greater than ordinary molecules of common chemical elements. The essential point about these huge chemical molecules of the viruses is that they are believed to represent the borderline between animate and inanimate matter. Although the viruses, at least some of them, have been shown to be chemical in nature they have been found to be capable of reproduction and possess biological activity which has always been associated only with living things.

This issue of *Science* also notes other recent developments in virus research:

Dr. Thomas M. Rivers, of the Rockefeller Institute for Medical Research, believes that the viruses that cause disease, and which are much too small to be seen, are a very "mixed lot," having only their size and disease-causing ability in common. "Some of the viruses," he said, "may be minute, highly parasitic micro-organisms, the midgets of the microbial world, capable of reproduction only within susceptible host cells; others may represent forms of life more or less unfamiliar to us, and still others may be fabrications of their host cells aided by the processes of auto-catalysis. What life is and where the transition from the non-living to the living takes place, if it does, in the scheme just set forth is not known. Furthermore, the transition may be so gradual that it will be difficult for investigators to assign the particular point at which it occurs."

Dr. Rivers further states that the viruses range from almost the size of the smaller bacteria down to that of single protein molecules, and that they carry the same kind of electrical charge commonly found on protein molecules.

Still another review points to similar conclusions:

Evolution of man and all lesser living things gains scope and takes on new grandeur by being traced far below the world of life to the very chemical elements themselves. A new visualization presented by Professor George A. Baitzell, of Yale University, bridges the gap between the living and the non-living with recent new knowledge of gigantic chemical molecules of viruses that act as though they were alive. The difference between the living and the non-living is shown to be a matter of complexity. The same materials are used in both domains and they conform to the same elemental patterns. The natural world is fused so effectively that the procession of organic development flows uninterruptedly from atom to man. There is no need to worry as to just when and at exactly what stage life was infused into the evolving stuff of the natural world. In that ultra-Lilliputian borderland where the most powerful microscopes lose their sight, increasing complexity evolves into what has been labeled "life." From the simplest substance in the organic world to the most complex patterns of living substance there must be a graded series. Should evolution begin at the level of the living organism? The union of hydrogen and oxygen to form water, the union of carbon and oxygen to form carbon dioxide, the union of water and carbon dioxide to form sugar, the addition of other elements to the sugar molecule to form protein—were not all these stages in the evolutionary processes which have led to ever-increasing complexity, reaching their climax in the world of life?

But where is any "climax," or any "world of life" as distinguished from another kind of world?

While the foregoing quotations show the presence of "organic" qualities in the "inorganic" world, there is also an accumulation of evidence tracing an ascent of "inorganic" qualities into the "organic" world. Ernst Haeckel, arch-enemy of the spiritual life of man, and scientific pretender as he was in some respects, nevertheless pointed out certain phenomena which needed only to be considered from the proper point of view, *i. e.*, opposite to his own, to show the truth. Haeckel noted the close relation between crystallinity and living structure. Much later, Rinne^o contended for the fundamental similarity of crystalline material and organic structure, and the continuity of the organic and the inorganic worlds. Dr. W. D. Francis in 1935 showed that the iron bacterium *Leptothrix Ochracea* is crystalline, and contended that one of the fundamental factors in the generation of life is *iron*. (He little suspects the bearing of this fact on the seemingly "symbolic" designation, the Iron Age!) Dr. Fuerth, of Prague, apparently reduced organic structures as well as

^o *Grenzfragen des Lebens*, 1931.

organic functions to magnetic fields.' ("Life is light, and both are electricity," says *The Secret Doctrine*.)

It seems that crystalline patterns extend through all the kingdoms of nature. Prof. Baitzell has arrived at conclusions pointing to the crystallinity of living structure. His findings were revealed by X-ray investigations, unlike the others mentioned. Crystalline structures are also regarded as existing in normal fluids, such as water, the molecules of which are arranged in orderly groups, according to Prof. Peter Debye of the University of Berlin.⁸

Thus there is today strong scientific support for certain propositions set forth in Theosophy, which may be put in the language of *The Secret Doctrine*:

1. There is no dividing line between the "organic" and the "inorganic."

As to our outward physical bodies . . . the Doctrine teaches a strange lesson; so strange that unless thoroughly explained and as rightly comprehended, it is only the exact Science of the future that is destined to vindicate the theory fully. ALL IS LIFE, and every atom of even mineral dust is a LIFE, though beyond our comprehension and perception. . . . (I, 248.)

Chemistry and physiology are the two great magicians of the future, who are destined to open the eyes of mankind to the great physical truths. With every day, the identity between the animal and the physical man, between the plant and man, and even between the reptile and its nest, the rock, and man—is more and more clearly shown. . . . Each particle—whether you call it organic or inorganic—is a life. . . . It is that mysterious LIFE, represented collectively by countless myriads of lives, that follows in its own sporadic way, the hitherto incomprehensible law of Atavism; that copies family resemblances as well as those it finds impressed in the aura of the generators of every future human being. . . . (I, 261.)

2. Life, light, and electricity are one. (Which means that they are also one with "matter.") That light and electricity are of fundamentally the same nature has been well enough proved by Einstein and others; the relation between life and electricity as noted above is only verification of the occult doctrine:

. . . the primordial Electric Entity—for the Eastern Occultists insist that Electricity is an Entity—electrifies into life, and separates primordial stuff or pregenetic matter into atoms, themselves the source of all life and consciousness . . . [the Astral Light is] the first Light of the primordial Elohim . . . or, (scientifically) ELEC-

⁷ *Die Naturwissenschaften*, 16, 777, 1928.

⁸ *New York Herald Tribune*, Sept. 13, 1936.

TRICITY AND LIFE. (Footnote.) Od is the pure life-giving Light, or magnetic fluid; Ob the messenger of death used by the sorcerers, the nefarious evil fluid; Aour is the synthesis of the two, Astral Light proper. (I, 76.)

3. The basis of living as well as so-called "inanimate" forms, hence of manifest material life, is *geometrical*, built upon number, as shown in the all-pervading phenomenon of crystallinity; for number is the basis of the "Eternal Thought in the Eternal Mind." (This is the thought behind Plato's insistence upon geometry.) The basis of crystallinity is the *triangle*, which gives rise to the simplest form of crystal.

Next we see Cosmic matter scattering and forming itself into elements; grouped into the mystic four within the fifth element—Ether, the lining of Akasa, the Anima Mundi or Mother of Kosmos. "Dots, Lines, Triangles, Cubes, Circles" and finally "Spheres"—why or how? Because, says the Commentary, such is the first law of Nature, and because Nature geometrizes universally in all her manifestations. There is an inherent law—not only in the primordial, but also in the manifested matter of our phenomenal plane—by which Nature correlates her geometrical forms, and later, also, her compound elements; and in which there is no place for accident or chance. It is a fundamental law in Occultism, that there is no rest or cessation of motion in Nature. That which seems rest is only the change of one form into another; the change of substance going hand in hand with that of form—as we are taught in Occult physics, which thus seem to have anticipated the discovery of the "Conservation of matter" by a considerable time. (I, 97.)

Now arises a consideration of utmost importance. It should be clear to the student how directly all these discovered facts interlock with Theosophical fundamentals long since set forth. But the materialist argues from the same data that all living phenomena are complexes of molecular motion. In this field, in other words, each man can interpret according to bias, unless facts coming in at another angle or plane of perception clinch the issue in the right direction. And it is undeniable that the popular bias is materialistic. But must we resign ourselves to the view that these new discoveries will be of spiritual help only to the Theosophist, who does not need it from that source, and that perhaps they will be of great harm to the multitude, who know nothing of Theosophy? Not, we think, if these findings are used constructively by Theosophists aware of other discoveries relating to the broad problem of form and its origin. This will be our next subject for consideration.

YOUTH-COMPANIONS' FORUM

You say that Theosophy is an educational movement. Will the school of today or some institution like it ever be part of Theosophical work?

Theosophy is more than an educational movement. Its teachings are the textbooks of Life, and the whole universe is Life's school. To live in co-operation with our fellows and with nature means the constant study and application of these "textbooks."

As to whether our schools will ever be a part of Theosophical work in the future, we should like the questioner to visit Theosophy School on Sunday morning at any United Lodge of Theosophists. There he will find an example of a school that is founded on Theosophical principles. Such work or an outgrowth from it might very well develop into a system of education that would be of use to the Teacher in 1975.

But modern education is already showing the infiltration of Theosophical ideas. Looking through the "Lookout" of this magazine, we find many thoughtful men pointing to the shortcomings of present-day education. Lately, for instance, we have had important criticisms from Dr. Hutchins of Chicago University; then nationwide broadcasts (programs such as the American School of the Air and the Town Meeting of the Air) are debating the subject, calling for purposeful thinking. Nor is the press neglecting these questions. An editorial in the Hollywood *Citizen-News* (March 6) says that going to school, reading books, memorizing historical dates, is not education, but merely training preliminary to the real education which comes through a passionate search for knowledge.

"Purposeful thinking," but to what purpose? "Passionate seeking," but for what sort of knowledge? As Theosophy leavens the thought of the people, so will there be hope of real education for all.

Are all reforms to be considered as part of the Theosophical Movement? What of the Lollards, for instance, who were religious?

(a) Mr. Judge wrote: "Wherever thought has struggled to be free, wherever spiritual ideas, as opposed to forms and dogmatism, have been promulgated, there the great movement is to be discerned. . . . Luther's reformation must be reckoned as a portion of it." The reforms of Wycliffe were precursors of Luther's reforms and were part of the movement known as the Reformation. Wycliffe himself was a great deal like Luther. (See Henry Osborn Taylor's *Thought and Expression in the Sixteenth Century*, I, 199-200.) The Lollards,

Wycliffe's followers, helped to break the power of Church in England. Their name, however, is much older than its English use; there were Lollards in the Netherlands as early as the beginning of the fourteenth century, off-shoots from the rebellious Franciscans, the *Fraticelli* who had disowned the pope's authority and separated themselves from the mediaeval church. It is probable that the name was given to the followers of Wycliffe because they resembled the earlier reformers. The Lollards were never so powerful as Luther's movement came to be in Germany, but they were in a way the necessary precursors of the Lutheran Reformation.

The guiding intelligences behind the Theosophical Movement are the Adepts and Mahatmas. They have helped in many reforms—religious, political, scientific, social, and economic. They must act with the karma of mankind and "can only modify and direct some of its minor currents." Their influence, however, is tremendous. They were behind the Renaissance and the American Revolution, and They have directed many of the major and minor reforms recorded in European and American history. They work behind the scenes, and we do not *recognize* Their work until we learn of Their existence and purpose. Then we see history from a different point of view—as an unbroken effort on the part of the Great Ones to give humanity the light of Truth, and the response of human beings to it. Many of the figures in the Reformation and Renaissance were either conscious or unconscious agents of Adepts.

Other reforms, such as those brought about in medicine by Paracelsus, and in astronomy and philosophy by Giordano Bruno, were direct efforts of the guiding intelligences of the Theosophical Movement. Reforms in all departments of human endeavor are necessary before the greatest reform can come—a change of the *Buddhi-Manas* of the race, toward which were directed the labors of H. P. B. Krishna, Buddha, and Jesus came to reform religion. Plato and Ammonius reformed philosophy. Pythagoras and Paracelsus reformed science. But H. P. B.'s mission was to *re-form* all three fundamental aspects of life—religion, sciences, and philosophy. True reform is a reflection on outer planes of the reformation going on within—the return to the Source and the fulfillment of the purpose of evolution.

(b) The Theosophical Movement of Europe has been a series of attempts to educate mankind to the realization of the god within. This is done by starting men to think, to free their minds from the shackles of dogmatic religious despotism. A reform may be individual or collective, and most of the reforms of history have been

started by the heroic efforts of individuals, followed by the collective rebellion of groups or nations against oppressive forms of government.

The Lollards were a semi-monastic sect of Brabant and Antwerp which arose about 1300. The members devoted themselves to the care of the sick and burial of the dead. Their name was afterward given in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries to those who adhered to the religious and economic views advocated by John Wycliffe. He contended that "the individual has the right to form opinions on the basis of scripture and reason, and then to carry out these opinions in association with other individuals as seem best to him and them." The Lollards condemned the use of images in the churches, pilgrimages to the tombs of saints, the temporal lordship of the clergy, Papal authority in administration, ecclesiastical decorations, the ceremony of the mass, the doctrine of transubstantiation, the waging of war, and the infliction of capital punishment.

Considering the strength of the Church of Rome at that time, and what had been done and was being done to the Albigenses in France, we can see that here was a noble effort to obtain freedom of thought and action. The struggle of the Lollards had a tremendous influence, both religiously and politically, and must be considered as one of the many steps of the Theosophical Movement in "breaking the molds of men's minds."

(c) To say that all reforms are to be considered a part of the Theosophical Movement is too inclusive. We have to use our discrimination in these matters, as well as with anything else. That is why the principles of Theosophy are given to the world. What, then, is the yardstick? It is true brotherhood. H. P. B. said in the *Key to Theosophy*: "One general test, may, however, be given. Will the proposed action tend to promote the true brotherhood which is the aim of Theosophy?"

As to the Lollards, let us consider Wycliffe, their leader. We find universal agreement among the various encyclopedias (except the Catholic), and such books as Wells' *Outline of History*, that Wycliffe fought so that men could think for themselves, for religious and political freedom, trying to separate church and state. It is evident, therefore, that his work was a part of the Theosophical Movement, especially as we can see the connection between the work of Wycliffe and that of Luther.

No matter what course of action a man may take, and however good his motive, there are always those who object for some or an-

other reason. Is one ever justified in believing his is the "right" way?

The Theosophy of five thousand years ago, *The Bhagavad-Gita*, gives an excellent answer to this question: "A man's own natural duty, even though stained with faults, ought not to be abandoned." The ideal attitude is stated in these words: "The highest perfection of freedom from action is attained through renunciation by him who in all works has an unfettered mind and subdued heart."

There is a similar expression by Mr. Judge in *Letters That Have Helped Me*: "It is one's duty to try and find one's own duty and not to get into the duty of another." Again, ". . . it is of the highest importance that we should detach our minds (as well as our tongues) from the duties and acts of others whenever those are outside of our own."

We should be sure of our motive, try in the smallest act to live for the benefit of all. If we use our discrimination, and are not deterred by the opinions of others from doing our duty, there must be an accrual of benefit to all. Mr. Crosbie cautions that motive is not enough; discrimination is needed, too. Those who keep busy minding their own business are not concerned with the opinions of others. If we are thinking of what others may think of us, aren't we minding the others' business a little?

THE EGO IN MAN

No one will deny that the human being is possessed of various forces: magnetic, sympathetic, antipathetic, nervous, dynamical, occult, mechanical, mental—every kind of force; and that the physical forces are all biological in their essence, seeing that they intermingle with, and often merge into, those forces that we have named intellectual and moral—the first being the vehicles, so to say, the *upadhi*, of the second. No one, who does not deny soul in man, would hesitate in saying that their presence and commingling are the very essence of our being; that they constitute the *Ego* in man, in fact. These potencies have their physiological, physical, mechanical, as well as their nervous, ecstatic, clairaudient, and clairvoyant phenomena, which are now regarded and recognized as perfectly natural, even by science.

—*The Secret Doctrine.*

HOPE FOR CULTURAL IMPARTIALITY

THE gradual decline in influence of "Christian" ways of thinking is generally noted with regret by modern Jeremiahs who see in this trend a return to "paganism" and irreligion. There are, however, much more important effects to be traced to the waning of Christianity, which may help to replace the old dogmas with a vitalizing religious philosophy. In the first place, scholars are beginning to recognize that much of the literature on the religions of antiquity is vitiated by the distortions of Christian prejudice. The books which are today being written about other faiths reflect an impartiality that has no place in similar works of the last century. The author of a modern study of the religions of Greece and Rome contemporaneous with early Christianity has pointed out the unreliability of the familiar source materials on this subject. Except for the writings of the Roman satirists, who presented a one-sided view, these sources are principally Christian apologetics which, he says, "betray a frank bias both in the selection of discreditable data and in the utilization of that data to serve a polemic purpose. Because of this misuse of inadequate materials the point of view which posits a dearth of real religion in the Graeco-Roman world is itself clearly discredited."¹

Hardly an issue of the *Hibbert Journal* goes by without another scholarly blow at the foundations of orthodox Christianity. One writer shows that Anglican clergymen deliberately give lip-service to doctrines they do not and cannot believe, on the ground of "spiritual experience."² Learned theologians hold acrimonious debates on whether Jesus was a man deified by tradition or a humanized "Resurrection god" for whom a tissue of symbolic legend became the fictitious "historical" background.³ Another contributor notes that while the Gospels, which were not established in full canonical acceptance until the time of Irenaeus, are full of the words, deeds, and personal sufferings of Jesus, the admittedly much earlier Epistles are without reference to Jesus except as the divine man crucified, raised from the dead, and ascending into heaven. He pertinently asks: *Why did the Master's teaching make so much deeper an impression on those who did not hear it than on those who did?*

¹ Harold R. Willoughby, *Pagan Regeneration* (Chicago: University Press, 1929), p. 9.

² John Campbell Graham, "Fast and Loose in Theology," *The Hibbert Journal*, October 1938, January 1939.

³ Paul-Louis Couchoud, "The Historicity of Jesus," *The Hibbert Journal*, January, 1939.

Again: "Credal incidents apart, Barnabas, Ignatius, Hermas, and the others knew nothing whatever about the 'great historical truths' of Christianity. Paul's own testimony or the lack of it is decisive. The Christ of his inspiration is not the Galilean prophet but a spirit akin to the Socratic daimon." *

Scholars whose eyes are thus peeled of the scale of dogma can now turn to the comparative study of religious thought and philosophy with something like genuine impartiality. The cloudy atmosphere of European pride and prejudice is clearing before a hemisphere humbled by nearly two thousand years of religious and social failure. Although investigation of the philosophical systems of the ancient world, East and West, will for years be stultified in many quarters by the materialism which modern thought has embraced, on the supposition that materialism is the only alternative to Christian theology, science is at least impartial *in spirit*, while dogmatic religion has blind partiality for its cardinal article of faith. Moreover, the best possible antidote to materialism is the impartial study of philosophy.

There are numerous indications that the philosophies of the East are receiving more and more respectful attention among western thinkers. Hindu and other oriental writers and teachers (in the academic sense) are slowly gaining just acceptance on a par with scholars of European tradition and education. Sir Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan is the first Indian to occupy the Spaulding Chair of Eastern Philosophy and Religions at Oxford, so that the indigenous theosophy of his native land now has an able exponent among the students and scholars of the English University. Recently an American professor appealed for a greater appreciation of Eastern thought in America. While European and American modes of thought are based almost entirely on Greek and later European philosophy, he points out that historically there have been "three centers of philosophy, not just one, corresponding to the three historic centers of higher civilization—Europe, India, and China." * This writer emphasizes the value of Eastern philosophy in helping to explain the enigmas which European thinkers have been unable to resolve. He has himself published a solution to the body-mind problem as found in the doctrines of Hindu Sankhya school, which, he says, does not occur in any European treatment of the problem. *

* Ray Knight, "Early Christian Belief," *The Hibbert Journal*, October 1938.

* Homer H. Dubbs, "The Present Significance of Oriental Philosophies," *The Philosophical Review*, May, 1939.

* *Monist*, January, 1929.

He regards it "just as reprehensible for a graduate student in philosophy to be ignorant of the Vedanta or Confucian philosophies as it is to be ignorant of Aristotle." An increasing number of thoughtful persons will concur with his judgment that "Under modern circumstances, a school of philosophy which allows its students to graduate without an acquaintance with non-European philosophical thought is really an anachronism."

Besides such appreciative considerations of Eastern thought by western students, Hindu writers who have been educated according to European standards, and yet who have not as a result lost their profound faith in the wisdom of the East, are beginning to close the gap between oriental and occidental culture. Ananda K. Coomaraswamy, Fellow for Research in Asiatic Art at the Boston Museum, is one who refuses to regard the literature of India through the myopic vision of modern orientalists. His recent study of "The Vedanta and Western Tradition," an address given before the Radcliffe Chapter of Phi Beta Kappa, and published in *The American Scholar* (Spring, 1939), should do much to clarify for American scholars the real significance of the philosophical treasures of India.

Theosophists must welcome contributions of this sort as gaining a hearing for Eastern philosophy in quarters where a woeful provincialism has prevailed for centuries. It is, however, an unpleasant duty to point out two misapprehensions under which Mr. Coomaraswamy suffers: first as to the relation of Theosophists to the popularization of Eastern philosophy in the West, and second, as to the various beliefs held by so-called "Theosophists" on the doctrine of reincarnation. One of his two disparaging remarks about Theosophists, which attributes to them belief in "rebirth here of the very being and person of the deceased," fully explains the other, which asserts that Theosophists have "caricatured" the sacred literature of India "with the best of intentions and even worse results" than it has suffered at the hands of Christian propagandists. It will be well to correct this unfortunate impression before attention is given to the admirable qualities of his article.

That there are in print caricatures of Hindu doctrine written by persons calling themselves Theosophists is undeniable. But that a faithful presentation of Eastern philosophy may be found in the real Theosophical literature is also undeniable, as Mr. Coomaraswamy would, we think, be the first to admit were he to examine the writings of H. P. Blavatsky. Her first work, *Isis Unveiled*,

which introduced to the world the term Theosophy in its modern application, as well as the philosophy of that name, lays particular emphasis on the fact that the personality *cannot* reincarnate. Actually, Mr. Coomaraswamy's own statement of the doctrine of metempsychosis is an exact parallel of a passage from *The Key to Theosophy*. He says:

. . . the death of So-and-so [any man] involves two possibilities, which are approximately those implied by the familiar expressions "saved" or "lost." Either So-and-so's consciousness of being has been self-centered and must perish with himself, or it has been centered in the spirit and departs with it. . . . Supposing that our consciousness of being has been centered in the spirit, we can say that the more completely we have already "become what we are," or "awakened," before the dissolution of the body, the nearer to the center of the field will be our next appearance or "rebirth."

H.P.B. wrote:

. . . the incarnating Ego dresses itself up in new garments entirely different from those of its previous incarnations, and in which all except its spiritual prototype is doomed to a change so radical as to leave no trace behind . . . it [the terrestrial "I"] must so perish and in its fulness, all except the principle which, having united itself with the Monad, has thereby become a purely spiritual and indestructible essence, one with it in the Eternity. . . . Your spiritual "I" is immortal; but from your present self it can carry away into Eternity that only which has become worthy of immortality, namely, the aroma alone of the flower that has been mown by death. (*Key*, p. 166.)

While Mr. Coomaraswamy makes the same general criticisms of the translations of Indian literature that H.P.B. offered, remarking that western scholars are trained in linguistics rather than metaphysics, and are biased by the assumptions of the naturalist and the anthropologist, he is nevertheless led to repeat the error of Barth and other orientalists in placing Sankaracharya in the ninth century A.D. An article published in *The Theosophist* for September, 1883, as eighth of a series of answers to "Some Inquiries Suggested by Mr. Sinnett's *Esoteric Buddhism*," assembles the historical evidence bearing on the date of Sankara, exposing the various errors made by western orientalists and giving the facts which support the Theosophic teaching that the founder of the *Adwaita* school of the Vedanta lived in the sixth century B.C. The writer shows on the testimony of Vidyanaraya's *Sankara Vijayam*¹ that the Govinda whom Mr. Coomaraswamy identifies as the teacher of

¹ Chapt. V, verses 94-7.

Sankara was in fact Patanjali, the author of the *Yoga Sutras*. Agreeably with Max Müller, the Theosophical writer places the Sutra period between 500 and 600 B.C., and therefore, as Sankara was the chela of Patanjali, he must have lived in this period.

Except for this historical question, and his manifest ignorance of the works of H.P.B. while passing judgment on Theosophy, Mr. Coomaraswamy's article should do much good. A number of misconceptions as to Eastern philosophy are dispelled by his clear analysis. He points out, for example, that there are no "sects" among Indian philosophers, the six *Darshanas* or "systems" of Indian thought being but branches of the one "science." As H.P.B. said, "The *Shad-darshana* (or Six Demonstrations) have all a starting point in common, and maintain that *ex nihilo nihil fit*." Some passages dealing with the method and goal of the Vedanta may be quoted as particularly valuable:

The Vedânta [writes Mr. Coomaraswamy] takes for granted an omniscience independent of any source of knowledge external to itself. . . . In saying "That art thou" the Vedânta affirms that man is possessed of, and is himself, "that one thing which when it is known, all things are known" and "for the sake of which alone all things are dear." It affirms that man is unaware of this hidden treasure within himself because he has inherited an ignorance that inheres in the very nature of the psycho-physical vehicle which he mistakenly identifies with himself. The purpose of all teaching is to dissipate this ignorance; when the darkness has been pierced nothing remains but the Gnosis of the Light. . . .

There is indeed a quest, but the seeker already knows, so far as this can be stated in words, what it is that he is in search of; the quest is achieved only when he himself has become the object of his search. Neither verbal knowledge nor a merely formal assent nor impeccable conduct is of any more than indispensable dispositive value—means to an end. . . .the Indian feels, the Vedantic texts have been only verbally and grammatically and never really understood by European scholars, whose methods of study are avowedly objective and noncommittal. The Vedânta can be known only to the extent it has been lived. The Indian therefore cannot trust a teacher whose doctrine is not directly reflected in his very being. Here is something very far removed from the modern European concept of scholarship.

We must add for the sake of those who entertain romantic notions of the "mysterious East" that the Vedânta has nothing to do with magic or with the exercise of occult powers. It is true that the efficacy of magical procedure and the actuality of occult powers are

* This article was reprinted in *Five Years of Theosophy*, at p. 278.

taken for granted in India. But the magic is regarded as an applied science of the basest kind; and while occult powers, such as that of operation "at a distance," are incidentally acquired in the course of contemplative practice, the use of them—unless under the most exceptional circumstances—is regarded as a dangerous deviation from the path.

Nor is the Vedânta a kind of psychology or Yoga a sort of therapeutics except quite accidentally. Physical and moral health are *pre-requisites* to spiritual progress. A psychological analysis is employed only to break down our fond belief in the unity and immateriality of the "soul" and with a view to a better distinguishing of the spirit from what is not the spirit but only a temporary psycho-physical manifestation of one of the most limited of its modalities. Whoever, like Jung, insists upon translating the essentials of Indian or Chinese metaphysics into a psychology is merely distorting the meaning of the texts. Modern psychology has from an Indian point of view about the same values that attach to spiritualism and magic and other "superstitions."

Other parts of "The Vedanta and Western Tradition," an article of considerable length, are of equal excellence and interest to the theosophist. The student who wishes to see the clear parallels between the Vedanta doctrines and the teachings of the Platonists and of Christians like Dante and Eckhart will find them drawn in this article, for the writer believes that Hinduism may be best understood by westerners in the terms of European mystical tradition. This theory may have some merit so far as the scholarly world is concerned, but the theosophist knows that there is no better key to the subtleties of eastern metaphysics than *The Ocean of Theosophy* by W. Q. Judge. *The Ocean*, in fact, is a twofold key, for within its simple periods stirs the *heart* of the ancient philosophy—not that of pundits and yogis, but the primitive, *soul-satisfying* philosophy of the Aryans. Without the *altruism* that Theosophy teaches, intellectual study of the Vedanta or any other system of thought accomplishes only a work of preparation, of the Second Object of the Theosophical Movement, which is but the vehicle of the First—Universal Brotherhood.

MAN'S PLACE IN THE UNIVERSE

THE theologian, in token of the supremacy of his personal god, ascribes to his deity three outstanding qualities: omniscience, omnipotence and omnipresence. These powers are readily seen to be but a hypothetical extension to an infinite degree of the attributes of man. Having persuaded himself that his limitations are permanent and inevitable, the worshipper of a personal God takes comfort in his belief and hope that "God" will bear the burden of man's spiritual welfare and save him from the helplessness which these imagined limitations impose. Theosophy declares that *Life* is omnipresent; Life is no *being*, for "being" implies limitation. "The conceptions of a Personal God as changeless and infinite are thus unpsychological and, what is worse, unphilosophical." (*The Secret Doctrine* I, 2 fn.)

The shoreless and fathomless Reality can never be personified and "separated" from the All, as the believers in an extra-cosmic deity seem to think. "If one could suppose the Eternal Infinite All, the Omnipresent Unity, instead of being in Eternity, becoming through periodical manifestation, a manifold universe or a multiple personality, that Unity would cease to be one." (*S. D.* I, 8.) Although *It* cannot manifest, all individuals in manifestation proceed from that Infinite Source. Although there is no *one* being such as the sectarian god, the ocean of life is made up of an infinitude of living beings of every grade and degree of knowledge and power; the manifested Whole is a Unity of units, each sustained by the Universal Spirit. Law is the intrinsic nature of all these spiritual beings in action:

The whole Kosmos is guided, controlled, and animated by almost endless series of Hierarchies of sentient Beings, each having a mission to perform, and who—whether we give to them one name or another, and call them Dhyan-Chohans or Angels—are "messengers" in the sense only that they are the agents of Karmic and Cosmic Laws. They vary infinitely in their respective degrees of consciousness and intelligence; and to call them all pure Spirits without any of the earthly alloy "which time is wont to prey upon" is only to indulge in poetical fancy. For each of these Beings either *was*, or prepares to become, a man, if not in the present, then in a past or a coming cycle (Manvantara). (*S. D.* I, 274.)

Man occupies the central position in all evolution:

In sober truth, as just shown, every "Spirit" so-called is either a *disembodied* or a *future man*. As from the highest Archangel (Dhyan

Chohan) down to the last conscious "Builder" (the inferior class of Spiritual Entities), all such are *men*, having lived æons ago, in other Manvantaras, on this or other Spheres; so the inferior, semi-intelligent Elementals—are all *future men*. That fact alone—that a Spirit is endowed with intelligence—is a proof to the Occultist that that Being must have been a *man*, and acquired his knowledge and intelligence throughout the human cycle. There is but one indivisible and absolute Omniscience and Intelligence in the Universe, and this thrills throughout every atom and infinitesimal point of the whole finite Kosmos which hath no bounds, and which people call SPACE, considered independently of anything contained in it. (*S. D. I*, 277.)

The responsibility for the cyclic evolution of every universe is ever the burden of Manasic Beings.

The whole order of nature evinces a progressive march towards a *higher life*. There is design in the action of the seemingly blindest forces. The whole process of evolution with its endless adaptations is a proof of this. The immutable laws that weed out the weak and feeble species, to make room for the strong, and which ensure the "survival of the fittest," though so cruel in their immediate action—all are working toward the grand end. The very *fact* that adaptations *do* occur, that the fittest *do* survive in the struggle for existence, shows that what is called "unconscious Nature" is in reality an aggregate of forces manipulated by semi-intelligent beings (Elementals) guided by High Planetary Spirits, (Dhyān Chohans), whose collective aggregate forms the manifested *verbum* of the unmanifested LOGOS, and constitutes at one and the same time the MIND of the Universe and its immutable LAW. (*S. D. I*, 277-8.)

The responsibility of Man as the architect, the builder and the renovator of the universe, never ceases. Man, considered as a spiritual host, is present at the birth of the world from the matrix of abstract space; Man is concerned in that world's translation from its ideal form in the Universal Mind to its first and highest appearance on the plane of objectivity, and Man guides its descent from plane to plane until the seventh and lowest is reached. When he reaches this lowest material plane, a struggle ensues because of the failure of many human monads to become self-conscious co-workers with the whole of nature. Laggards, they misuse their divine energies, keep back the progress of the lower kingdoms and produce the problem of good and evil, with all its resulting pain and sorrow. This is the state of present-day humanity. The work of the Higher Manasic Beings, Those who no longer forget—the Masters of Wisdom—consists in reminding Their younger human brothers of Man's place and work in the Universe. This is the meaning of the Theosophical Movement.

Present humanity may be divided into two classes: those who have begun to grasp the great plan of evolution from the beginning, who recognize their responsibility in and for that plan and who have begun to act upon that basis; and those who are so immersed in the purely personal that they are blind to their higher destiny. The latter use the spiritual gift of self-consciousness for personal, selfish ends, resulting in the greatest tragedy of the age—the use of power without responsibility. The higher occult powers can never be exercised or invoked except by those who work in harmony with the universal plan of evolution, which on our plane manifests itself as the universal brotherhood of all that lives. The mighty creative powers hidden in man must remain latent until he becomes constitutionally incapable of misusing them; until his sole thought is the selfless service of the whole of life.

The Secret Doctrine contains an account of Cosmogogenesis and Anthropogenesis. Did H. P. B. and Masters record this heretofore secret knowledge in order that men might have their intellectual curiosity satisfied, or that the world might have so much additional information on these subjects? This was not their purpose, as they have repeatedly declared. Theosophy is not only “knowledge,” but a *message*, and its purpose is to hasten a reform in the heart and mind of the Race. It shows clearly what the great plan of evolution really is. The association of the Stanzas of *Dzyan*, giving the archaic cosmogenesis and anthropogenesis, with the precepts of *The Voice of the Silence* fittingly suggests that it is only through the assimilation and practice of the Golden Precepts that the whole significance of the plan outlined in the Stanzas may be realized.

SPIRITUAL EVOLUTION

It is the Spiritual evolution of the *inner*, immortal man that forms the fundamental tenet in the Occult Sciences. To realize even distantly such a process, the student has to believe (*a*) in the ONE Universal Life, independent of matter (or what Science regards as matter); and (*b*) in the individual intelligences that animate the various manifestations of this Principle.—*The Secret Doctrine*.

ON THE LOOKOUT

SCIENTIFIC ETHICS

With the retirement of religion from the central position in Western thought, Science has gradually fallen heir to the problems that once were the special province of theology. In considering these subjects scientists naturally avoid the traditional religious terminology, which is tainted by superstitious associations. The word "ethics" supplants "morality," and words like "sin" and "repentance" are no longer used. The same old human nature remains, but the modes of defining it have changed. During the past decade in particular have men of science turned to ethics, hoping to make the study of human conduct really "scientific," since the need of some ethical credo that will *work* has become especially manifest in this period. Suffering and evil have been too strikingly present in the world to allow continued neglect of modern social problems. What, then, is offered as "Scientific Ethics"?

THE NEW VIRTUES

Dr. S. J. Holmes, professor of zoology at the University of California, gives us one version, attributing its inspiration to Charles Darwin (*Science*, Aug. 11). He speaks of the Darwinian theory and "its far-reaching import, especially in the social sciences," adding the truism that "Any theory that throws a flood of light upon the nature of man and the whys and wherefores of human behavior can not fail to have a salutary influence on all our efforts at moral reform." But is Darwinism "a flood of light upon the nature of man"? Dr. Holmes believes it is, and in this light has constructed a theory of morality:

One who accepts the Darwinian theory of natural selection and applies it consistently has, so to speak, his interpretation of human nature cut out for him. Man's traits, in so far as these are a part of his inheritance, owe their origin and biological meaning to their survival value. In fact, the Darwinian theory could not well account for the evolution of any other kind of creature. All the natural traits and impulses of human beings must therefore be fundamentally good if we consider the good as the biologically useful. Cruelty, selfishness, lust, cowardice and deceit are normal ingredients of human nature which have their useful role in the struggle for existence. Intrinsically they are all virtues. It is only their excess or their exercise under the wrong conditions that justly incurs our moral disapproval. . . .

We sublimated simians have no reason to be ashamed of our origin. We owe to our more primitively moral ancestors our good as well as our bad traits.

A DARWINIAN CONTRADICTION?

Darwin himself, however, speaking from the pages of *The Descent of Man*, makes of supreme importance the moral "instinct" of altruism. He quotes Immanuel Kant on the inexplicable sense of Duty felt by man—that "Wondrous thought . . . before whom all appetites are dumb, however secretly they rebel . . ." Darwin examines this most noble of man's attributes, "leading him without a moment's hesitation to risk his life for that of a fellow-creature; or after due deliberation, impelled simply by the deep feeling of right and duty, to sacrifice it in some great cause." Commenting on these ideas, Prof. William E. Ritter, also of the University of California, writes in *The Christian Register* (Oct. 7, 1937):

Notice clearly what we have here; the man who upset the thought of the world about the nature of man by propounding a theory of his origin, in which natural selection leading to the survival of the fittest is very potent, endorsing a conception of man propounded by the founders of at least seven of the world's great religions and figuratively expressed as the Golden Rule.

MORAL FITNESS

Dr. Ritter asks for light on this paradox, although he seems to have managed a reconciliation that satisfies his own mind. For others, perhaps, the matter is not so simple. Why should Prof. Ritter prefer an article of Darwin's philosophic faith to Dr. Holmes' conclusions, which follow much more logically from the vast body of evolutionary literature? Can it be that the "moral ought" has a greater "survival value" than the lower instinct of mere *self*-preservation? Such, it appears, was actually Darwin's opinion. In 1864 he wrote to A. R. Wallace that "the struggle between the races of man depended entirely on intellectual and *moral* qualities." As if to elaborate Darwin's statement, Thomas Huxley, the great defender of Darwinian theory, wrote in his now famous essay on *Evolution and Ethics*:

The practice of that which is ethically best—what we call goodness or virtue—involves a course of conduct which in all respects is opposed to that which leads to success in the cosmic struggle for existence. In place of ruthless self-assertion it de-

mands self-restraint; in place of thrusting aside, or treading down, all competitors, it requires that the individual shall not merely respect but shall help his fellows; its influence is directed, not so much to the survival of the fittest as to the fitting of as many as possible to survive.

Let us understand, once for all, that the ethical progress of society depends not on imitating the cosmic process, still less in running away from it, but in combating it.

SOURCE OF ANIMAL INSTINCTS

The "cosmic process" of Huxley, viewed Theosophically, is nothing more nor less than the separative force of nature typified in the animal attributes and tendencies which Dr. Holmes characterizes as Darwinian virtues. Man has incarnated in matter, where he meets in the uprising tide of form the combined tendencies engendered in past periods of evolution. Man, the spiritual being, is not the creature of this combination of instincts, desire and tendencies. They are dependent upon him, for he is their creator—and can be their master. Hence, as Huxley has put it, moral development proceeds in inverse ratio to a surrender to blind animal instincts. Darwin's letter to Wallace shows an appreciation of the fact that human evolution is essentially moral.

A RETURN TO SANITY

Few students of modern thought have grasped the full significance of the inability of the greatest scientists to maintain a position of complete materialism. Huxley was at one time an ardent devotee of mechanism, which in his earlier writings he seemed inclined to apply to man in the manner suggested by Dr. Holmes. But this truly great man did not hesitate to adopt a different view of evolution when he found his earlier theories morally unsatisfactory. His essay on *Evolution and Ethics* helped to re-open a question which, he must have perceived, is far better left unsolved from the scientific point of view than settled in the manner proposed by Dr. Holmes. Writing of Huxley's "revulsion against mechanism," in his *Riddle of Life* (London, 1938), the late Dr. William McDougall emphasizes the great significance of this fundamental change in position—something modern "scientific ethicists" would do well to ponder. It was, Dr. McDougall says, a "rejection of all the principal conclusions which the biologists of his school had so confidently announced, and the throwing open again of all the great questions, such questions as man's place in nature, the factors of evolution, the core of truth in all religions, and the essential validity of ethical principles."

EFFECTS OF MATERIALISM

This is somewhat at variance with Dr. Holmes' conclusion "that up to the time of Darwin we had no scientific explanation of human nature that was worth a rap." The practical effects of Dr. Holmes' "ethical" theory, which calls lust, cruelty and deceit "intrinsic virtues," are well summarized by Sir Richard C. Tute in the *Hibbert Journal* for October, 1938:

In all countries which can claim to be civilised materialism has exercised enormous influence. It teaches men that they are no better than the beasts of the field, and men are responding to such teaching by behaving as beasts to an extent which the scientists and philosophers of the last century hardly contemplated. . . . In the United States, if Dr. Carrel is to be believed, the doctrines of materialism are responsible for widespread mental and moral deterioration and for the encouragement of a dogmatic attitude of mind, which is doing great harm in the biological, medical and social sciences.

"LIFE: WHAT IS IT?"

Dr. A. B. Cooke, senior attending surgeon at the Los Angeles General Hospital, writes on this subject in *The Family Physician* for July. His "scientific discussion of life from a philosophical viewpoint" begins with the statement that although "Life is usually referred to as a mystery, miracle or enigma would be a more fitting term." "Life," says Dr. Cooke, "is energy, and energy is the most familiar as well as the most abundant entity in the universe. Can anything properly be called a mystery when so many facts about it are known, or readily knowable, and so many of its phenomena and mechanisms are clearly understood?" But the term "energy" seems merely to name something the real nature of which remains unknown:

If the simple definition that life is energy is correct and true, the question of major interest at once becomes, what is energy? Ordinarily force, power, are employed as synonymous terms. But the definition remains incomplete unless the resultant motion is also taken into account. . . . Modern Science teaches that all energy is of electrical nature, — that in final analysis all matter, whether living or non-living, is made up of electrical charges. . . . Mind and its output, thought, represent some form of energy, — indeed have already been identified as electrical and their energy actually measured. Spirit, too, accepted by Scientist as well as theologian as the ultimate expression of both physical and mental

life, must be interpreted as energy though perhaps forever beyond the range of the bodily senses. The deduction appears unavoidable that there is nothing but energy in the universe.

ALL IS LIFE

Dr. Cooke infers that there is no such thing as dead matter:

The reactions of animate matter differ only in degree, not in kind from those of inanimate matter. . . . Energy is the primary essence of the universe from which all things are fashioned. Matter, life, mind, spirit, are merely different expressions of the same primordial essence. This is the most significant truth to crystallize from the tremendous expansion of scientific knowledge during the last half century, — the idea of unity — one in all and all in one.

Here Dr. Cooke individually fulfills the prophecy of H. P. B., that men of science must come to realize the *Oneness* of all Life. "It hardly seems possible," she wrote, "that science can disguise from itself much longer, by the mere use of terms such as 'force' and 'energy'," the fact that things that have life are living things, whether they be atoms or planets." Dr. Cooke remarks that the fundamental operations of energy exhibit definite principles: First, *energy* is the beginning and the end of all things; it is one, differing in its form and manifestations only because its mediums are different. Life, mind, and spirit, he says, are simply types of energy in operation and so parts of one all-embracing whole. Second, Energy is indestructible—"annihilation is an utter impossibility." Third, all movements of energy are under law.

LIFE IS ELECTRICITY

There are other orders of reality besides the physical, according to Dr. Cooke:

With the passing of the age-old distinction between animate and inanimate types of material substance, the conclusion became self-evident that reality does not consist alone in the grossness of physical matter. Is it not true that all of the great basic realities are wholly intangible and invisible? It is easy to visualize a container of salt solution, but not the molecules, atoms, ions, and electrons of which the solution is composed. . . . Behind the senses through which ordinary matter is apprehended lie the inscrutable processes and mechanisms that render the apprehension possible. And the processes themselves, usually referred to under the specious term function, are no less real than the material substances through which their activities are manifested. There is no longer conflict between the concepts of

the visible and the invisible. Both are expressions of the one fundamental entity—energy. . . . It is accepted at the present time that all motion, all action and reaction, are the expressions of electrical energy, whether the resulting phenomena occur in the domain of the animate or inanimate.

WHAT IS THIS ENERGY?

Science is able to describe only the visible effects of “energy.” H. P. B. wrote: “The atom as known to modern science is inseparable from Spirit, now called ‘Energy’ in Science. . . . That which is called ‘energy’ or ‘force’ in Science is never, in fact, and cannot be energy alone; for it is the substance of the world, its soul.” Dr. Cooke has come close to the occult teaching as stated in *The Secret Doctrine*:

Electricity is matter. “Force,” “Energy,” may be a better name for it, so long as European Science knows so little about its true nature; yet matter it is, as much as Ether is matter, since it is as atomic, though several removes from the latter. . . . Electricity is “immaterial” in the sense that its molecules are not subject to perception and experiment; yet it may be—and Occultism says it is—atomic; therefore it is matter. But even supposing it were unscientific to speak of it in such terms, once Electricity is called in Science a source of Energy, Energy simply, and a Force—where is that Force or that Energy which can be thought of without thinking of matter? (I, 111 fn.)

“ULTRA REALM OF MIND”

Not all our knowledge depends on approved methods of “scientific research,” in Dr. Cooke’s view. “It might be difficult, if not wholly impossible,” he says, “for one to prove in the sense referred to that he lives and thinks, but his conviction on the matter would remain unshaken.” The possibility that there are modes of perception by which all our doubts might be resolved is hopefully considered. “If it were possible to project consciousness into an ultra realm of mind and spirit where the trammeling influences of earth and flesh would no longer impede the understanding, it is readily conceivable that certain great basic truths would at once appear, luminous and self-evident. . . . Humanity must have some means of anchorage on the storm-tossed voyage of life. Is not that afforded by acceptance of the spiritual not alone the most trustworthy, but the only means available?”

Since Plato, the doctrine of spiritual vision has been abroad in the western world. H. P. B. brought directly from its primeval Source the true psychology of the ancients, giving the rules of self-

development through which the eye of wisdom may be opened, even in the darkness of Kali Yuga. Perhaps, in the passage of time, as materialism more and more loses its hold on the aspiring minds of the race, thoughtful men such as Dr. Cooke will no longer be satisfied to *speculate* about the possibility of a sight before which "great basic truths would at once appear, luminous and self-evident," but will seek that sight with the truths that have been in the world for more than a half a century.

OUR "BULGING" EARTH

That "the surface of the earth is continually bulging or sagging," was recently affirmed by geophysicists at a convention of the International Union of Geodesy and Geophysics. According to the *New York Times* of Sept. 9:

Instead of being a hard, tough mass of unyielding rock, the earth actually is elastic, said the scholars. . . .

As causes they mentioned the pulls of the moon and sun, the earth's rotation, the melting of its polar ice caps, the concentration of water toward the equator and the shifting and constant growth of mountains.

H. P. B. shows in *The Secret Doctrine* that the earth is a living, changing entity. "Nature is never stationary during manvantara, as it is ever *becoming*, not simply *being*." (I, 257.) As to the meaning of "entity," she says: "'Entity' may be thought a strange term to use in the case of a globe; but the ancient philosophers, who saw in the earth a huge 'animal,' were wiser in their generation than our modern geologists are in theirs." (I, 154.)

CATAclysms AND CYCLES

Mr. Judge throws light on this subject in the *Ocean of Theosophy*. Writing on cycles, he observes:

In regard to great cataclysms occurring at the beginning and ending of the great cycles, the main laws governing the effect are those of Karma and Re-embodiment, or Reincarnation, proceeding under cyclic rule. Not only is man ruled by these laws, but every atom of matter as well, and the mass of matter is constantly undergoing a change at the same time with man. It must therefore exhibit alterations corresponding to those through which the thinker is going (p. 123).

The pull of the sun and moon, the rotation of the earth, and the shift of the elements are effects, not causes of cataclysms. Man is the cause of all changes in the earth's surface, which occur in accordance with the law of cycles. As Mr. Judge says:

At the intersection of the great cycles dynamic effects follow and alter the surface of the planet by reason of the shifting of the poles of the globe or other convulsion. This is not a theory generally acceptable, but we hold it to be true. Man is a great dynamo, making, storing, and throwing out energy, and when masses of men composing a race thus make and distribute energy, there is a resulting dynamic effect on the material of the globe which will be powerful enough to be distinct and cataclysmic (*Ocean*, 120).

The shifting of land and water to form new continents for the future races of men is going on all the time. At present land off California is rising from the sea and in other localities the coast is sinking. At the same convention of geophysicists the rising of new mountains in Guatemala was described. But all these physical phenomena have as their noumena spiritual and moral causes. Until scientists recognize this they will remain in the dark as to the causes of the continuous as well as cataclysmic changes in the earth's surface. A suggestive article in this connection is Mr. Judge's allegory, "The Skin of the Earth," reprinted in THEOSOPHY II, at p. 68.

OCCULT FRAGMENTS

Two paragraphs of science news appearing in *Science* of Aug. 18 are of interest:

Mayan Indians, greatest scholars of ancient America, knew exactly when to introduce inter-calendar days necessary to keep their year in step with the sun, according to Erwin P. Dieselforff, of Copan, Guatemala. He states that eclipses of the sun were of major interest to these ancient American astronomers, explaining the Mayan method of forecasting when eclipses would occur.

Mayan mothers consulted astrologers in their anxiety to know what good fortune or bad might be the destiny of their babies. Four of the lists of days and their omens, found in the books of Chilam Balam, have been studied by Alfredo Barrera Vázquez, of the National Museum at Mexico City, and he has concluded that the custom of guarding babies' fortunes by giving them calendar names up to a certain age was used by the Mayan mothers of Yucatan, as well as by those in Indian nations of Mexico proper.

The books of *Chilam Balam* are transcripts of more ancient works in the Mayan tongue put into Spanish characters by educated natives after the Conquest. The literary remains of the Mayans are fragmentary because Bishop Landa had most of them destroyed

as his sacred Catholic duty. Enough, however, remains to show many traces of a Central American version of occult doctrines. The Mayans, according to H. P. B., were coeval with Plato's Atlantis, and the temples and palaces of Uxmal, Copan and Arica, she says, were probably built by the Atlanteans.

THE HIGH COST OF DYING

In an age priding itself on freedom from medieval customs and beliefs it is strangely incongruous to find the elaborate rituals of funeral and burial still religiously practiced. There are protests, however, against both the ignorance which so glorifies mere physical remains, and against the unwarranted expense involved. In the September *Forum* Percy Waxman presents convincing arguments for the universal adoption of cremation. His article, "The Flesh Profiteth Nothing," begins with a reminder that "the idea of cremation is as old as civilization. In ancient Greece it was considered the only honorable means of disposing of the dead. Only suicides, infants, and unfortunates struck by lightning were subjected to the disgrace of interment." H. P. Blavatsky wrote in *The Secret Doctrine* (II, 753) that "*Cremation was universal till a comparatively recent period—some 80, or 100,000 years ago,*" and in *The Theosophist* (IV, 221) she observed, "Funeral rites have originated among the theocratically governed nations . . . are an afterthought of the priest, an outgrowth of theological and clerical ambition, seeking to impress upon the laity a superstition, a well-paying awe and dread of punishment."

A SERIOUS ECONOMIC FACTOR

Mr. Waxman considers the tremendous waste of money involved in the procedure of funeral and burial, as well as the prolongation of a family's grief and its public exposure. The cost of the custom is staggering. He writes:

We spend far more money on burials than we do on births—between \$300,000,000 and \$400,000,000 a year. We pay out more than \$60,000,000 annually in the United States for funeral flowers—\$60,000,000 wasted on the dead when that vast sum might be used to benefit the living . . . modern civilization tells us that the flesh profiteth a great deal, that there is money in mourning and dividends in death—also unlimited opportunities for high-pressure salesmanship in costly coffins with quilted silk lining and heavy silver handles.

TOWARD SANITY

Although Mr. Waxman's arguments for cremation are in the main economic, he also suggests with common sense that "The 'flesh' is not what we remember a man by. It is rather by the 'things of the spirit'—his kindness, loyalty, generosity, integrity, unselfishness. These qualities can never be buried." Only a deepening realization of this truth will make men see the materialistic futility of our antiquated funeral customs. An appreciation of the benefits of cremation as taught in Theosophy would certainly hasten this desirable reform. A brief statement of Mr. Judge reprinted in THEOSOPHY (XVI, 133) gives the actual effects of cremation in terms of the sevenfold nature of man:

Cremation has no direct effect on any of the sheaths or vehicles, but it must have the indirect effect of freeing the astral form from the influence of the material body and thus give the astral a chance to more quickly dissipate. It has much less effect on kama and the others above, and none on prana, for the latter is ever present, and in the case of death is simply at work somewhere else. Material fire can have no effect directly on any sort of matter that is not on its own plane, and hence has no effect at all on manas or those above that. From a sanitary point of view cremation is of high importance, as it does away with injurious matter or matter in such a state as to be injurious to living.

Theological Christianity is rightly accused of materialism. It focuses attention on the resurrection of the *body*, giving no light on the nature and destiny of the soul. Theosophists may remember that the first cremation in the United States was promoted and endorsed by members of the original Theosophical Society. Today there are approximately 150 crematories in this country, the practical result of an applied Theosophical perspective.

HALF BRAIN AS GOOD AS WHOLE

Dr. Byron Stookey, an eminent brain surgeon, recently reported the results of a number of operations which necessitated the removal of one of the frontal lobes of the brain. The operations in no way impaired the mental capacity of the patients, and in some cases resulted in mental improvement. (*New York Times*, Sept. 15.) Said Dr. Stookey:

The observations . . . bear out the concept of a bilateral representation of personality and mental processes in the frontal lobes, comparable to the bilateral representation of muscle action. In

other words, the two frontal lobes send out vibrations in the same wavelength, in complete synchronization, thus producing a harmonious complete personality.

When one of the lobes is removed, the other still keeps sending in the same wavelength and the personality remains complete. On the other hand, when one of the lobes is damaged by operation its frequency changes, resulting in "interference" and "personality static," a mentality divided against itself.

In two of the cases, Dr. Stookey reported, the complete removal of one of the lobes resulted in what may be regarded, by ordinary social standards, as mental improvement.

AN INVISIBLE ORGAN

Lookout in THEOSOPHY, December, 1935 (XXIV, 89), described a "brainless" baby whose cranial cavity was filled with fluid instead of grey matter. The baby lived twenty-seven days, but during that period it partook of food, cried, moved its limbs, and reacted as any infant having a normal brain. Such phenomena must ever remain mysteries to science, unless it recognizes the existence of other principles in man than the physical body alone. Theosophy teaches that the brain is merely an instrument of the mind on this physical plane. Dr. Stookey's operations show that so long as the instrument is not wholly impaired, the mind may still function through it.

COMPLEX STRUCTURE OF THE BRAIN

According to H. P. B.'s *Transactions* (p. 64), "The brain is such a complex thing, both physically and metaphysically, that it is like a tree whose bark you can remove layer by layer, each layer being different from all the others, and each having its own special work, function and properties." If the complexity of the brain extends to the "metaphysical," then it must have "layers" which the scalpel cannot reach, and these layers might possibly connect mind and body when portions of the physical brain have been removed. If fluid in the cranial cavity served an infant for all practical purposes, then why not matter in a gaseous state? What did Dr. Stookey mean when he spoke of the frontal lobes sending out vibrations in the same wavelengths? If the normal functioning of the brain depends on "vibrations," "wavelengths," and "synchronization," then it involves processes of which physiology knows but little. Motion of one kind or another attends all phenomena whether physical, mental, or spiritual, but behind all motion is the *Mover*, the Divine Ego.

All matter is finally reducible to invisible, sensitive points, called "lives," and the "cell" is simply the ideal form in which the lives arrange themselves. The cell pattern derives from the astral design body, which also gives shape to the various organs and body as a whole. The "lives" fill up the privative limits of the cells and are in apparently void spaces as well as where flesh and blood are seen. As neither these lives nor the ideal cells nor the astral counterpart of the brain can be affected by surgery, the mind could still use them as an instrument. Matter immediately responsive to thought is of a most refined and plastic nature, and the "layers" of the brain must be composed of grades of matter increasingly fine until the physical merges gradually into the metaphysical. The term "metaphysical" as used by H. P. B. does not necessarily refer to the *astral* alone, but may apply to finer degrees of physical or fourth plane matter as well. Theosophy teaches that matter, like all else, is septenary, and that its higher states are unknown to physical science.

CELLS AND CRYSTALS

The following passages taken from a dispatch in the *New York Times* for July 5 should be interesting to readers of the "Science and the Secret Doctrine" article in this issue (p. 18) :

Dr. John Desmond Bernal, University of London crystallographer, tonight advanced the hypothesis that the puzzling phenomena of cell division may be explained in terms of physical action characteristic of crystalline proteins. . . .

The physicist's theory is that the physical action of crystals essentially similar to those well known to colloid chemists is exemplified in the external and internal mechanisms of chromosomes when cells divide. The mechanisms, he said, form division spindles and metaphase plates. The spindle is simply a crystalline form, known to physicists as a "tactoid," of a long, charged protein molecule which will separate in an ionized medium in spindle-like forms.

A paragraph from H.P.B. is sufficient comment to the foregoing :

It is not those who teach the transformation of the mineral atom through crystallization—which is the same function, and bears the same relation to its *inorganic* (so-called) *upadhi* (or basis) as the formation of *cells* to their organic nuclei, through plant, insect and animal into man—it is not they who will reject this theory. . . . The whole trouble is this: neither physiologists nor pathologists *will* recognize that the cell-germinating substance (the *cytoblastema*) and the mother-lye from which crystals originate, are one and the same essence, save in differentiation for purposes. (*S. D.* II, 255.)