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Let every Brahman with fixed attention consider all nature, both visible and invisible, as existing in the Divine Spirit.

For when he contemplates the boundless universe in the Divine Spirit, he cannot give his heart to iniquity.— *Manu.*

THE PATH.

VOL. III.

FEBRUARY, 1889.

No. II.

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THE SIGNING OF A PLEDGE.

To those who have ears to hear
And will to act ;
Who have counted the cost
And are ready to lose themselves that they may be the whole :
These words are written.

Those theosophists who have taken a new Pledge are at the outset of a study which will require the concentrated attention of the outer and inner man. As some slight indication of the method to be employed in this study, it is here proposed to examine the bearings of certain portions of this Pledge and memoranda accompanying it ; to note the words employed, their shades, their exact extent, and, above all, their under meaning and relation to things spiritual.

In Clause No. * of the Pledge, for example, stress should be laid upon the words,—“*before the world.*” Our support is to be given openly, firmly. We are not called upon to argue, nor to thrust our belief upon unready minds, but, just as standard bearers hold the flag aloft, we are called upon to let our faith be known, and to defend it and its champions, when need arises, from all attacks.

In Clause * we also find the words,—“*without delay.*” This includes mental as well as physical delay. We are to act without pausing to debate or to question. The time for these things was *before* signing the Pledge. Once our adherence given, our faith declared, we are to live up to them promptly, sure that in the results of our action we shall learn the wise reasons for its being demanded of us. This is the best and most impressive way of learning, and what we are trying to do is precisely to impress—that we may in time control—the lower mind, the outer man. Moreover, opportunity passes more swiftly than light; we are not to deceive ourselves as to our present inability to act, but we should at once begin to act in thought and to inquire of ourselves how the thing is to be done, setting aside all other things *except our duties*, until we are able to do what has been asked of us, whether in thought, in action, or both. The word “delay” applies also to doubt. If we doubt the wisdom or expediency of the request made to us, we impair the efficacy of our action, and cause “delay” on the inner planes of being by that doubt. It is supposed that we have taken this pledge in obedience to an inner prompting and conviction. If these are not strong enough to carry us through our self imposed task, or if we are too weak to stand by them firmly, then we had better have left this Pledge unsigned.

In Clause * there is the word,—“*constant.*” It denotes that mere effort is not sufficient. It is the *constant* effort that succeeds. When men roll a stone up hill, it is the unrelaxed strain that does the work. If the velocity of a falling body increases in every second of its descent, this is only because the movement of that body is, for the time, constant or regular. If the object fell by jerks, with pauses between, the increase of velocity or moving force would not occur in anything like the same ratio. Spasmodic attempts, with intervals of neglect, will not help others or ourselves. A moderate and constant effort has far better results than fierce but fickle ones. In another document an Adept says that neither He nor His Brother Associates will desert H. P. B., because her fidelity to their work “has been *constant.*” This suffices to show the importance of that word; the state of mind denoted by it; and the scrutiny to which all phrases from occult sources should be subjected, in order to extract their full meaning.

In Clauses * and * the words—“*all in my power,*” and “*what support I can*”—are full of significance. We have invoked a Mighty Power; called

upon Its inflexible Justice ; asked, in fact, that we may be dealt with as we deal with this Pledge. The gauge of our power, of our real ability to do these things, now rests with that Power. We cannot cheat It. We are tried hereafter by a higher Law than that of man, and by a judgment for which we have asked.

While we were wholly blind and unconscious, as far as the physical brain is concerned, of these truths, we were not held to that strict account which we have now opened by the declaration that we have seen the Light and are prepared to follow it as conscious men. We must then look well to ourselves, that we neither flatter, deceive, nor excuse ourselves unduly. We are to use all our talents, faculties, outer and inner, opportunities, and means to this work, in so far as we can consistently with our duties and the justice due to others. If our powers are small, that matters nothing. It is the simple inner attitude, the action of doing just what we can, neither more *nor less*, that counts. We have voluntarily undertaken to devote ourselves to the spiritual enlightenment and ethical reform of humanity ; the self sacrificing spirit of pioneers must be ours. We are not asked to sacrifice anything but ourselves : nor to combat with persons, but with frauds, shams, and lies, whether organized or vague and half concealed. The honest word in the right place is a deed of weight and valor. In the preliminary Memoranda this point is again stated in the words ;—“ *to the extent of time and ability.*” No one will appear to call us to account if we trifle with this Pledge. We shall answer to no man, but to the Law we have summoned, which will crush us or aid us as we keep or neglect our vow.

On page * of the * * * a great truth is stated in the words,—“ *too many were quick to doubt and despair.*” They indicate a law of Thought. When trouble arises, if we set ourselves promptly and unflinchingly to think how it may be met and overcome, we attract the assistance we deserve : if we generate the contrary energies of doubt and despair (or repulsion), we create about us, by contraction, a dense atmosphere which the helpful influences cannot penetrate. They cannot be forced through to us by other wills, in despite of the inertia we have created around ourselves, because that would be contrary to Karmic Law. If any being infringes the Law but once even, to bring about some present good to any temporary individual, far greater injury results by reaction to both the actor and the befriended man ; and the higher the Being, the more *conscious* he is of having evaded the Law, the greater the subsequent penalty to both.

It is further stated that only our solidarity makes help from Masters possible. A body, like an atom, is a centre of energy and of life. The greater the energy, the greater the influx of fresh life. Now the energy of a body does not depend upon its gross size, but upon the coördination or union of all its parts. Together, the signers of this Pledge form a body

corporate which exists upon several planes of being. If it be weak, dismembered, ruptured by dissensions, it cannot attract an efflux of energy from higher (or inner) spheres. Its functions cannot increase if its members are atrophied. Or, to put it differently, we can only receive, assimilate, and advance, as a body, whose energy each one of us can lessen or increase by his individual thoughts. From thoughts action follows, whether upon the plane of thought only (and this is the most potent and swift effect) or upon the plane of physical action also. He who breaks a pledge, he who indulges in doubt, despair, or evil thoughts, forces his brother to pay the penalty of retrogression along with himself. Let each one be strong for the rest. Be it remembered that Masters are rarely justified in helping individuals, and then only in due proportion to their usefulness to Humanity at large. But what we cannot yet merit as single individuals, we may merit as a body, especially when the units composing that body are harmoniously devoted to the advancement of the race. Our centre of energy need not be numerically large, if it be large in purpose, in thought, and in usefulness: the *quality* of the energy engendered determines its attractive and assimilative power, and ensures the rapid evolution of the centre or organization from which it proceeds. Individual progress, within the body, will depend upon concentration of thought, upon an effort to think for one's self, to answer one's questions from within; to open up the avenues of the soul; to stand firm without regarding what we may hear from books or from the lips of men; to secure the affirmation of our own souls to every step, and then to take that step, or to constantly try to take it, in the teeth of every obstacle, whether inward or outward, whether bred in our own nature or in so-called worldly circumstance. *Effort is growth*; we may not succeed in the specific things attempted, but the constant struggle ensures growth as a whole. Of our own progress we can never judge, and it should not occupy our thoughts, for that enhances the perception of self.

In regard to necessary discrimination and thinking for one's self, a hint may not be misplaced. Many good theosophists frequently lay stress upon Madame Blavatsky's denial of infallibility. This is very good and very true in its way, and we must learn to think for ourselves, but still it is possible to swing too far the other way. *In that denial we must also discriminate.* It has been done for us by a Master who says that "with occult matters she has everything to do." The denial refers to external affairs conducted by the personal nature. When M. C. wrote in notes on "Light on the Path" that one could live in the same house with an Adept, see him daily, yet never come near him, she gave a hint to the wise. Any teaching given is to be taken for consideration without doubt or suspicion being admitted, for, as is well known, the disciple is the gainer by his pure devotion to the person who stands to him as teacher. Even should that chosen guide make

mistakes, the disciple is not harmed if he has followed them in the self-forgetful spirit of devotion, whereas if he infringes his pledge by suspicion or doubt, he precipitates the very catastrophe he dreads. We may say, over and over, the mental attitude is the chief consideration. When that is far removed from self, nothing can harm us.

There comes then the question of condemning others. Impersonal things and acts we may and must condemn. But we have not the smallest right to condemn or to criticise any man. Even human law requires that a judge shall be, (a) appointed by authority; (b) fully possessed of all the facts. We are neither. The facts are *never* before us. The unseen causes we never know. Often the faults and crimes of men are the punishment decreed by Karma for Sin in other lives, and what we behold is the inexorable execution of the Law, the entailed suffering by which alone the erring soul experiences and learns to know its mistake. We have to live out even our mistakes in order to know them. We who condemn *persons* do so through a subtle quality of nature which will, in after lives, bring us to be sharers of the faults we now condemn. Not seeing the forces which impel a man along his prescribed course, we are madmen if we permit ourselves to be moved by scorn or criticism of *him*. The attitude of criticism of a person, whether captious or justified (apparently) by the prevailing views of Life, is one which is fatal to inner growth, and to the development of the inner body, which it eats like a canker. We have no rights except in our Brotherhood. By the one Ray, all the worlds come forth into manifestation. It is the Power of Powers; if we exclude it from our hearts we are lost men. A quotation from a private letter of Madame Blavatsky fittingly concludes this point.

“Poor blind men, not to know the difference between condemning in *words*, which is *uncharitable slander*, and withdrawing in silent pity from the culprit and thus punishing him, but still giving him a chance to repent of his ways.”

In rule * the reference to other associations “*for the purpose of mystic study or occult training*” includes all colleges, esoteric “Calls,” and societies, and serves as a warning that no man, once he is pledged in this direction, shall listen to contrary or other teachings in the spirit of a disciple, or even of a credulous hearer. Nor can he belong to any other occult body. It is a law in nature—hence inviolable—that we cannot serve two Masters. The attempt only injures us. No authorized teachings will come to him by any other external source than those named in this document, for Masters are just to their chosen agents, and this is the rule. Nor is it true, as sometimes said, that there is another school of *White Adepts*. The White Adepts all the world over form one Hierarchy in which there is no distinction of nationality or of creed. They form this school, not because

of personal inclination, but in virtue of the laws of Being, which we may faintly picture to ourselves as acting in this respect as a kind of spiritual gravitation. Black magicians, on the contrary, stand each for himself alone.

Much may be received through attention to our inner nature, and we will do well not to pay attention to various teachings to be found all about us, but to concentrate on that which comes to us through—Section, as it will require all our powers. There are persons who fear that they may be called from their home or other duties. To such we offer these grand words of Madame Blavatsky's.

“A man tied by his duty to one place has no right to desert it in order to fulfil another duty, let it be however much greater, for the first duty taught in occultism is to do one's duty unflinchingly *by every duty*.” How like Thor's hammer falls that word Duty again and again upon the anvil of the heart. Then she continues :

“He who plays truant in one thing will be faithless in another. No real, genuine MASTER will accept a chela who sacrifices *anyone* except himself to go to that Master.”

May we then search our hearts well before it is too late, and, this done, may we prepare with calm confidence and courage to fulfil our pledges *in the spirit* of Brotherhood.

JASPER NIEMAND, F. T. S.

THE PRESS AND OCCULTISM.

When THE PATH first appeared on the scene, the *World* and the *Sun*, two prominent daily newspapers of New York, devoted a large space to a criticism of this journal anent a prophecy concerning the Theosophical Society based on certain books in India called *Nadigrandhams*, and took pains to say that we were all only superficial dreamers and dabblers, but at the same time the *Sun* itself displayed ignorance of the subject. We then went on to record, among others, a prophecy as follows :

“The Sanscrit language will one day be again the language used by man upon this earth, first in science and metaphysics, and then in common life. *Even in the lifetime of the SUN's witty writer, he will see the terms now preserved in that noblest of languages creeping into the literature and press of the day.*”(1)

Already our words are coming true, and even in the paper that abused while it advertised us. In that paper of January 2d, appears this editorial paragraph :

1 PATH, May, 1886.

“For the space of 111 years from to-day we are to have the figure 9 in our years, and the occultists, who put much stress upon numbers, predict that the condition of mankind will be greatly improved over all past times during this period. It is the age of Kal Yuga.”

In this is a reference, in seriousness, to “the Occultists,” together with more superficial statements of what those persons say, nearly all of it wrong, chiefly that the Occultists “predict that the condition of mankind will be greatly improved over all past time during this period.” What they do say is, that things will grow worse in reality instead of better. But at the end of the paragraph we find the paper referring to the present age as the age of “Kal Yuga,”—which ought to be *Kali Yuga*. The same “witty writer” who criticised our superficial oriental knowledge probably wrote the lines above and forgot to inform himself that *Kali Yuga* means Dark Age, and hence he grew tautological. Still, we can forgive him, inasmuch as probably several hundred thousand readers of the *Sun* read the statement, and will remember “Kali Yuga,” two words from the Sanscrit, after the journalist who wrote them has ceased airing his superficial attainments.

In other journals we can find numerous references to such Sanscrit terms as *Nirvana*, *Satwa*, *Devachan*, *Ishwara*, and a host of others, all taken from Sanscrit metaphysics and philosophy.

On the whole, therefore, we begin to see a beginning of the fulfilment of the prophecy made so long ago.

SPIRITUAL GIFTS AND THEIR ATTAINMENT.

One of the questions which a Theosophist is apt to ask, and to ask with some earnestness and intensity, is, How can I make progress in the higher life? How can I attain spiritual gifts? For the phrase “spiritual gifts,” which is a rather loose-jointed expression, we are indebted to Paul, the Apostle and Adept, who thus wrote to the Corinthian Church: “Concerning spiritual gifts, brethren, I would not have you ignorant.” Among the “gifts” which he goes on to enumerate are these,—wisdom, knowledge, faith, healing, the working of miracles, prophecy, discerning of spirits, the speaking of divers tongues, and the interpretation of tongues. And while the Apostle urges the Corinthians to “covet earnestly the best gifts,” he yet proceeds to show them a more excellent way, namely the supreme law of love. “Now abideth,” he says, “faith, hope, charity (or love), these three; but the greatest of these is charity.” Spiritual gifts, then, however desirable their possession may be, are plainly not, in the opinion of this

good Adept, on the highest plane, not the supreme object of human attainment, or the most excellent way of reaching human perfection. They may doubtless properly be regarded as evidences of advancement on the higher planes of thought and spiritual life, and may be coveted and used for the benefit of others ; but they are not in themselves the chief object of human desire. For man's supreme aim should be to become God, and "God is love."

But let us look at the matter a little more closely. In the first place, what is a "gift"? What is the common acceptation of the word? Clearly something given to or bestowed upon a recipient, not something which a man already possesses, or which he may obtain by a process of growth or development. The latter, strictly speaking, would be a "fruit," not a gift. A tree which has been producing nothing but leaves and branches for many years finally breaks out into blossom and fruit. No new "gift" has been conferred upon it ; it has simply reached a stage of development in its natural growth where certain powers, inherent in the tree from the beginning, have an opportunity to assert themselves. In the same way the transcendental powers possessed by the Adepts are not gifts ; but the natural result of growth in certain directions, and the necessary efflorescence, so to speak, of the profound development in their cases of those spiritual potentialities which are the birthright of all men.

Taking this view of the meaning of the word, I think most Theosophists will be ready to admit that the phrase "spiritual gifts" is a misnomer. There are and can be no gifts for man to receive. Whatever the student of the higher life is, he is as the result of his past labors. Whatever he may become in the future will be due to his own efforts. He may develop his latent faculties and in time become an Adept, or he may drift along the currents of life without aim or effort, till he finally sinks into oblivion. His destiny is in his own hands, and is in no way dependent upon "gifts."

Bearing in mind, however, the manifold nature of man, the subject may be looked at from another point of view. For all practical purposes man may be said to consist of body, soul, and spirit, the soul being the true ego, and the spirit one with the Supreme. And regarding these for the time as separate entities, it is perfectly true, as James, another apostle, puts it, that "every good gift and every perfect gift is from above." Every aspiration of the soul for spiritual things, every resolve of the man to lead a purer life, every helping outstretched hand to a weaker brother, every desire for the truth, all hungering and thirsting after righteousness :—these and like yearnings and strivings of the soul have first of all come from above, from the Divine within. In this sense they may be called "gifts,"—gifts from the higher nature to the lower, from the spiritual to the human. And

this action of the above upon the below is seen in those humane attributes, or qualities, or virtues—whatever one may be pleased to call them--which Paul in another place enumerates as the “fruits of the spirit,—love, joy, peace, long suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance.”

Looked at from either of these points of view, how can we attain spiritual gifts? The answer would seem to depend upon what we are really striving for. If the extraordinary powers of the Adepts have captivated our fancy and fired our ambition, then we must possess our souls in patience. Few, if any, of us are at all fitted for a “forcing” process. We must be content to wait and work ; to grow and develope ; line upon line, precept upon precept, here a little and there a little, till, ages hence perhaps, we come to the full stature of the perfect man. If, however, wisely recognizing our limitations, we strive instead after what may be termed the ordinary manifestations of the spirit, two obvious lines of conduct suggest themselves.

Every impulse from above, every prompting of the Divine within, should meet at once with a hearty welcome and response. If you feel as if something urged you to visit some sick or afflicted neighbor or friend, obey the suggestion without delay. If the wish to turn over a new leaf comes into the lower consciousness, don't wait till next New Year's before actually turning it over ; turn it now. If some pathetic story of suffering has moved you, act on the emotion while your cheeks are still wet with tears. In short, put yourself at once in line with the Divine ways, in harmony with the Divine laws. More light, more wisdom, more spirituality must necessarily come to one thus prepared, thus expectant. How can a bar of iron be permeated with the earth's magnetism if it is placed across instead of in line with the magnetic meridian? How can a man expect spiritual gifts or powers if he persists in ignoring spiritual conditions, in violating spiritual laws? To obtain the good, we must think good thoughts ; we must be filled with good desires ; in short, we must *be* good.

And this practical suggestion is to fulfil faithfully and conscientiously every known duty. It is in and through the incidents of daily life, in work well done, in duties thoroughly performed, that we to-day can most readily make progress in the higher life,—slow progress, it may be, but at any rate sure. These are stepping stones to better things. We advance most rapidly when we stop to help other wayfarers. We receive most when we sacrifice most. We attain to the largest measure of Divine love when we most unselfishly love the brethren. We become one with the Supreme most surely when we lose ourselves in work for Humanity. DIES NOX.

OF OCCULT POWERS AND THEIR ACQUIREMENT.

There are thousands of people in the United States, as well in the ranks of the Society as outside, who believe that there are certain extraordinary occult powers to be encompassed by man. Such powers as thought reading, seeing events yet to come, unveiling the motives of others, apparition of objects, and the like, are those most sought after, and nearly all desired with a selfish end in view. The future is inquired into so as to enable one to speculate in stocks and another to circumvent competitors. These longings are pandered to here and there by men and societies who hold out delusive hopes to their dupes that, by the payment of money, the powers of nature may be invoked.

Even some of our own members have not been guiltless of seeking after such wonderful fruit of knowledge with those who would barter the Almighty, if they could, for gold.

Another class of earnest theosophists, however, have taken a different ground. They have thought that certain Adepts who really possess power over nature, who can both see and hear through all space, who can transport solid objects through space and cause written messages to appear at a distance with beautiful sounds of astral bells, ought to intervene, and by the exercise of the same power make these earnest disciples hear sounds ordinarily called occult, and thus easily transmit information and help without the aid of telegraph or mailboat. But that these Beings will not do this has been stated over and over again; for the kingdom of heaven is not given away, it must be "taken by violence." It lies there before us to be entered upon and occupied, but that can be only after a battle which, when won, entitles the victor to remain in undisturbed possession.

As many have seemed to forget these rules, I thought it well to offer them the following words from one of those very Adepts they seek to meet:

"The educating of the faculty of hearing occult sounds would be not at all the easy matter you imagine. It was never done to any one of us, for the iron rule *is* that what powers one gets he *must himself acquire*, and when acquired and ready for use, the powers lie dumb and dormant in their potentiality like the wheels in a music box, and only then is it easy to wind the key and start them. * * * Yet every earnestly-disposed man *may* acquire such powers practically; that is the finality of it. There are no more distinctions of persons in this than there are as to whom the sun shall shine upon or the air give vitality to. There are the powers of all nature before you; *take what you can.*"

This is perfectly clear and strictly according to the Secret Canon.

“When the materials are all prepared and ready, the architect shall appear”; and when we have *acquired* the powers we seek, by educating them ourselves from our inner being, the Master will then be ready and able to start into exercise that which we have obtained.

But—even here is an important point. This. If the Master can, so to say, wind the key and thus start the machinery, He can also refuse to give the necessary impulse. For reasons that have to do with the motives and life of students, it may be advisable for a while not to permit the exercise of these powers which “lie dumb and dormant in their potentiality.” To sanction their use might in one lead to the ruin of other lives, or in another to personal disaster and retardation of true progress.

Therefore the Master says that quite often he may not only refuse to give the start, but yet further may prevent the wheels from moving.

THERE ARE THE POWERS OF ALL NATURE BEFORE YOU; TAKE WHAT YOU CAN.

RODRIGUEZ UNDIANO.

MEDITATION AND ACTION.

It is the fashion now-a-days, with those who write about ideas which lie beyond the world of sense, to express opinion in very guarded terms. In contradistinction to the old priestly dogmatism, it has of late years been considered “good form” to handle these subjects in so tentative a manner as almost to imply agnosticism. It is a frame of mind that has eminently suited the time, and was a worthy set-off to the old superstitious intolerance.

But when a new revelation is bursting on the souls of men, when the error and the ignorance, alike begotten of the ancient superstition and the modern incredulity, are so powerful as to defy all but the best aimed shafts of the most cogent Reason, the tentative hesitation of the proper after Truth is no longer an appropriate attitude.

We have no desire to soar into the lofty region of metaphysics, where we are sure to be met with the assertion that truth about these ultimate realities never has been and never can be formulated or uttered by man. Let us content ourselves with the humbler elevation of practical ethics, and acknowledge that Truth is a relative term. To quote from a remarkable letter lately addressed to his Grace the Archbishop of Canterbury, “A religion is true in proportion as it supplies the spiritual, moral, and intellectual needs of the time, and helps the development of mankind in these respects. It is false in proportion as it hinders that development, and offends the spiritual, moral, and intellectual portion of man’s nature. And the transcendently spiritual ideas of the ruling powers of the Universe entertained by an Ori-

ental sage would be as false a religion for the African savage as the groveling fetishism of the latter would be for the sage, although both views must necessarily be true in degree, for both represent the highest ideas attainable by the respective individuals of the same cosmico-spiritual facts, which can never be known in their reality by man while he remains but man."

With this prelude let us attempt to form some just estimate of a remarkable and interesting book which has recently been published, *Scientific Religion*, by Laurence Oliphant. It is certainly in marked contrast to the style of writing commented on in the opening paragraph,—indeed it is refreshing to listen to such earnest utterances on subjects of the deepest interest. While expressing his sincerest attachment to the true Christian faith, no writer attacking the anti-Christian creeds of the churches could demolish the orthodox conceptions with more powerful or crushing arguments. The 22d chapter, which deals with the interpretation of part of the Book of Revelation, is one which the orthodox would do well to "read, mark, learn, and inwardly digest." His remarks throughout the volume about the orthodox science of the day (for there is now an orthodoxy in this also!) are equally admirable. The following is a specimen. "But a blind belief in the superficial senses is as unsafe a guide to truth as a blind belief in a book. Science is as mole-eyed as theology, and yet to one or the other the whole civilized world trusts for enlightenment. No wonder that these two sets of blind guides, leading their blind followers, should stumble against each other in the dark and fight furiously."

The new vital impulses descending on man are then dealt with. They are supposed to emanate from those inhabiting the Unseen Universe. Whatever opinions may be held on this subject—and opinion is to-day in a state of flux—the following may certainly be called an ingenious explanation. "Where there is scepticism in the human pneuma or inmost thought of the man, antipathetic atomic combinations are formed in his two external dielectrics, and interpose a hostile atomic element which encompasses the medium, and forms a barrier that the psychic force of the spiritual agent cannot penetrate. It is for this reason that physical manifestations are successful just in proportion as there is a strong faith-sentiment in the spectators, whose external dielectrics are then co-operating with the spiritual agent."

The remarks on the discoveries claimed by Mr. Keely too are so interesting as to deserve reproduction. "Mr. Keely has discovered that such a change can be effected by vibration, in the atoms of which the atmosphere is composed, that what he terms 'atmospheric disintegration' can be produced, which has the effect of liberating a subtle essence, the nature of which has still to be determined, and which he believes to be 'inter-atomic.' The energy it possesses is so great that it exercises a pressure of 25,000 lbs. to the

square inch, and, in the engine which he has just constructed for traction purposes, develops a force of 250 horse-power. All this is achieved without the introduction of any extraneous motive power, the whole apparatus being so constructed that the liberation of this tremendous agency from its atmospheric prison-house can be effected by the vibrations produced by a tuning-fork. Those who are sufficiently unprejudiced to connect the bearings of this discovery, of what must be dynaspheric force, with phenomena which have hitherto been regarded as supernatural by the ignorant, will perceive how rapidly we are bridging over the chasm which has always divided the seen from the unseen, and obliterating the distinction between what has erroneously been called matter, and what has no less erroneously been called spirit." Further on in the book it is significantly pointed out that this dynaspheric force with which Mr. Keely can operate on external substance is synonymous with the inter-atomic energy that produces the phenomena of hypnotism, telepathy, mediumship, and all such abnormal manifestations.

While differing in some points to a marked degree from the recognized theosophic teachings, the author nevertheless demonstrates that the source from which he has drawn his inspiration is conscious of many of the occult facts,—for instance, the androgynous or bisexual nature of primeval man; the highly attenuated character of matter which composed his frame, compared with the fleshly covering we now wear; the esoteric meaning hidden from the vulgar gaze in the Bible as well as in the Scriptures of all religions, and the consequent necessity of initiation in the mysteries; the mistaken notion of the popular mind as to the fundamental difference between spirit and matter; but it is needless to enumerate them further.

We now come to the great subject of which the whole book is a gospel,—the sympneumatic impulse, the descent of the Divine Feminine. Taken in the widest sense, the author's inspiration appeals to our highest reason, and we cannot but give approval to the general proposition that the far-off regeneration of the race will lie (amongst other things) in the reversion to the bisexual type of our prehistoric spiritual ancestors,—in other words, in the absolute quenching of the principle of lust, the double-faced goddess today worshiped, though in varying degrees, by all Humanity—by the votaries alike of marriage and of free-love. This will be an unpalatable way of stating the truth to many, for it is a view from a light which naturally seems to dwarf the difference between the virtuous world and those whom the virtuous world avoids touching with the hem of its garment.

But while assenting to the general proposition, there are details in the working out of the idea which do not appeal to our sense of truth. Writing in chapter 20 of one who is pursuing the upward path, he says, "She will know—not because it is to be found in the Bible—not because her reason suggests its truth, but because her physical organism forces the fact

upon her, that she is the feminine half of a two-fold being, and that her completion consists in union with her masculine complement." And again in chapter 21, interpreting extracts from the Kabbalah, he refers to the sym-pneumatic descent, "for it will result in the union on earth of the halves hitherto divided, whereby man will regain his lost condition." This is no new idea either. Without going back to Plato (and we should probably err in ascribing to his deeply-veiled utterance the meaning that the words might naturally seem to imply), we find it unmistakably expressed in "Jocelyn," that touching story of Lamartine's, in the stanza which begins—

"Mon cœur me l'avait dit : toute âme est sœur d'une âme ;
Dieu les créa par couples et les fit homme ou femme ;
Le monde peut en vain un temps les séparer,
Leur destin tot ou tard est de se rencontrer."

The completion of the at-present incomplete nature of man or woman by an ideal union must to many be a very fascinating thought, but instead of its being as it here purports to be, the explanation of the mystery of the differentiation of sex, is it not rather a perversion of the truth, the truth being that both man and woman have within each one the potency of both sexes, and in this consists their true equality,—in other words, that the Soul is bisexual, and is therefore capable of assuming and wearing either the male or the female form, and that its true apotheosis consists in its assertion of and its reversion to its real nature and Divine source.

Much that is written in this section of the book on the subject of woman's mission is admirable. Though the author is severe on the colleges for the higher education of women, which, he says, are "attractive to a certain class of the sex, but which are nurseries of hybrids which turn out an inferior species of man-woman," yet, as he truly points out, the degree in which they (women) compete, with more or less success, with men in the intellectual and executive battles of life is the degree to which they stunt and destroy their own higher faculties.

Of the truth of his inspiration generally, what shall we say? Each man must judge according to his own light which opinion and belief are our guides, and before we have risen to the heights necessary for directly cognising these facts of the Unseen Universe. While leaving those who are able to do so to deal critically with the detailed statements, and to discriminate between the interpretations of symbols and passages, many of which appear to be far-fetched, it seems to us generally that, while the learned and able author has received shreds and fragments of transcendental truth from the Astral World, the knowledge of the primary fact is wanting which would have been capable of discriminating between the teachings and of welding them all into one homogeneous whole,—we mean the doctrine of re-incarnation and the law of Karma, facts which are recognised as the basis of all the

great Oriental religions, and which it is the shame and loss alike of Christendom and of Islam to have generally ignored, though traces of the truth are still to be found in the scriptures of the former, and though it is secretly acknowledged by the mystical followers of the latter.

The author also suggests that the attainment of a perfect human state by man while still he bears the body is a realizable possibility. A whole chapter is devoted to the subject of the formation of households which are gradually to realize this perfect state. But let the author speak for himself though of course no short extract in this or in any other case can do full justice to the gradually elaborated idea of the author in his own work. "For as he labours thus side by side with his fellow-men, tilling, perhaps, the land, and ploughing deep furrows into his own soul, which are destined in good time to bring forth an abundant crop, he perceives that he is indeed laying the foundations of a reconstructed society; and a vista opens out to his charmed gaze of co-operative industries, harmonious communities, and a political system in which liberty, equality, and fraternity shall develop under the ægis of absolute authority, and in association with a hierarchy composed of such different degrees of rank as correspond to their fitness to enjoy it."

It must necessarily be with regret that criticism is allowed finally to replace approval of a book which contains so much that is excellent, and the lessons in which are so sadly needed by this self-satisfied and self-vaunting age of ignorance and error. But the unwarranted optimism implied in the above calls for comment; and, besides, there is an apparently wilful misunderstanding throughout the volume of some of the deepest and most occult truths, which recalls a similar though much less flagrant example of misunderstanding, viz: the exaltation of woman as the crown of the universe by the late Mrs. A. Kingsford in her and Mr. Maitland's work, *The Perfect Way, or the Finding of Christ*. If it is fair thus to cite a single blemish in a book of such exalted inspiration and remarkable value as the one just named, it may still stand as an example of the error which all psychics are specially liable to, who trust to "spirit-guides" apart from the true intuition of the well balanced nature, as well as from the ancient traditions of revealed authority.

PILGRIM.

(Concluded in March.)

If the severity of my virtue incites another to sin, I am most to blame. He is carried away by the law of polarity; I set it in motion. A rigid virtue destroys; a loose virtue wastes: seek the mean. In equilibrium all things find perfection.

LETTERS THAT HAVE HELPED ME.

(Continued from January.)

IV.

Dear Sir and Brother ;

In cogitating lately I thought of you in respect to some of my own thoughts. I was reading a book and looking around within myself to see how I could enlarge my idea of brotherhood. Practice in benevolence will not give it its full growth. I had to find some means of reaching further, and struck on this, which is as old as old age.

I am not separate from anything. "I am that which is." That is, I am Brahma, and Brahma is everything. But being in an illusionary world, I am surrounded by certain appearances that seem to make me separate. So I will proceed to mentally state and accept that I am all these illusions. I am my friends,—and then I went to them in general and in particular. I am my enemies; then I felt them all. I am the poor and the wicked; I am the ignorant. Those moments of intellectual gloom are the moments when I am influenced by those ignorant ones who are myself. All this in my nation. But there are many nations, and to those I go in mind; I feel and I am them all, with what they hold of superstition or of wisdom or evil. All, all is myself. Unwisely, I was then about to stop, but the whole is Brahma, so I went to the Devas and Asuras :* the elemental world, that too is myself. After pursuing this course a while I found it easier to return to a contemplation of all men as myself. It is a good method and ought to be pursued, for it is a step toward getting into contemplation of the All. I tried last night to reach up to Brahma, but darkness is about his pavillion.

Now what does all this insanity sound like? I'll tell you what: if it were not for this insanity I would go insane. But shall I not take heart, even when a dear friend deserts me and stabs me deep, when I know that he is myself?

NAMASTAE !

Z.

I found the above letter still more valuable when I remembered that Brahma is "the universal expansive force of Nature"—from *Brih*, to expand; and so stated in an article by H. P. Blavatsky in *Five years of Theosophy*. In the Dhammapada we are told to think ourselves to be the sun and stars, the wet and dry, heat and cold; in short, to feel all experience, for we can live out all in the mind.

J. N.

* Gods and demons.—[J.N.]

V.

Dear Jasper ;

I wish I could answer your letter as you ought to have it done. But I feel my inability. However, our duty is to never consider our ability, but to do what comes to be done in whatever way we can, no matter how inadequate the work appears to others. When we stop to consider our weakness, we think, by comparison, of how another would do it. Our *only right is in the act itself*. The consequences are in the great Brahm. So I will just say what comes.

I feel the sadness in your letter, but know that you will rebound from that. Do not let the sadness of knowledge create despair ; that sadness is less than the joy of Truth. Abstract Truth, even, has necessarily in it all the mercy there is in the whole. Its sternness is only a reflection from our own imperfections, which make us recognize the stern aspect alone. We are not the only ones to suffer upon the Path. Like ourselves, Masters have wept, though They do not now weep. One of them wrote some years ago : "Do you suppose we have not passed through many times worse trials than you now think you are in?" The Master often seems to reject and to hide his (spiritual) face, in order that the disciple may try. On the doors and walls of the temple the word "TRY" is written. ("The Brothers" is a better designation than Mahatmas or Masters.)

Along the path of the true student is sadness, but also there is great joy and hope. Sadness comes from a more just appreciation of the difficulties in one's way, and of the great wickedness of the individual and collective heart of man. But look at the great fountain of hope and of joy in the consideration that the Brothers exist, that They were mere men too ; They had to fight the fight ; They triumphed, and They work for those left after Them. Then beyond Them are "the Fathers," that is, the spirits of "just men made perfect," those Who lived and worked for humanity ages ago and Who are now out of our sphere, but Who nevertheless still influence us in that Their spiritual forces flow down upon this earth for all pure souls. Their immediate influence is felt by Masters, and by us through the latter.

Now, as you say, it is all Faith ; but what is Faith ? It is the intuitional feeling—"that is true." So formulate to yourself certain things as true that you feel to be true, and then increase your faith in them.

Don't be anxious. Don't get "maddened." Because in the fact that you are "maddened" (of course in the metaphorical sense), is found the proof that you are anxious. In a worldly sense it is perhaps well to be anxious about a highly important matter, but in occultism it is different, for the Law takes no account of our projects and objects, or our desire to be ahead or behind. So, if we are anxious, we raise a barrier against progress, by

perturbation and straining harshly. You wrote to B. that what is his, is his. Then the converse is true ; what is not, is not. Why don't you take your own medicine ?

Yours,
Z.

STRAY MEMORANDA.

“Why not,” I said to a Master’s messenger, “give to all these gaping theosophical children throughout the Society, the whole truth at once? Collect all the doctrines and the interlocking prophecies together, whether about the world of men or the world of the Gods ; arrange all the facts respecting the evolution of men on the planet, with all the details about dividing of races and the hidden descent of tribes : then give it out for good and all.”

Looking at me seriously, he said, “Would they believe it? I think not.” But he left behind him some stray jottings.....

“The science-worshipping theosophist, thinking that the brighter day will only come when men of science are convinced that the Masters know all that is to be known, would have revelations regarding ‘missing links’ and the dispersion of races. But the dawn of a new age is not heralded by such divulgements ; and to tell the facts before the time would only result in strife, bitterness, and laughter.

“Not even the devotees of the Worship of the Dead, who follow after mediums and say that the souls of the deceased return to detestable surroundings in heated cabinets, would admit a single fact that militated against pet theories. Yet we know that the souls of good men who have died do not trouble the world. They leave behind them the ‘coat of skin,’ full of what wickedness they were unable to disperse in life. This unsavory remainder is worshipped by the medium-hunter, and because out of the astral light it reports facts and words not thought of by the sitters, the real man is accused, and by default convicted, of returning here. Such spiritualists as believe thus are consecrating corpses and making Gods of the demons of the air. Will they believe this?

“The extraordinary psychological manifestations occurring during the last forty years all over the Western world have been dubbed by the ‘spiritists’ as the awakening of men and the new, best, last philosophy, whereas they merely marked the changes beginning in the great heart and mind of the collective Western man. In relation to what is heralded and will be, they are as is the changing voice of the youthful chorister to its full development into a basso profundo.

“By careful and painstaking attention to this worship of the dead, new forms are created in the astral light, compounded of the reliquæ of deceased people and the matter added by elementals; they imitate the dead in word, gesture, recollection, and other indicia of identity, and delude the living, because these elementals like the new surroundings thus found. One small section only of the elemental nature is thus affected, but it likes not to relinquish a grasp once taken upon us mortal-gods.

“Although this Death-Cult calls itself scientific, we have not yet heard of any careful or other collecting of statistics about appearances through mediums of the same deceased person at more than two places at once. But any careful reader can find that such things are reported every day and no deduction drawn from it.

“The real deceased one in his blissful state after death feels a twinge every time his shade is called up in the charnel house of a living medium's body.

“The money paid to mediums for ‘spirit communications’ is haunted by astral beings of a certain order. They plunge upon the medium, and find their appropriate dwelling in the bad and not in the good part of his nature. The temple of the Holy Ghost is thus turned into a den of thieves.

“The trajectory of a spiritual being through space is visible to the human eye from only one point, and very often it is seen as a curved line when in fact it is otherwise. One sort of elemental being moves in an epicycloidal curve. Looked at by one person's eye it is a straight line, to the other observer it is a curve, while a third sees it as a triangle.

“Every thought has with it in its journey all the physical, mental, and moral attributes of the thinker; but the recipient may be able only to perceive one of those attributes, and then, instead of getting the thinker's thought, he may hear the rate of vibration in the body of the thinker, and all he sees then is a small white star.

“There are beings who have their existence in your body. Some live but a moment, others for longer periods.

“Where cities are ‘destined’ to be built, whole armies of celestial beings build an imaginary city and try to induce men to erect the objective structures there; and the founding of a city is an occasion of joy or deep sorrow for those who can see the nature of its builders.

“There are certain spots in the land now uninhabited, over which swarm hosts of elementals. They have their own city there, and when men pass that way they whisper to them, show pictures of a city, of its buildings, and its future; and soon or late the human beings come and erect their dwellings there.

“Your American continent is full of these spots, and crowded with memories of past glories that elbow each other for space.

“Although each thought goes on through infinite space, many thoughts sent out from your mind are, so to say, lost on the way; for they meet opposite thoughts or stronger ones which deflect them from the course desired, and they thus fly on to a goal not in the mind of the thinker, or through weakness of impulse they fall easily away from the appointed orbit.

“In one aspect the Astral Light may be compared to a howling mob of rival musicians, each engaged on a different tune. Who enters there has need to know how to distinguish the right tune, or dire confusion will result in his mind.

URBAN.

GENERAL THEOSOPHICAL CENTRES.

Some theosophists think there is no need for a headquarters of the Society in India or in the United States, and that the money spent for maintenance of such centres ought to be devoted to some other object. With this view we cannot agree.

The buildings and grounds belonging to the Society in India are our only headquarters, strictly speaking, and are desirable, while centres of theosophical work elsewhere have fully demonstrated their usefulness. The “centre” in India has done the greatest good to the Society. It has been a visible evidence of our work and influence, and, as such, a point not only of interest for theosophists, but of serviceable impression upon others. While we are working in the world we must use the things of the world, and not attempt to drag everyone, whether or not, to the high planes of thought where there no longer is any necessity for tangible evidences. Nothing encourages people so much as results of work, and in our struggles with the scoffers we often find assistance in that we are able to point to where outward signs can be found for that which we have tried to do. The headquarters are in one sense the embodiment of an idea—that of Universal Brotherhood—, for they have been created and are supported by the efforts of members holding to every known shade of religious belief and of every race, caste, and color.

The need for a similar *locus standi* in the United States has been felt for some time by many of us, and to meet it the room in New York, at 117 Nassau Street, which has been referred to in these pages and in the daily press, was fitted up by the efforts of members residing in different parts of

the country and devoted to the general good. Every theosophist is welcome there, and every inquirer.

The register of visitors shows callers from every point in America, from New Zealand, Asia, and Europe. The room is not the property of the Aryan T. S. That Branch has its own hall and library in another part of the city.

At present this theosophical centre is in a small room, because the expense of rent for larger quarters cannot be met until a greater number of members become interested in its welfare. It ought to be in a larger room, so that a library of theosophical works might be accumulated for the use of every visitor. The fact that it is in New York should make no difference, for this city is the metropolis of this country, and one which members from distant points are constantly visiting. And there is no reason why Branches in the other large cities should not establish similar centres. But at present this is the only one of the sort, and there ought to be enough money raised by members throughout the United States to permit of a larger room being hired, so that it may become a real theosophical club of universal use and interest.

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONERS.

From L.

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

Answer.—The plan of life should be that which shall appear to the student the best one under his lights; any sort of life may have as a plan under it the good of the race. It is not required that literature or art should be given up: theosophy seeks to round men out and not to produce moral skeletons. As to marriage, we have nothing to say.

2.—Is *Light on the Path* written for chelas alone or for all?

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

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

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

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

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

A STUDENT.

From "An Outsider"—in England.

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

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

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

JASPER NIEMAND, WM. BREHON, EUSEBIO URBAN.

REFLECTIONS.

When I am annoyed by an ungovernable animal, I am reminded that the brutes would not oppose man if man understood and entered into his true relations with all things. The brutes are unconsciously aware of the general human opposition, which they see focalized in each human being. When I am in harmony with all things, men *cannot* and brutes *will not* oppose me. In underrating instinct, the brute is more true than is the man, to the unwritten Law.

The "idle word" condemned by Jesus is inactivity of Being. It is the cessation of the homogeneous resonance, the Logos or Word. The Word in its highest activity is pure spirit; in stagnation it is hell. To each man it is given in trust for all men; if he misinterprets it he is tortured. If he sequestrates it, he is condemned to eternal death that it may be free; for it is eternally free. Through misuse, he may learn its use. If he denies it, he is lost; for by it alone he lives.

It is better for a man to sin deliberately against the Law than to chafe under the mandates of conscience. The first is a renegade who chooses another King; the second is coward and slave who rebels but dares not disobey. The energy of direct sin may, by reaction, compel return, but the lethargy of fear bears no fruit.

If you wish to receive, *give*. If you wish to ascend, *descend*. If you wish to live, *die*. If you wish to understand these words, read them by the lamp of the spirit, and reject that of the understanding.

Apparent evil is a necessary result of manifestation or duality. The good alone is *in Time* inactive. Evil is the balance of good: the Equilibrating power reigns above and is alone eternal.

When the silent Eternal gives birth to the activity of Spirit in Space the worlds are evolved, and, seeking equilibrium, return again to the eternal silence. So with the soul of man.

More saving grace may be found in the society of thieves than in that of fine persons who never reverberate to a true thought. In the first there is rebound; the latter is the negation of life.

Expiation is the kernel of sin. "Evil" containing its own punishment continually defeats itself, and sows the seed of "good" in its own regeneration.

He who would see Perfection must become It. How? By beginning the attempt. Its first step is the full realization of imperfection in himself.

TEA TABLE TALK.

Thinking over the current number of the Tea Table, a sudden idea struck me. It was one of those ideas that hit hard, and that seem to fall into the mind from "outside,"—as we, in our sense of separation, call all that is not visibly interior to our physical shell. This body is really immersed in the one Substance much as a sponge is plunged in the ocean. The sponge seems to enclose a certain fixed amount of water, but in fact that water is always ebbing and flowing through wave and tide, and interpenetrates the sponge without being separated from the whole body of the ocean. Moreover, the sponge can only hold a certain amount at one time, but through that it is related to and impinges upon the whole ocean, and has not the folly, as the human sponge has, to try and hold on to its small share of water, to crystallize and fix it there, shutting out all the rest and impeding the glorious universal influx.

Such ideas are very different from those that seem to originate with a flash within us. A study of the various kinds and methods of Thought is of great help to the student. He sees more and more clearly that we are often "thought through"; that many of our thoughts are suggestions, sometimes from beneficent and also from evil sources: he learns to distinguish all these from that internal and luminous prompting which is his soul-guide.

My idea was a very simple one, and illustrates the point because it appeared to come whizzing directly from some other mind. It had the practical human flavor about it. There are flavors of the mind, as well as of the palate. Its bearing was simply as follows. "This is the people's Tea Table; why not let them furnish it once in a way?" So I only enter this month to bow myself out again, a conventional visitor, leaving as my card the subjoined letters.

"*My dear Julius*; This is the experience of W., a friend who has lived in this mountain fastness for 22 years. * * * In 1873 he had (and has yet) a partner named J. They had a little bunch of Indian ponies—25 or 30. They built a cabin just on the west side of the Sierra Madre, but it was deemed best to bring their ponies over on the east side to range during winter. It fell to J's lot to take the ponies round the mountain point, 40 or 50 miles from their cabin, to the range selected. They had a very intelligent bitch of shepherd breed, called "Woolly." Usually she remained at the cabin, but on this occasion she concluded to assist J. with the horses. Being a very trusty and, as I said, very intelligent animal, she was accorded a particular corner in the cabin, and it was her habit, when returning from any jaunt, to trot to her corner and throw herself down (when very tired), and groan with satisfaction. W. was sitting in the cabin at dusk, on the eve of J's expected return, listening intently for any sound of his coming.

The weather was pleasant, and he had not yet lighted the evening fire. Everything was intensely still, and W. was expectant, knowing that J. should be near. Inside the cabin it was quite dark. Not a soul within 50 miles probably. Finally, old "Woolly" trotted into the cabin and to her bed, and threw herself down unusually hard, groaning and grunting with evident

satisfaction that her hard tramp was over, and she once more in comfortable quarters at home. W., hearing the dog come in, started up to go and assist J. in caring for the horse he had ridden. He looked everywhere for J. but couldn't see him. Old Woolly was never known to desert and come home of her own accord. If she had done so this time, it was the first. J. must be close; so W. returned to the cabin, made up a fire, and began to prepare supper, thinking J. would soon appear. He glanced into old Woolly's corner; *she was not there.* Surprised beyond measure, W. called and searched, but no Woolly was to be found. The fact was, neither J. nor the dog was within 20 miles of the cabin at that moment, for W. found J. the next morning in old Bridges Pass, on the ground, with his collar-bone broken. His horse had fallen, just after dusk the evening before, and had thrown him over his head, breaking the bone; and old Woolly, tired and worn out to exhaustion with the long tramp, had thrown herself down on the ground in abandon, and groaned as she stretched her weary limbs.

That was 15 years ago, and W. (who by the way is nothing if not a Materialist) says that he never was so badly deceived in all his life, and cannot, to this day, rid his mind of the belief that he heard the dog come in just as she always did. I want to say, by way of closing, that they had this old dog in 1883, and it is my firm belief that she understood all that they said to her. They talked to her as though she were a person, and I have seen some strange things done by her, that she was told to do, just as one would tell a child to do so and so.—J. F. C."

It may interest our comrades to see how far our lines extend. The above letter comes from the far West, and the next one relates events of Honduras life. As the Tea Table gathers them in, the wish will arise that we could all draw closer together, could personally inter-act and work. For example, one devoted member and official of T. S., reading in the Tea Table of a Brother's exertions, promptly offered him through us a subscription to T. P. S. publications, with which to do more good. Such events make us glad that we spread our Tea Table.

My dear Sir; The accounts of coincidences as given in THE PATH remind me of an occurrence of last November. One morning in that month I awoke impressed by the idea that I should like to stroll to the Sterling Valley station, on the Rome, Watertown, and Ogdensburg road, about a mile from the house of the friends whom we were visiting. It was the first and only time such an apparently causeless impression was felt by me. I mentioned the feeling to my wife before leaving the room to go to breakfast; but became interested in a conversation during that meal and thought no more of my desire to walk to the station. But during family prayers the impression that I must go to the railroad became so strong that I hurried away as soon as I could do so.

Arrived at the station without having a conscious purpose in coming, and nothing to do when there, I chatted for a moment with the agent, and then paced to and fro along the track. At last I was tempted to go to the switch a few rods to the westward from the station. There was nothing of interest to call me there, for I had seen all there was to see; but as I had

nothing else to do, and as little is needed at times to tempt an idle man to do acts for which he has no reason, I walked toward the switch. There I found a piece of the steel rail of the main line broken out and displaced. It was not a large piece—perhaps not more than a foot in length—, but it has happened that great disasters have been caused by smaller things.

Hastening to the agent I told him of my discovery. He promptly telegraphed a warning to the fast express, then almost due at the station next west from Sterling Valley; and when the train came it ran very slowly over the break instead of flying along at a high rate of speed.

If you will [take the trouble of looking at page 183 of Lippincott's for January, 1887, you will see recorded there two or three other incidents of the like nature which have happened within my own experience.

As I sat writing in my room in the house of Señor Don D. M., in Tegucigalpa, Honduras, one evening in March last, the señor came in, looking rather scared, and exclaimed:

“A most curious thing has happened to me this moment. I heard the voice of my sister calling to me so plainly; did you hear any one call? I thought you might have spoken to me some word, but that could not be so; you were here, and I was on the veranda on the far side of the *patio*, so I could not have heard you if you did not shout. I fear much that my sister, who is in Paris, may have died that moment. I felt my hair to straighten, so,” and my good friend straightened a lock of his curly hair.

I had not spoken. In the salon adjoining the library where I was, la señora sat contentedly rocking and softly singing to the sleeping baby. The three-year-old girl lay curled in one of the commodious rocking chairs sound asleep; the other two little girls sat each on an arm of the chair their mother was in, their arms around her neck and their cheeks resting against her wavy black hair. Juan had just given over trying to finish a sketch by the fast-waning light which came through the little ports in the west door; Luis sat, quiet as usual, his closed book in his hand, and Rafael rested from his practice at the piano. It was a mother's happy, quiet moment, when, every care put aside, she enjoys to the fullest the pleasure of having her children about her. None of them could have been heard by *el señor* if they had spoken, for the walls of the old house were so tremendously thick that no sound of voice could penetrate them, and the doors had been closed to keep out the north wind which was settling down from the cold mountain-top back of the city.

I had that day received a copy of the New York *Herald* of January 1, containing an account of an interview with Prof. Royce of Harvard on the subject of thought transference; and another paper in which was an article by which Richard Proctor mathematically demonstrated that *he* did not know that there were such things as presentiments, and that, therefore, there are none. Having so recently read these, I felt a lively interest in the fancy the Professor entertained that a voice, the voice of his sister, had called to him from across the ocean. In the conversation which followed Señor M. said:

“Several years ago Señor Don Gerrardo Barrios, who was afterward

president of Salvador, negotiated the sale of a valuable mine he owned at Los Encuentros, near the volcano of San Miguel in Salvador. Promising to report in favor of the mine, the expert returned to France.

"For a long time nothing more was heard of him or of the company which sent him. One morning my cousin Señora Barrios said, 'I have just dreamed that I was in a great city of grand houses, very beautiful. It was Paris. In a room in a house there I saw gentlemen at a table on which were papers. They signed the documents you sent to them about Los Encuentros. They have bought the mine.'

"So Barrios wrote on the wall then the date of the day when she dreamed, and the hour also, because that he knew that curious things do sometimes happen, that no man can explain. And many days after, when the documents came to him from Paris, Barrios looked, and the date of them was the same as the date on the wall of the morning when his spouse dreamed.

"After that, when Barrios was president of Salvador and the conspirators tried to assassinate him and all of his family, he went to Costa Rica. Then they wrote to him to return to Salvador, because all the people were ready to rise in revolution to make him again president. So he tried to go on a steamship from Costa Rica; but the steamer would not receive him on board, because they feared that if they carried Barrios then Salvador would not any more pay them the subsidy.

"Then Barrios went on a little schooner with two masts; and when the vessel was near the little port of Corriento, the lightning struck the principal mast and broke it. Then the captain said, 'I must go to Corriento to mend the mast,' and so he did.

"Then, but not that very same morning, my cousin, the wife of Barrios, came to me and said, 'Diego, cousin, I have seen Barrios in a small ship, and two other large ships pursuing him; but they could not find him because of the storms. And then I saw my sisters before me, spreading their skirts, so, to hide the black coffin; but I saw it behind them, and Barrios was in it—and he is shot.'

"My cousin was much troubled by this dream, and spoke often of it to many people when we lived there together in Costa Rica. Often she said that we would hear that Barrios had been shot. One day news came from Salvador that it was so. Barrios was killed. Then my cousin was wild, and ran that day all the way to Punte Arenas. It was fifteen leagues. I went with her, for she was my cousin and a woman. I was nearly dead when we reached that place, and I wanted nothing else in the whole world so much as I wanted rest and sleep. But she would embark at once, and ran up and down the shore until she found a ship.

"When we reached Salvador we found that Barrios was shot. The people of Corriento, in Nicaragua, gave him over to his enemies, and they took him to Salvador the very day my cousin dreamed. If it was the same hour, the same moment, I do not know."

"After that he told of other coincidences, then wandered into the secret history of Guatamala and Salvador until, at nine o'clock, our coffee was sent

in, after which he left me to reflect upon experiences which may, perhaps without fear of the mathematical geniuses, be called 'curious' at least.

E. W. P."

Oddly enough, on the back of this last letter I find a note in lead pencil by Quickly, who has a way of thus dotting my letters with news when he finds me absent from my desk. The note relates to the frequent pranks of elementals in hiding objects for which we are searching, and explains what Gail Hamilton has called "the total depravity of inanimate objects," in getting themselves lost, found, or in thwarting our attempted use of them. It is a common experience, and we find we do best in ceasing to look for the object, just as women shake a refractory sewing-machine and leave it alone for a while. In both cases, our thought being diverted from the object, the elemental loses interest and withdraws the veil or bar.

"This morning F. dropped a knife which he uses to hold his segar by a sort of spike in the knife. When I came in he was looking for it. We both looked, examined the floor well, then gave it up. About five minutes after, I got up, and there in the very middle of the floor, where we had looked, was the knife."

This note fitly closes the number, for Quickly is in heart and soul one with "the people." Were we all so within, what vital work we might do towards making our Brotherhood a real one on the inner planes of Being.

JULIUS.

LITERARY NOTES.

SPECIAL NOTICE. We particularly wish to again notify all friends that copies of *Lucifer* and the *Theosophist* are NOT kept on sale in this office. Subscriptions to either are gladly received and forwarded by us; but changes of address and complaints of non-delivery must be sent to the respective offices at London and Adyar, whence these magazines are issued. Single copies of recent numbers may usually be had from Brentano Bros., 5 Union Square, New York, or from the Occult Publishing Co., 120 Tremont St., Boston. By noting the above, time and patience may be saved to both correspondents and PATH.

Moreover, we have no information as to when the 3d and 4th volumes of the *Secret Doctrine* are to be published, nor what is to be their price. Here again, letters to us are useless.

AT IN MARCH LAST, so in next month we shall print a full table of all Theosophical Societies now in the U. S., with date of organization and name and address of President or Secretary.

THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES, by Prof. Elliott Coues, has been reprinted in Chicago. It is a lecture which Prof. Coues delivered April 26, 1886, in Washington.—*Religio Phil. Jrnl.*, Chicago. 15 cents.

The story noticed by us in the January PATH "All's Dross but Gold, the Strange Record of two Reincarnated Souls," by A. E. Lancaster, has been

republished as a 10 ct. novellette, we understand, by the John W. Lovell Co., 14 Vesey St., New York, the same house which published the 20 ct. edition of Mr. Sinnett's famous *Karma*.

OCCULTISM is being noticed every month in current literature. In the *Cosmopolitan* magazine of January, 1889, Mr. Edward Dwight has an article on Psychometry. This is the first instance, we believe, in which a popular magazine has seriously noticed any branch of occult-science.

THE DREAM OF LOVE AND FIRE. We have received this brochure of 42 p.p. from the publishers, *Estes and Lauriat, Boston*. It is by "a dreamer," and is dedicated to the re-incarnation of Cleopatra. As we thoroughly believe the latter lady was re-incarnated, and have seen several modern women either of whom might be she, but do not know who the dreamer thinks is the Queen of Egypt, we cannot point the moral. Many of the things in the brochure are distinctly erotic, and it savors more of ideas of black magic than aught else.

CORRESPONDENCE.

EDITOR PATH.

After the issue of the January PATH, I received a reply from *The Esoteric*, in which my letter in re "Nemo" is declined for reasons of business policy and because "it would advertise the PATH."

The editors are quite within their right in declining contributions, yet I earnestly deprecate editorial furtherance, without opportunity of rejoinder, of a bitter and anonymous attack upon those whom we consider the Great Ideals of men. The usual abstinence of *The Esoteric* made the present case all the more marked, and I thought a defense a clear dictate of duty.

Yours fraternally,

J. CAMPBELL VER PLANCK.

Wayne, Jan. 10th, 1889.

THEOSOPHICAL ACTIVITIES.

INDIA.

BRO. RICHARD HARTE, who has gone with Col. Olcott to India to assist in editing the *Theosophist*, writes that the headquarters seems like a paradise after the rush of New York and London. Our own opinion is the same. His presence there will relieve Col. Olcott, who has been obliged to take the entire responsibility of the magazine in consequence of Mme. Blavatsky's being compelled to remain in London.

The Library at Adyar requires a set of the Encyclopædia Britannica. A second-hand edition will do, and any kind friend having one can send it either direct to Headquarters or in care of the Countess C. Wachtmeister, 7 Duke St. Adelphi, London, W. C.

NAINI TAL T. S. At this place a new Branch has been started, called Kúrmáchal T. S. It was opened by Thakur Ganesh Singh, President of Baran T. S.

THE CONVENTION. The general convention which met at Adyar at the close of 1888 has not yet been fully reported to us. The only facts we have are that it was well attended, the rules were revised, and new officers elected.

Col. H. S. Olcott of course remains President; Mr. William Q. Judge, of New York, has been selected as Vice President.

The revision of the rules mainly consists in restoring to the President some powers which he had in other years delegated to Committees and Boards. We expect next month to give a full report.

NEW ZEALAND.

Bro. E. T. Sturdy has gotten together a Branch T. S. in far off New Zealand, to be called *The New*.

ENGLAND.

THE THEOSOPHICAL MOVEMENT begins to make sensible progress in England, owing without doubt to the presence of H. P. Blavatsky there. And yet her great book, the *Secret Doctrine*, has not made as much stir there as in the U. S. But new Branches are being talked of, and with the great mass of gossipers and curiosity-hunters who run after strange human beings like H. P. Blavatsky, some earnest workers always appear.

IRELAND.

DUBLIN LODGE T. S. This Lodge has planned out considerable work for the new year. The secretary reports that, acting upon a suggestion made by Mr. Judge during a recent visit, they have brought the scheme of Research Sections into more definite shape, and the members of the various sections will in future devote themselves largely to the preparation of clear and comprehensive reports of the subjects selected; each of these reports being wound up within three or four weeks, and being read and discussed at open monthly meetings to be held for that purpose.

A monthly manuscript journal has also been started by the Lodge to further the exchange of views amongst the members, and to keep the Corresponding members of the Lodge more closely in connection with their Dublin brethren. A visiting committee and other plans for spreading theosophical views in Dublin have been made. Though the lodge has a fairly good library, the number of inquirers is so large that there are seldom sufficient works on hand. The Council appeal to their American friends to send them any little works of an explanatory nature they may have to spare.

SECRETARY, DUBLIN LODGE.

NOTE.—The PATH hopes that American Theosophists will send now and then any odd books they may have read and no longer need to the Dublin Lodge, the address of which is care Fred. J. Dick, Esq., 14 Warrington Place, Dublin, Ireland.

AMERICA.

THE KRISHNA BRANCH, Philadelphia, is now holding meetings regularly every two weeks on Sunday afternoons. These gatherings are perfectly informal, and are not limited to members of the society. Consequently there has been a considerable attendance of interested inquirers who have joined freely in the informal discussions, and several of them have been sufficiently impressed with the truths of Theosophy to ally themselves with the Society. Proselyting is studiously avoided, and nobody is asked to join the Society, but those who manifest an interest of their own accord are given such assistance as it may be possible to extend to them. A regular course of study in the Bhagavad Gita is to be begun at once.

THE INCREASE OF MEMBERS in the U. S. is of such an extent as to justify the statement lately made by one of the high disciples of the Adepts writing to a London Theosophist, that the agents of the Adepts had been working here unperceived by us all, and would continue so to do as long as members labored in earnest for the cause. When we recollect also that it is said on the same authority that the new race following ours is to appear in America, the matter takes on a new importance, and we should remember that even a few devoted and earnest members may have power to save the cause we work for, even in the face of the greatest opposition.

BRO. HENRY B. FOULKE, late President of the Krishna T. S., Philadelphia, has joined the group of workers around, and in attendance upon, Mme. Blavatsky in London. A late member of the Aryan T. S. has also taken the same step, and thus increases the ties binding us all to H. P. B. and the Cause.

NEW YORK HEADQUARTERS.

THESE ROOMS, although very small, owing to the lack of sufficient funds, are very pleasant, and have become a real centre of interest. Many people ask why the example is not followed in our other great cities, and we think it would be wise to do the same thing elsewhere.

Since last month's issue a new album has been donated to hold the increasing number of photographs, and by a member who we know is less able to do so than many others. Several new photographs of European theosophists have been added. The register shows visitors nearly every day, and on one day ten altogether. A fine life-size crayon portrait of Col. Olcott has also been hung since last month. It is felt by New York Theosophists that, if interest continues on the increase, a larger and better room will be an absolute necessity.

CINCINNATI T. S. This Branch is active and prosperous. It recently had its anniversary at the house of Dr. J. D. Buck, at which about 40 were present. Dr. Buck is getting out a new book called "*A Study on Man, or the Way to Health.*"

MEMBERS AT LARGE.

There are a great many persons joining the Society in various parts of the country where no Branches exist. Any of them who wish to know whether there are other members unknown to them in their several localities can write to the General Secretary, who will gladly reply.

NOTICES OF THEOSOPHY are continually appearing in the newspapers. One of the latest and best is in the *Troy Daily Press* of January 9, 1889, which gives many interesting details and a fair statement of the cause of theosophy and the efforts of theosophists.

THE ATTENTION OF Branch Presidents and Secretaries is particularly requested to the following resolution, reported by the Auditing Committee and adopted by the 2d Annual Convention in April, 1888.

“We further report that we are in favor of making each branch responsible for the annual dues of its members in good standing, such dues to be paid on or before March 15th of each year. The General Secretary shall notify each branch when said dues are payable.”

SUBSCRIBERS TO THE T. P. S. are reminded that the first year thereof expires March 1st, and are invited to renew their subscriptions through this office.

THE THEOSOPHICAL PUBLISHING FUND started by Mrs. Ver Planck has reached \$105.

COL. OLCOTT'S TOUR.

The item promised for the January PATH, giving further facts and the amount pledged to the Fund (then \$1,222), was actually in type when instructions were received from the Editor for its suppression, and there was no time for even an explanatory notice. Being then in Europe, the Editor received information that business exigencies, of specially important nature, would make imperative the President-Founder's return to India after his visit to Japan, and that the Tour in America would be impracticable this year. Hence it was essential to stop further invitation to pledges at this time, and to take the earliest possible steps to inform the Brethren who have so generously responded to the appeal that, though the Tour has unfortunately become hopeless for 1889, it has been but postponed and not abandoned. The list of pledges is to be carefully kept, and as soon as Col. Olcott finds himself able to carry out this most important and, indeed, invaluable project, the contributors will be appealed to for a renewal of their subscriptions and the Society for a renewal of its anticipations.

The Wise guard the home of nature's order; they assume excellent forms in secret.—*Rig Veda.*

OM.