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The chest which has the sky for its circumference and the earth for its bottom, does not decay, for the quarters are its sides, and heaven its lid above. That chest is a treasury, and all things are within it.—*Chandogya-Upanishad.*

THE PATH.

VOL. IV.

OCTOBER, 1889.

No. 7.

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LETTERS THAT HAVE HELPED ME.

(Continued from August.)

XII.

Dear Jasper :

There are so many questioners who ask about *Chelaship* (1) that your letter comes quite apropos to experiences of my own. You say that these applicants must have some answer, and in that I agree with you. And whether they are ready or unready, we must be able to tell them something. But generally they are not ready, nor, indeed, are they willing to take the first simple step which is demanded. I will talk the matter over with you for your future guidance in replying to such questions ; perhaps also to clear up my own mind.

1. *Chela* means *disciple*. It is a Sanscrit word. J. N.

The first question a man should ask himself (and by "man" we mean postulants of either sex) is: "When and how did I get a desire to know about chelaship and to become a chela?", and secondly; "What is a chela, and what chelaship?"

There are many sorts of chelas. There are lay chelas and probationary ones; accepted chelas and those who are trying to fit themselves to be even lay chelas. Any person can constitute himself a lay chela, feeling sure that he may never in this life consciously hear from his guide. Then as to probationary chelas, there is an *invariable* rule that they go upon seven years' trial. These "trials" do not refer to fixed and stated tests, but to all the events of life and the bearing of the probationer in them. There is no *place* to which applicants can be referred where their request could be made, because these matters do not relate to places and to officials: this is an affair of the inner nature. We *become* chelas; we obtain that position in reality because our inner nature is to that extent opened that it can and will take knowledge: we receive the guerdon at the hands of the Law.

In a certain sense every sincere member of the Theosophical Society is in the way of becoming a chela, because the Masters do some of Their work with and for humanity through this Society, selected by Them as Their agent. And as *all* Their work and aspiration are to the end of helping the race, no one of Their chelas can hope to remain (or become) such, if any selfish desire for personal possessions of spiritual wealth constitutes the motive for trying to be a chela. Such a motive, in the case of one already a chela, acts instantly to throw him out of the ranks, whether he be aware of his loss or not, and in the case of one trying to become a chela it acts as a *bar*. Nor does a real chela spread the fact that he is such. For this Lodge is not like exoteric societies which depend upon favor or mere outward appearances. It is a real thing with living Spirit—men at its head, governed by laws that contain within themselves their own executioners, and that do not require a tribunal, nor accusations, nor verdicts, nor any notice whatever.

As a general thing a person of European or American birth has extreme difficulty to contend with. He has no heredity of psychical development to call upon; no known assembly of Masters or Their chelas within reach. His racial difficulties prevent him from easily seeing within himself; he is not introspective by nature. But even he can do much if he purifies his motive, and either naturally possesses or cultivates an ardent and unshakable faith and devotion. A faith that keeps him a firm believer in the existence of Masters even through years of non-intercourse. They are generous and honest debtors and always repay. How They repay, and when, is not for us to ask. Men may say that this requires as blind devotion as was ever asked by any Church. *It does*, but it is a blind devotion

to Masters who are Truth itself; to Humanity and to yourself, to your own intuitions and ideals. This devotion to an ideal is also founded upon another thing, and that is that a man is hardly ready to be a chela unless he is able to stand *alone* and uninfluenced by other men or events, for he must stand alone, and he might as well know this at the beginning as at the end.

There are also certain qualifications which he must possess. These are to be found in *Man, a Fragment of Forgotten History* towards the close of the book, so we will not dwell upon them here.

The question of the general fitness of applicants being disposed of, we come to the still more serious point of the relations of Guru and Chela, or Master and Disciple. We want to know what it really is to be a pupil of such a Teacher.

The relation of Guru and Chela is nothing if it is not a spiritual one. Whatever is merely outward, or formal, as the relation established by mere asking and acceptance, is not spiritual, but formal, and is that which arises between *teacher* and *pupil*. Yet even this latter is not in any way despicable, because the teacher stands to his pupil, in so far forth as the relation permits, in the same way as the Guru to his Chela. It is a difference of degree; but this difference of degree is what constitutes the distinction between the spiritual and the material, for, passing along the different shadings from the grossest materiality to as far as we can go, we find at last that matter merges into spirit. (We are now speaking, of course, about what is commonly called *matter*, while we well know that in truth the thing thus designated is not really matter, but an enormous illusion which in itself has no existence. The real matter, called *mulaprakriti* by the Hindus, is an invisible thing or substance of which our matter is a representation. The real matter is what the Hermetists called *primordial earth*; a, for us, intangible phase of matter. We can easily come to believe that what is usually called *matter* is not really such, inasmuch as we find clairvoyants and nervous people seeing through thick walls and closed doors. Were this *matter*, then they could not see through it. But when an ordinary clairvoyant comes face to face with *primordial matter*, he or she cannot see beyond, but is met by a dead wall more dense than any wall ever built by human hands.)

So from earliest times, among all but the modern western people, the teacher was given great reverence by the pupil, and the latter was taught from youth to look upon his preceptor as only second to his father and mother in dignity. It was among these people a great sin, a thing that did one actual harm in his moral being, to be disrespectful to his teacher even in thought. The reason for this lay then, and no less to-day does also lie, in the fact that a long chain of influence extends from the highest spiritual guide who may belong to any man, down through vast numbers of spiritual

chiefs, ending at last even in the mere teacher of our youth. Or, to restate it in modern reversion of thought, a chain extends up from our teacher or preceptors to the highest spiritual chief in whose ray or descending line one may happen to be. And it makes no difference whatever, in this occult relation, that neither pupil nor final guide may be aware, or admit, that this is the case.

Thus it happens that the child who holds his teacher in reverence and diligently applies himself accordingly with faith, does no violence to this intangible but mighty chain, and is benefited accordingly whether he knows it or not. Nor again does it matter that a child has a teacher who evidently gives him a bad system. This is his Karma, and by his reverent and diligent attitude he works it out, and transcends erstwhile that teacher.

This chain of influence is called the *Guruparampara chain*.

The Guru is the *guide or readjuster*, and may not always combine the function of teacher with it.

Z.

MODERN ASTROLOGY DEFENDED.

Now and again in the course of reading one meets with a book or article which leaves on the mind an indescribable feeling of irritation akin to that produced by wrong notes and discords in music. Of this class the paper on "True and False Astrology" in the *PATH* for last month, by G. E. W. of Chicago, the self-appointed critic of Lilly, Morrison, Pearce, and Proctor, of astronomical and astrological renown, has proved to be in my case.

There is much in the article which commands assent, and its general drift and intention are no doubt good, but it is marred by the altogether unnecessary importation of personalities, and by the two evident disposition evinced to condemn others upon wholly insufficient ground.

As a student myself for many years of the "Science of the stars," and as a fellow of the T. S., I feel it my duty to protest against this and to endeavour to show to the best of my ability the reverse of the medal. G. E. W. writes—"Since the death of Lieut. W. R. Morrison (Zadkiel) in 1874, there has been no one of general reputation with a pretense of honest astrology in London. It is true that there is another Zadkiel in Morrison's shoes, but his lucubrations, as judged by the annual almanac issued in his name, are disgusting to a sincere believer in star-influence." Now an assertion of this nature, involving the imputation of dishonesty, untruthfulness, and fraud, to an author whose work has been before the public for at least 14 years, requires in the minds of all lovers of fair play the fullest proof: nothing short of a series of "disgusting lucubrations" and proven failures

of prediction could establish such a sweeping statement. But what is the proof adduced? "The predictions of Zadkiel's Almanac thus far for the year 1889"—and even those predictions not quoted in full, as our critic deems it "a loss of time to quote any further," and is evidently content to believe that because he asserts with confidence that "not one prophecy among the above has come true," his readers will think with him that "the present Zadkiel is a pretender."

As a matter of fact, however, although some portion of the predictions for January which he quotes has not been fulfilled, those for February have proved quite correct, and G. E. W.'s bold statement to the contrary can only be the result of superficial observation. The Czar of Russia *was* in danger in February, for a plot against his life was discovered early in March and several arrests made, and the King of Italy was also under martial influence, as the riots in Rome and Milan that month attest. The news from India, Burmah, and Afghanistan *was* "of evil import," *e. g.* the fighting in Burmah, and the strong and oft-repeated rumors of the pending outbreak of a war between Afghanistan and Russia on account of Ishak Khan. That no serious trouble would result in India was foreseen by Zadkiel, for he goes on to say (the quotation is *entirely omitted* by our critic)—"as Jupiter enters the sign ruling India on 5th inst. (February), some improvement in the state of our Eastern Empire will soon manifest itself, etc." Again, while it may probably be strictly true that "Anarchists," properly so called, were not particularly troublesome in France in February, was it not that month which witnessed the brilliant success of Boulanger at the polls, the intense excitement in connection therewith, and the determination of the Government to endeavour to overthrow Boulangism at all costs? And is it not well known that Boulanger received the greatest assistance from Louise Michel and other prominent "Anarchists"? I remember also that on 24th February or thereabouts there were several determined attempts made in Paris to hold Socialist meetings, which finally had to be dispersed by the Police.

Will G. E. W. in face of this adhere to his assertion that "not one prophecy among the above has come true," and will the Theosophists and others who read his article agree with him on such evidence that "the present Zadkiel is a pretender"? Before they decide, let me point them to the long roll of successful predictions which has marked the career of that astrologer,—the Franco-Prussian war, the Russo-Turkish war, the Zulu war, the war in Egypt, the Expedition to the Soudan and loss of Gordon, the Charleston earthquakes, and scores of others which time and space alone forbid me to refer to; and let me remind them that the books published by this author, the "Text Book of Astrology" in two volumes, and the "Science of the Stars," have probably done more to bring a knowledge of this branch of occult science before the reading public than any others.

Fair play and common sense alike oppose the violent conclusion which G. E. W. draws from insufficient and ill-considered premises. Of course we all lament with him the inadequacy of modern astrology as instanced by frequent failures in prediction, but it does not follow because there are failures that modern astrologers are "pretenders." I freely admit that there is no *perfect* astrologer now-a-days, in the West at all events: to be such, a man must be competent to deal with astrology by other methods than those by which we students now laboriously arrive at an approximation of the truth: in other words, as our revered teacher, Madame Blavatsky, states—(Isis, Vol. I, p. 259)—"in astrology one has to step beyond the visible world of matter, and enter into the domain of transcendent spirit;" and again, (Idem, page 314)—"the accuracy of the horoscope would depend, of course, no less upon the astrologer's knowledge of the occult forces and races of nature, than upon his astronomical erudition." But because this is the case, and because no *adept* astrologer throws light on the darkness of futurity, is it fair to dub as a charlatan and a pretender one who, whatever may be his failures and shortcomings, is a sincere truth-seeker, and who, all that G. E. W. may say to the contrary notwithstanding, is admitted by the large majority of students to be *facile princeps* among modern astrologers in the west?

I am writing hurriedly to catch the mail steamer leaving to-day, but I propose to say something later on with respect to G. E. W.'s remarks on Horary Astrology; in the meantime I wish him from my heart a calmer judgment and more charitable opinion of his fellow students of Astrology.

Grenada, W. I. E. D.

THE PRESENT SITUATION DISCONNECTEDLY CONSIDERED.

I.

From now on, the advancement of the Theosophical cause depends largely upon individual work in one or more directions. Concentrated action in this respect is at once desirable and necessary. The Enemies of the Society are at present active as never before, and their professed determination to create dissension in its ranks must be met and overcome. The silent defensive policy should be succeeded by positive, aggressive action. Detractors should be met, not on the plane of vituperation, but with clear-cut argument and controversy. The constant misrepresentation and abuse of theosophy and theosophists so often seen of late in the public press arises, it is most charitable to believe, from an entire misconception

of the aims and teachings of theosophy. A trifle of effort on the part of members of the Society would set the matter right. Editors are notably fair and impartial, and entrance to the columns of their newspapers in defense of theosophy would not be hard to obtain. It remains for every member of the Society to do what he can in this respect, and the result will be well worth the effort.

II.

A true theosophist is never a bad man or woman. This axiom is beyond controversy. A pure mind and far-reaching influence for good are part and parcel of the theosophic character. But ability to do good is frequently allowed to lapse into inactivity, and the well-meaning theosophist merges into the *average person*. The rule of averages, it is fair to say, is not conducive to the advancement and healthy growth of the theosophic cause. The *average person* moves in a rut—travels in a path previously pointed out by the custom of precedent. By simply making a detour and coming back to the old way at the same or another point, a trifle of intelligence may be grasped of what is going on in spheres outside of the accustomed common round. The greatest progress will be made and the largest degree of enlightenment secured, however, in boldly branching out and bidding farewell to all preconceived ideas as to utility, aye, even pseudo respectability; in proclaiming the social outcast, the criminal, the rich and the poor as of one family; in seeking to raise all to the common level of Universal Brotherhood. That is radical Practical Theosophy.

III.

Every walk of life contains elements that may be theosophically solidified. Wealth, position, or attainments are not a bar that need be considered in the theosophic arena; they are ephemeral, personal. On the other hand, theosophic thought and theosophic teaching are for all mankind and are eternal. It has been mistakenly said that theosophy is not for the masses; that intellectuality is the open sesame to the camp of Universal Brotherhood! Monstrous idea! Even a child can grasp with perfect understanding the wholesome truths and noble teachings of theosophy—those truths and teachings that appeal to the common sense of the multitude rather than to the intellectuality of the few.

IV.

All great movements have, of a necessity, leaders and teachers of high attainments. It is not designed to belittle intellect or wealth of learning. But these possessions go for nothing without charity, truthfulness, right thinking, right living, and right action. The path of Practical Theosophy is wide; it is narrow; it is straight; it is crooked; but it is never without

good. Expect nothing ; work without thought of or desire for reward ; share your happiness with others ; be upright in your dealings with your fellow laborer on life's highway ; work for the good of humanity ; speak ill of no one ; judge the act and not the actor ; and last, but not least, strive for consistency as a member of the Theosophical Society. Then will be realized the basic idea of Practical Theosophy and Universal Brotherhood.

EXETER.

THE SKIN OF THE EARTH.

The cold materialism of the 19th century paralyzes sentiment and kills mysticism. Thus it commits a double crime, in robbing man and preventing many classes of sentient beings from progressing up the ladder that leads from earth to heaven. So in telling these tales I feel sheltered behind the shield of the editor of the magazine for which I write, for, were I to be known as believing that any beings whatever other than man are affected by the mental negations of the century, my life would soon become a burden. This age is so full of ignorance that it sees not and cares nothing for the groans that are rolling among the caverns of mother earth fathoms deep below its surface. Nor will it care until its contempt for what it calls superstition shall have caused its ruin, and then—another age will have risen and other men have come.

It was not so in our Sacred Island cycles ago. Then what we call superstition was knowledge that has now been replaced by impudent scorn for aught save the empiric classification of a few facts ; a heritage of glory given up for a mere statement of the limits of our ignorance. But I will plunge into the past and forget the present hour.

Seven months had rolled away since the time when, standing in the picture gallery, I had seen the simulacrum of a dear friend blacken and disappear, and now on the morning of the day when I was to pass by the mountain of the diamond, the news was brought to me how he had fallen faithless to his trust, overcome by vanity with its dark companion, doubt.

So, at the appointed hour I waited for the messenger. Once again the white moonbeams shone into the room and, revealing the monthly dial curiously wrought into the floor and walls by a chemical art that allowed nothing to be revealed save by moonlight after the 14th day of her course, told me in a language pale and cold that this was the 17th day. I stood and watched the dial, fascinated by the symbols that crept out with the silvery light, although for years I had seen the same thing every month. But now as I looked some new combination of our ancient magic was revealed. Every now and then clouds seemed to roll across the floor, while on them

rested the earth itself. This I had never seen before. Seven times it rolled by, and then I felt that near me stood the silent messenger. Turning I saw him just as he stood when he called me to the gallery.

“Do you not know this picture?” said he. “No. All is dark to me.”

“It is the sign that you are to come to the earth’s hall beyond the gallery. Look again closely at that rolling ball upon the clouds, and tell me what you see.”

These words seemed to come not from the man’s lips, but from all about him, as if the air was full of sound. But obeying the direction I gazed at the picture and saw that the surface of the mystic globe was moving, and then that myriads of small creatures were coming through it.

“It is time,” said the sounds from all about the impassive being. “That is the signal. We will go;” and he turned away.

I followed while he led me up to the building and through the gallery of tell-tale pictures where still in the silence the faces changed and the soft music sounded. I would have lingered there to see those magic pictures, but a cord seemed to draw me after my guide. As we approached the other end of the gallery nothing was visible to the eye save a blank wall, but the messenger passed through it and disappeared. Afraid to stop, unable to resist the drawing of the invisible cord, I walked against the wall. One short moment of suspense and with my breath held I had passed through; it was but a cloud, or a vapor—and I was on the other side. Turning expecting to still see through that immaterial wall, I found that it was impervious to the sight, and then the cord that drew me slackened, for my guide had stopped. Stepping up to the wall, my outstretched fingers went through it, or rather disappeared within it, for they felt no sensation. Then the messenger’s voice said,

“Such is the skin of the Earth to those who live below it.” With these words he walked on again through a door of a large room into which I followed. Here a faint but oppressive smell of earth filled all the space, and, standing just inside the door-way now closed by a noiselessly moving door, I saw that the whole place save where we stood was moving, as if the great globe were here seen revolving upon its axis and all its motions felt.

As I gazed the surface of the revolving mass was seen to be covered with circling hosts of small creatures whose movements caused the revolutions, and all at once it seemed as if the moving body became transparent, and within was filled with the same creatures. They were constantly coming from the surface and moving to the centre along well-defined paths. Here was the whole globe represented in forcible miniature, and these creatures within and upon it of their own nature moved it, guided by some mysterious Being whose presence was only revealed by beams of light. Nor could the others see him, but his silent directions were carried out.

These little beings were of every color and form ; some wore an appearance similar to that of man himself, others appeared like star blossoms of the sea, their pure tints waxing and waning as they throbbed with an interior pulse of light. Whatever their shapes, these seemed evanescent, translucent, and easily dissipated ; in their real essence the creatures were centres of energy, a nucleolus around which light condensed, now in this form, now in that, with constant progression of type and form. Some were more swift and harmonious in their movements than others, and these I understood were the more progressed in the scale of Being. Such had a larger orbit, and satellites circled about them. Of such systems the place was full, and all owed obedience to the subtle and interior Power which I could not discern. Each system existed for the service of all the rest ; each complemented and sustained the others as they swept onward in a harmony that was labor and love. Their object seemed twofold ; they assisted in maintaining the revolutions of the earth upon its axis and in guiding it in its orbit. They also grew through the ever-increasing swiftness of their own motions into greater splendor and brightness, approaching greater intelligence, coming ever nearer to self-conscious reason and love, and, as they grew, stimulated the latent spark in the metals and all the underworld growth as the lambent touch of flame awakens flame.

Guided by the Unseen Power and in their automatic obedience (for to obey was their nature), there were some who by the greatness of their own momentum and the ferment of new forces attracted and gathering about them, seemed upon the point of bursting into some fuller expansion, some higher state of intelligence and life, but they were withheld by something that was not the Power guiding them. Looking closer I saw that an antagonistic influence was at work in the place.

The orbit of many of these docile and beautiful creatures included a passage to and fro through the mystic wall. Their duties were upon the earth as well as beneath its surface ; faithful fulfilment of these functions comprised an evolution into higher service and a higher form. The malign influence often prevented this. It seemed like a dark mist full of noxious vapor that deadened while it chilled. As the clouds rolled into the hall their wreaths assumed now this shape and now that, changeful and lurid suggestions of hatred, lust, and pride. Many of the creatures coming in contact with these had that influence stamped upon their sensitive spheres, giving them the horrid likeness which they were powerless to shake off, and thus becoming servants of the baleful mist itself with altered and discordant motions. Others were paralyzed with the chill contact. Others were so taxed to make up for the partial suspension of their fellows' activity that their work was unsteady and their orbital revolutions checked. But still the whole throng swung on like some splendid creation, paling, glowing,

throbbing, pausing, a huge iridescent heart scintillating, singing through the gloom. Here the mist was beaten back by greater efforts that jarred the harmony; there it gathered, condensed, and in its vile embrace swept in bright systems, stifling their motions, then leaving them paralyzed where they fell, while it crawled on to fresh victims. And all through this strange picture and wonderful battle I could see the dim cloud-like shapes of cities inhabited by the men of earth, my fellows, and also the rivers, mountains, and trees of the globe.

In my mind the query rose, "Why do the earth's cities look like dreams?"

And there upon the wall flashed out this sentence, while its meaning sounded in every letter:

"When you are being shown the elemental beings, the men of your earth and their cities appear as clouds because it is not to them that your mind is directed. Look yet again!"

I saw that the evil mist had gathered strength in one part of the place, and had destroyed the harmony and swiftness of so many of the little beings that the great circling globe was moving off its axis, circling more and more, so that I knew upon whatever earth this happened great changes would occur, and that in the path of the mist there would sweep over man epidemics of disease and crime. Horrified at such impending calamities I sought for an answer and looked towards my guide. As I did so he disappeared, and upon the wall his voice seemed to paint itself in living letters that themselves gave out a sound.

"*It is the thoughts of men.*" I hid my face, appalled at owning such a heritage, and when I looked again great jets spurted through the Skin of the Earth, thoughts spouting and pouring out in miasmatic streams.

I would have asked much more, but again from some vast distance came the tones of the deep bronze bell; a shower of earth's blossoms fell about me; I had passed the wall; my guide was gone; and I was alone in my own room reflecting on what I had seen.

BRYAN KINNAVAN.

LEAD, KINDLY LIGHT!

Effaceably stamped upon the memory are those scenes of childhood connected with religious instruction. The infant on its mother's knee listens not only to the old fashioned lullaby, but now and then to snatches of church hymns and Sunday School songs, and thus, as it were, absorbs their familiar airs among its first recognized impressions. Later, the child goes to church and learns to sing the same tunes and to repeat the same

words, which thus acquire that depth of root in the brain enabling them to outlast years of carelessness or wicked living and to come back sooner or later as gentle reminders of the past or monitors of the future. Have we not all read stories of men steeped in crime, to whom have risen up at some supremely critical moment visions of sainted mothers and happy days of infancy, and whose hardened souls have been touched even to tenderness by the recollection of long ago church bells on peaceful Sundays in quiet country places, and the singing of the old, simple, long-forgotten hymns? Such an awakening is not by any means improbable. We must acknowledge the existence in almost every human being of some good impulses. A long course of worldly life, sordid or violent, will go far towards banishing the higher principles and degrading the soul to a lower level, but it is only in rare cases that the spiritual spark is extinguished entirely. Illustrations of the former are all around us. There are plenty of gamblers who are model husbands; there are thieves who love their children; there are drunkards who are otherwise moral; there are swindlers who are honorable in their dealings with their partners; and all of these and others equally reckless and abandoned are quick to respond to charitable appeals. What do these facts teach? That none are so far gone in depravity as to be beyond the reach of the good; that all—the exceptions are so rare as to be hardly worth noticing—possess some traits that are praiseworthy; that the good impulses, no matter how obscured by disuse, may be reached if only the right chord be touched and the proper moment seized.

The value of early religious training can hardly be over-estimated. There is no question here of creed or form. We might look out from our advanced standpoint of theosophy and say that is better to rear a child outside the church, in order that the child may not become imbued with erroneous opinions. But how many children are there that could comprehend the subtle distinctions of mentality found in the theosophic works? Not one. Children's minds require the simplest ideas clothed in the plainest language. The strongest of mature brains find perplexities in the involved theories of Karma, Reincarnation, and the Planetary Chain. But the mind of a child can grasp the problems of good and evil and of life and death as propounded by the Christian churches. It would seem, in fact, as if the founder of Christianity reasoned from analogy when he preached the gospel first, and, likening the human race to children, adapted his teachings to the comprehension of infancy. Theosophists who have dipped into the lore of ages can, of course, put Christianity aside as being puerile in its dogmatic form, and can demand a scheme of the universe that is more satisfactory and in accordance with the known aspects of science. The least we can do is to separate the original kernels of truth

from the outer husk of creed, reserving the former for our use and condemning the latter.

But all this does not give us the right to scoff at Christianity or to revile it as many theosophists are in the habit of doing. Christianity may be likened to a bridge which has carried part of the world over from an epoch of infancy, or at least of ignorance, to an epoch of knowledge. It should therefore not be made the target of abuse. What if it has been the vehicle of tremendous cruelty and oppression? Nobody denies it—except, possibly, a few prejudiced priests. Let us admit that from the age of Constantine to the age of Victoria the church has only one long record of blood-shed and injustice. The mistake we are apt to make is to charge those crimes to Christianity, when, as a matter of fact, the fault lay in the darkness and degradation of the race. Religion in any other form would probably have evoked the same spirit of malevolence and persecution.

Or, if we were even to admit that the church is as bad as any one has ever claimed it to be, and if we charge all the crimes of the Inquisition directly to the church, that is, as a result of the church's teaching; still we find that these evils have largely corrected themselves with time, and that now a more liberal spirit pervades all denominations. All Theosophists who have examined the various religions must admit that Christianity stripped of dogma is truthful, even to as great an extent as Mohammedanism, Hinduism, and Buddhism are true when deprived of their external forms. It so happens that we in America are brought up in and surrounded by Christianity. It is the religion of all classes without exception, save Jews. If we were living in Constantinople it would be fitting for us to be Mohammedans, and doubtless we would be; if we were in Bengal we would be bound in the chains of caste which the Hindus have forged; if we were in Ceylon we would be followers of Buddha. Thus our external form of religion is determined, as it should be, by the circumstances of birth. Our real religion is what we make it in our daily lives. But I think it most appropriate that, as we are dwelling in a Christian country, we should be to a certain extent Christians. As there are Buddhist Theosophists, as there are Moslem Theosophists, so there can be and are Christian Theosophists. It must be admitted, however, that some members of the Society have become so irritated against the creeds of the Christian churches that they have lost all patience and continually expend most of their vitality in open abuse of Christianity. Now, it is true that there are many objectionable features to the dogmas—in fact, all are objectionable—but is it not a waste of energy to be crying out against the churches all the time? Does not such a course really obstruct the progress of the truth by arousing the hostility of the church members? If we go out to battle with the sword, immediately the sword is drawn in defense of

long-cherished theories, even though erroneous, and they out-number us a thousand to one. Would not far greater success be achieved by exercising a larger spirit of forbearance, by dwelling more upon the words of Jesus and less upon the quarrels of the apostles? A Theosophist of renown has written a book to prove that there was no such person as Jesus Christ, but what has he accomplished by it? Nothing except to induce some Theosophists to quote this imaginary work as a real authority and to excite the sneers of Christians. But the worst feature of this and other such attacks is that they are all the time placing Theosophy in direct antagonism to Christianity. They are giving the enemies of Theosophy weapons to use against us. Admitting the abuses that have crept into the churches, admitting even the exoteric nature of their religion as now taught, admitting all the crimes of the past and the ignorance of the present era, there is still no reason why we should not endeavor to reform Christianity. And to do any effectual work in this direction requires more discreet treatment of the church, or at least of the religion of Jesus, than has been accorded to it from many quarters in the last few years. Does any one expect to convert people from Christianity to Theosophy? The idea is absurd. Can you convert a barn-door into a barn? No, but one can so fit the barn and barn-door that they can henceforth work together in harmony.

But, after all, there is a more important aspect which this question assumes, or should assume, to faithful theosophists. A no small part of duty is to exercise charity towards everybody, not to judge harshly, and to observe the Golden Rule. Our lot is cast in the midst of Christianity. In every city and village the spires denote the devotional tendency of the people. What if many individuals are imperfect and hypocritical? Is it not our duty to endeavor to see their better sides? Should we not exert ourselves to think kindly of these neighbors and friends of ours, even if they may be cherishing beliefs which we have found to be wrong? We admit that all religions are true at bottom, and no exception is made of Christianity. Is it not therefore our part to dwell upon this esoteric side of the national religion, and to think with kindness and charity of its errors, and by so doing and thinking shall we not achieve greater results than by deliberately separating ourselves from the church, and then attacking it as a foreign and hostile power?

G. E. W.

“The knowledge of the Absolute Spirit, like the effulgence of the sun, or like heat in fire, is naught else than the Absolute Essence itself. The attributes of the latter, heat or flame, are not the attributes of the Spirit, but of that of which the Spirit is the unconscious cause.—*Sankaracharya*.”

SANSKRIT PRONUNCIATIONS.

The following are hints of how to pronounce some Sanscrit words found in theosophical literature—

| <i>Word.</i> | <i>Meaning.</i> | <i>Pronunciation.</i> |
|-------------------|-------------------------------------|-----------------------|
| ARJUNA..... | The shining one..... | Arjoonah. |
| ASURA..... | The evil spirits..... | Asoorah. |
| ATMA..... | Soul..... | Atmah. |
| AVIDYA..... | Ignorance..... | Ahvidya. |
| AVITCHI..... | Hell..... | Ahvitchee. |
| BAGAVAD-GITA..... | Song of God..... | Bähgaväd-Geetah. |
| BENARES..... | The sacred city..... | Benährays. |
| BRAHMA..... | Creator..... | Brähmah. |
| BUDDHA..... | Enlightened One..... | Boodhah. |
| BUDDHI..... | Highest intelligence..... | Boodhee. |
| CHELA..... | Disciple..... | Chaylah. |
| DEVACHAN..... | Heaven..... | Dayva-khan. |
| GURU..... | Teacher..... | Gooroo. |
| KAMA..... | Desire..... | Kahmah. |
| KALI..... | Death, Dark, Wife..... | Kahlee. |
| KRISHNA..... | A divine incarnation..... | Kreeshnah. |
| LOKA..... | Place or plane..... | Lökah. |
| MANAS..... | Mind..... | Mahnas. |
| MANVANTARA..... | The life of a Manu..... | Mänvántärä. |
| SIVA..... | The destroyer..... | Seevah. |
| SURYA..... | The sun..... | Sooreea. |
| VEDA..... | The revealed books of religion..... | Vaydah. |
| VISHNU..... | The Preserver..... | Vishnoo. |
| YUGA..... | An age or term of years..... | Yoogah. |
| YOGA..... | Concentration..... | Yohgah. |

These will give a good idea of how, in general, all these Sanscrit terms are to be sounded; the a as ah, o as oh, u as oo, e as eh, i as ee, almost without exception. The error should never be made of pronouncing Manas, *Maynas*, nor Kali as Kaylai.

On p. 95 of Vol. I of PATH will be found further suggestions.

Analogy is the guiding law in Nature, the only true Ariadne's thread that can lead us through the inextricable paths of her domain, toward her primal and final mysteries.—*Secret Doctrine.*

REINGARNATION AND MEMORY.

II.

In a previous paper certain relations of experience to memory were considered, and Karma was shown to be a resultant of action. These are elementary considerations, yet none the less important. They are derived from the commonest every-day experience, and hence everyone can test them for himself. It might be profitable to observe, in passing, that this deduction of knowledge from experience is the only way of learning. We have within ourselves the elements and conditions of superior knowledge and illumination, but so long as these elements are latent and inactive they are of no practical value. They make a grave, often a fatal, mistake who imagine that those possessed of supreme wisdom can bestow it upon the ignorant as a gratuity or a favor. They have not so received it, neither can they so impart it. The law never changes, and is the same for Adept and neophyte. Most truly says Hadji Erinn in the last PATH, "*It may be a child's school, but it takes a man to go through it.*"

This digression seemed necessary in order to show the importance of the simpler primary propositions, and the manner in which they are to be received and tested. We are not dealing with Reincarnation as a dogma, but strictly as a scientific hypothesis. For any intelligent person now-a-days to accept the special-creation theory, with birth into the present life as the beginning of man, is to confess the whole problem of life to be incomprehensible and all its mysteries incapable of solution. With shaded eyes and bated breath all such continually ask, "*What does it all mean?*" The most salient point, the most common objection to the theory of reincarnation, is the lapse of memory. If we could remember distinctly any existence previous to this, the problem would at once be solved. It would then be a matter of common experience, and no one would doubt it. Therefore memory becomes the point of interest in examining the theory. If we are to estimate with any degree of certainty what memory may or may not do, what it may or may not have done, we must first determine by our own daily experience just what memory is now doing. Every reader, therefore, should pause after every statement, and inquire after every proposition—"Is this true? Is it in accordance with my own experience?" If he does this, and is careful as to the use and exact meaning of words, he will find the latent stores of knowledge beginning to unfold within his own soul, and the meaning of life will begin to appear. This knowledge of the true meaning of life will not depend on his acceptance of the theory of reincarnation as a dogma, though even in that way it is infinitely superior to any other, but the real benefit to the student will come from the fact that he is begin-

ning to *know himself*, and to read correctly the lessons of his own experience. Those who oppose the reincarnation theory almost invariably show utter ignorance of these primary considerations, the very alphabet of the whole subject. The questions involved are so deep, so broad, and in their final application so abstruse, that an error in the beginning leads to endless complications and misconceptions further on. This is because human experience covers such a wide area, and human relations are so complicated; and any theory capable of meeting these experiences at every point must be equally potent and applicable. If, therefore, reincarnation be true, and be thus involved in human experience and capable of explaining the mysteries of life, it must be capable of logical deduction from these same experiences. Its ground of operation is our legitimate ground for investigation. Those who are unable or unwilling to study the subject in this way may accept the theory as a dogma, or deny it altogether, as they please; though at this point a great deal may be said as to motive and result on human action. From the stand-point of dogma the principle of *Justice*, both human and divine, overwhelmingly supports reincarnation; while every other theory known to modern times is horribly *unjust*; thus favoring priest-craft and king-craft, and rendering the essential Brotherhood of man impossible.

"Man's inhumanity to man
Makes countless millions mourn."

The essence of humanity is justice; the essence of all inhumanity is injustice. Wherever exact justice reigns, divine Charity glorifies life with the halo of Divinity.

These preliminary considerations may help to set our subject in its true light, and serve in divesting it of all prejudice. Only in this way can we examine any subject dispassionately, with any probability of arriving at the simple truth.

We may now return to our original inquiry: If the theory of re-incarnation be true, why have we no recollection of any previous life? Passing by all those cases where such reminiscence is claimed by certain individuals like Apollonius of Tyana, and certain experiences difficult of explanation on any other ground in the life of many persons, passing by such considerations as favor belief in reincarnation on the ground of Justice, let us consider memory in relation to experience. From the known character of memory deduced from daily experience, is there any reason to expect it to bridge the chasm between two incarnations, provided more than the present incarnation has existed for the individual? If not, why not? Put in another form, our thesis may be stated in this way: Is the absence of memory of a previous life any bar to the acceptance and rational application of the theory of reincarnation?

The terms cause and effect are related to phenomena. The essence of

phenomena is motion, or action. Every so-called cause is involved in its effect, and every so-called effect becomes in its turn a cause of further action to be involved in all succeeding effects. Man has sometimes been called "a creature of circumstance." This is a half-truth. Man is also a creator of circumstance. In other words, man bears the same general relation to cause and effect as does every object in nature. If we observe any object in nature we discover it giving rise to or the theatre of phenomena. If we find it acting, we may trace the so-called causes of its present activities. If we find it apparently quiescent, we may discover what activities it will presently give rise to. There is thus a period of activity followed by a period of repose, and this followed by renewed activity. All nature is thus instinct with life, for life is essential action. Thus "the out-breathing and in-breathing of Brahm" involves every atom and every object, no less than every organism.

Life's pulses quiver everywhere,
 A solemn rhythm reigns ;
 A measured tread is in the air,
 The ocean throbs with pain.
 The solid earth its pulses keeps
 While shadows come and go ;
 Deep's answer always unto deeps,
 Glow answers unto glow.
 Back of all action there is rest ;
 Behind all rest the flame
 Of life but smoulders in Brahm's breast,
 Ready to glow again,

HARIJ.

H. P. BLAVATSKY AND THEOSOPHISTS.

In a late number of the *Revue Theosophique*, H. P. Blavatsky says :

"'Love one another' said Jesus to those who studied the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven.

"'Profess altruism, preserve the union, accord, and harmony of your groups, all you who place yourselves in the ranks of neophytes and seekers of the *one Truth*,' say other Masters to us. 'Without union and intellectual and psychic sympathy you will attain nothing. He who sows discord reaps the whirlwind.'"

"Learned Kabalists are not wanting among us in Europe and America. What good does that do us, and what have they done for the society? Instead of getting together to help each other, they look at each other askance, ready to criticise."

"Those who wish to succeed in theosophy, abstract or practical, should remember that want of union is the first condition of failure. But let ten

determined theosophists unite themselves; let them work together, each according to his own way, in one or another branch of universal science, but let each one be in sympathy with his brother; let this be done, and we can answer for it that each member would make greater progress in the sacred science in one year than could be made in ten years by himself. In theosophy what is needed is emulation and not rivalry.

“In real theosophy it is always the least who becomes the greatest.

“However, the society has more victorious disciples than is commonly supposed. But these stand aside and work instead of declaiming. Such are our most zealous as well as our most devoted disciples. When they write they hide their names; when they read garbled translation of sacred ancient books, they see the real meaning under the veil of obscurity that western philologists have thrown upon them, for they know the mystery language. These few men and women are the pillars of our temple. They alone paralyze the incessant work of our theosophic moles.”

A SONNET TO NIGHT.

The spicy fragrance of the skies
 Falls through the night air on my soul,
 From depths where constellations rise,
 From depths where suns unnumbered roll:
 From star-laid strata—star o'er star
 Where God's great lanterns swing and sway,
 Behind the "Gates of Light" ajar:
 Behind the Barrier of the Day:
 And swing, and sway:—and flash their light
 Through every crevice of the night.

T. H.

UNIVERSAL APPLICATIONS OF DOCTRINE.

During the last few years in which so much writing has been done in the theosophical field of effort, a failure to make broad or universal applications of the doctrines brought forward can be noticed. With the exception of H. P. Blavatsky, our writers have confined themselves to narrow views, chiefly as to the state of man after death or how Karma affects him in life. As to the latter law, the greatest consideration has been devoted to deciding how it modifies our pleasure or our pain, and then as to whether in Devachan there will be compensation for failures of Karma; while others write upon reincarnation as if only mankind were subject to that law.

And the same limited treatment is adopted in treating of or practising many other theories and doctrines of the Wisdom Religion. After fourteen years of activity it is now time that the members of our society should make universal the application of each and every admitted doctrine or precept, and not confine them to their own selfish selves.

In order to make my meaning clear I purpose in this paper to attempt an outline of how such universal applications of some of our doctrines should be made.

Before taking up any of these I would draw the attention of those who believe in the Upanishads to the constant insistence throughout those sacred books upon the identity of man with Brahma, or God, or nature, and to the universal application of all doctrines or laws.

In *Brihadaranyaka Upanishad* it is said :¹

“ Tell me the Brahman which is visible, not invisible, the *atman* who is within all ?

“ This, thy Self who is within all. * * He who breathes in the up-breathing, he is thy Self and within all. He who breathes in the down-breathing, he is thy Self and within all. He who breathes in the on-breathing, he is thy Self and within all. This is thy Self who is within all.”

The 6th Brahmana is devoted to showing that all the worlds are woven in and within each other ; and in the 7th the teacher declares that “ the puller ” or mover in all things whatsoever is the same Self which is in each man.

The questioners then proceed and draw forth the statement that “ what is above the heavens, beneath the earth, embracing heaven and earth, past, present, and future, that is woven, like warp and woof, in the ether,” and that the ether is “ woven like warp and woof in the Imperishable.” If this be so, then any law that affects man must govern every portion of the universe in which he lives.

And we find these sturdy men of old applying their doctrines in every direction. They use the laws of analogy and correspondences to solve deep questions. Why need we be behind them ? If the entire great Self dwells in man, the body in all its parts must symbolize the greater world about. So we discover that space having sound as its distinguishing characteristic is figured in the human frame by the ear, as fire is by the eye, and, again, the eye showing forth the soul, for the soul alone conquers death, and that which in the *Upanishads* conquers death is fire.

It is possible in this manner to proceed steadily toward the acquirement of a knowledge of the laws of nature, not only those that are recondite, but also the more easily perceived. If we grant that the human body and

¹ 111 Adh., 4th Brah.

organs are a figure, in little, of the universe, then let us ask the question, "By what is the astral light symbolized?" By the eye, and specially by the retina and its mode of action. On the astral light are received the pictures of all events and things, and on the retina are received the images of objects passing before the man. We find that these images on the retina remain for a specific period, capable of measurement, going through certain changes before fading completely away. Let us extend the result of this observation to the astral light, and we assume that it also goes through similar changes in respect to the pictures. From this it follows that the mass or totality of pictures made during any cycle must, in this great retina, have a period at the end of which they will have faded away. Such we find is the law as stated by those who know the Secret Doctrine. In order to arrive at the figures with which to represent this period, we have to calculate the proportion thus: as the time of fading from the human retina is to the healthy man's actual due of life, so is the time of fading from the astral light. The missing term may be discovered by working upon the doctrine of the four yugas or ages and the length of one life of Brahma.

Now these theosophical doctrines which we have been at such pains to elaborate during all the years of our history are either capable of universal application or they are not. If they are not, then they are hardly worth the trouble we have bestowed upon them; and it would then have been much better for us had we devoted ourselves to some special departments of science.

But the great allurements that theosophy holds for those who follow it is that its doctrines are universal, solving all questions and applying to every department of nature so far as we know it. And advanced students declare that the same universal application prevails in regions far beyond the grasp of present science or of the average man's mind. So that, if a supposed law or application is formulated to us, either by ourselves or by some other person, we are at once able to prove it; for unless it can be applied in every direction—by correspondence, or is found to be one of the phases of some previously-admitted doctrine, we know that it is false doctrine or inaccurately stated. Thus all our doctrines can be proved and checked at every step. It is not necessary for us to have constant communications with the Adepts in order to make sure of our ground; all that we have to do is to see if any position we assume agrees with well-known principles already formulated and understood.

Bearing this in mind, we can confidently proceed to examine the great ideas in which so many of us believe, with a view of seeing how they may be applied in every direction. For if, instead of selfishly considering these laws in their effect upon our miserable selves, we ask how they apply everywhere, a means is furnished for the broadening of our horizon and the elim-

ination of selfishness. And when also we apply the doctrines to all our acts and to all parts of the human being, we may begin to wake ourselves up to the real task set before us.

Let us look at Karma. It must be applied not only to the man but also to the Cosmos, to the globe upon which he lives. You know that, for the want of an English word, the period of one great day of evolution is called a Manwantara, or the reign of one Manu. These eternally succeed each other. In other words, each one of us is a unit, or a cell, if you please, in the great body or being of Manu, and just as we see ourselves making Karma and reincarnating for the purpose of carrying off Karma, so the great being Manu dies at the end of a Manwantara, and after the period of rest reincarnates once more, the sum total of all that we have made him—or it. And when I say “we”, I mean all the beings on whatever plane or planet who are included in that Manwantara. Therefore this Manwantara is just exactly what the last Manwantara made it, and so the next Manwantara after this—millions of years off—will be the sum or result of this one, plus all that have preceded it.

How much have you thought upon the effect of Karma upon the animals, the plants, the minerals, the elemental beings? Have you been so selfish as to suppose that they are not affected by you? Is it true that man himself has no responsibility upon him for the vast numbers of ferocious and noxious animals, for the deadly serpents and scorpions, the devastating lions and tigers, that make a howling wilderness of some corners of the earth and terrorize the people of India and elsewhere? It cannot be true. But as the Apostle of the Christians said, it is true that the whole of creation waits upon man and groans that he keeps back the enlightenment of all. What happens when, with intention, you crush out the life of a common croton bug? Well, it is destroyed and you forget it. But you brought it to an untimely end, short though its life would have been. Imagine this being done at hundreds of thousands of places in the State. Each of these little creatures had life and energy; each some degree of intelligence. The sum total of the effects of all these deaths of small things must be appreciable. If not, then our doctrines are wrong and there is no wrong in putting out the life of a human being.

Let us go a little higher, to the bird kingdom and that of four-footed beasts. Every day in the shooting season in England vast quantities of birds are killed for sport, and in other places such intelligent and inoffensive animals as deer. These have a higher intelligence than insects, a wider scope of feeling. Is there no effect under Karma for all these deaths? And what is the difference between wantonly killing a deer and murdering an idiot? Very little to my mind. Why is it, then, that even delicate ladies will enjoy the recital of a bird or deer hunt? It is their Karma that they

are the descendants of long generations of Europeans who some centuries ago, with the aid of the church, decided that animals had no souls and therefore could be wantonly slaughtered. The same Karma permits the grandson of the Queen of England who calls herself the defender of the faith—of Jesus—to have great preparations made for his forth-coming visit to India to the end that he shall enjoy several weeks of tiger-hunting, pig-sticking, and the destruction of any and every bird that may fly in his way.

We therefore find ourselves ground down by the Karma of our national stem, so that we are really almost unable to tell what thoughts are the counterfeit presentments of the thoughts of our forefathers, and what self-born in our own minds.

Let us now look at Reincarnation, Devachan, and Karma.

It has been the custom of theosophists to think upon these subjects in respect only to the whole man—that is to say, respecting the ego.

But what of its hourly and daily application? If we believe in the doctrine of the One Life, then every cell in these material bodies must be governed by the same laws. Each cell must be *a life* and have its karma, devachan, and reincarnation. Every one of these cells upon incarnating among the others in our frame must be affected by the character of those it meets; and we make that character. Every thought upon reaching its period dies. It is soon reborn, and coming back from its devachan it finds either bad or good companions provided for it. Therefore every hour of life is fraught with danger or with help. How can it be possible that a few hours a week devoted to theosophic thought and action can counteract—even in the gross material cells—the effect of nearly a whole week spent in indifference, frivolity, or selfishness? This mass of poor or bad thought will form a resistless tide that shall sweep away all your good resolves at the first opportunity.

This will explain why devoted students often fail. They have waited for a particular hour or day to try their strength, and when the hour came they had none. If it was anger they had resolved to conquer, instead of trying to conquer it at an offered opportunity they ran away from the chance so as to escape the trial; or they did not meet the hourly small trials that would, if successfully passed, have given them a great reserve of strength, so that no time of greater trial would have been able to overcome them.

Now as to the theory of the evolution of the macrocosm in its application to the microcosm, man.

The hermetic philosophy held that man is a copy of the greater universe; that he is a little universe in himself, governed by the same laws as the great one, and in the small proportions of a human being showing all those greater laws in operation, only reduced in time or sweep. This is the

rule to which H. P. Blavatsky adheres, and which is found running through all the ancient mysteries and initiations.

It is said that our universe is a collection of atoms or molecules—called also “*lives*”; living together and through each the spirit struggles to reach consciousness, and that this struggle is governed by a law compelling it to go on in or between periods. In any period of such struggle some of these atoms or collections of molecules are left over, as it were, to renew the battle in the next period, and hence the state of the universe at any time of manifestation—or the state of each newly-manifested universe—must be the result of what was done in the preceding period.

Coming down to the man, we find that he is a collection of molecules or *lives* or cells, each striving with the other, and all affected for either good or bad results by the spiritual aspirations or want of them in the man who is the guide or god, so to say, of his little universe. When he is born, the molecules or cells or lives that are to compose his physical and astral forms are from that moment under his reign, and during the period of his smaller life they pass through a small manvantara just as the lives in the universe do, and when he dies he leaves them all impressed with the force and color of his thoughts and aspirations, ready to be used in composing the houses of other egos.

Now here is a great responsibility revealed to us of a double character.

The first is for effects produced on and left in what we call matter in the molecules, when they come to be used by other egos, for they must act upon the latter for benefit or the reverse.

The second is for the effect on the molecules themselves in this, that there are lives or entities in all—or rather they are all lives—who are either aided or retarded in their evolution by reason of the proper or improper use man made of this matter that was placed in his charge.

Without stopping to argue about what matter is, it will be sufficient to state that it is held to be co-eternal with what is called “spirit.” That is, as it is put in the *Bhagavad-Gita*: “He who is spirit is also matter.” Or, in other words, spirit is the opposite pole to matter of the Absolute. But of course this matter we speak of is not what we see about us, for the latter is only in fact phenomena of matter: even science holds that we do not really see matter.

Now during a manvantara or period of manifestation, the egos incarnating must use over and over again in any world upon which they are incarnating the matter that belongs to it.

So, therefore, we are now using in our incarnations matter that has been used by ourselves and other egos over and over again, and are affected by the various tendencies impressed in it. And, similarly, we are leaving

behind us for future races that which will help or embarrass them in their future lives.

This is a highly important matter, whether reincarnation be a true doctrine or not. For if each new nation is only a mass of new egos or souls, it must be much affected by the matter-environment left behind by nations and races that have disappeared forever.

But for us who believe in reincarnation it has additional force, showing us one strong reason why universal brotherhood should be believed in and practised.

The other branch of the responsibility is just as serious. The doctrine that removes death from the universe and declares that all is composed of innumerable lives, constantly changing places with each other, contains in it of necessity the theory that man himself is full of these lives and that all are traveling up the long road of evolution.

The secret doctrine holds that we are full of kingdoms of entities who depend upon us, so to say, for salvation.

How enormous, then, is this responsibility, that we not only are to be judged for what we do with ourselves as a whole, but also for what we do for those unseen beings who are dependent upon us for light. W. Q. J.

PROF. MAX MÜLLER ON BUDDHISM.

The distinguished Sanscritist Max Müller delivered last year before the University of Glasgow a series of lectures—called “Gifford Lectures”—upon Religions, and made the following remarks about Buddhism which will be of interest :—

The essence of Buddhist morality is a belief in Karma, that is of work done in this or in a former life which must go on producing effects until the last penny is paid. There can be no doubt, the lecturer thinks, that this faith has produced very beneficial results, and that it would explain many things which to us remain the riddles of life. Thus, while to us the irregularities with which men are born into the world seem unjust, they can be justified at once by adopting the doctrines of Karma. We are born what we deserve to be born. We are paying our penalty or are receiving our reward in this life for former acts. This makes the sufferer more patient, for he feels that he is working out an old debt, while the happy man knows that he is living on the interest of his capital of good works, and that he must try to lay by more capital for a future life. The Buddhist, trusting in Karma—and he does trust in it with belief as strong as any belief in a religious dogma—can honestly say, Whatever is, is right; and the same

belief, that makes him see in what he now suffers or enjoys the natural outcome of his former deeds, will support him in trying to avoid evil and to do good, knowing that no good and no evil word, thought, or act performed in this life can ever be lost in the life of the universe. But while Müller regards the Buddhist belief in Karma as extensively useful, he cannot see how it can be accommodated under any of the definitions of religion which he has passed in review.

But who, asks Müller, has the right so to narrow the definition of the word religion that it should cease to be applicable to Buddhism, which is the creed of the majority of mankind?

THE KEY TO THEOSOPHY.

H. P. BLAVATSKY'S LAST BOOK.

This work is meant to be a clear exposition, in the form of question and answer, of Philosophy and Ethics, for the study of which the Theosophical Society has been founded. There are 307 pages which are divided into fourteen chapters—the number of years the Theosophical Society has been in existence. There is also a conclusion in which the future of the Society is dwelt upon by the author. It is published simultaneously in New York and London.¹

The sections are as follows :

- I. Theosophy and the Theosophical Society.
- II. Exoteric and Esoteric Theosophy.
- III. The Working System of the T. S.
- IV. Relations of the T. S. to Theosophy.
- V. Fundamental Teachings of Theosophy.
- VI. Theosophical Teachings as to Nature and Man.
- VII. On the Various Post-mortem States.
- VIII. On Re-incarnation or Re-birth.
- IX. On the Kama-Loka and Devachan.
- X. On the Nature of our Thinking Principle.
- XI. On the Mysteries of Re-incarnation.
- XII. What is Practical Theosophy?
- XIII. On the Misconceptions about the T. S.
- XIV. The "Theosophical Mahatmas."

CONCLUSION.

The Future of the Theosophical Society.

The conclusion, regarding the future of the Society, is of great interest to all earnest students, showing what our possibilities may be if we live up to our responsibilities. The manner in which the author has dealt with the subject is clear and easily understood by any one, and the book ought to be in the possession of every Branch Library, and should be recommended by all Theosophists to others inquiring about the subject.

¹ 1889. New York, by William Q. Judge, and London by the Theosophical Publishing Company, \$1.50. The price in London is 5 shillings, in America \$1.50.

TEA TABLE TALK.

MY DEAR JULIUS ;

It has been my intention for some time to write to you relating a curious experience that I first heard some 6 or 8 months ago. My relative, a professional scientist, a man learned enough to know better than ever to risk making fun of any one's beliefs, and knowing my interest in occultism, told me the following.

Some 20 years ago, while still young and at college, he had the universal and very bad habit of doing what he pleased during the terms, and "cramming" the last week or so before examinations, to enable him to pass. This operation of cramming is a painful one, for it necessitates continued application to one subject, often for over 24 hours at a time, and to keep himself from going to sleep in the midst of his studies he made some highly concentrated coffee, a teaspoonful of which, he says, made him shiver from head to foot. (I give these details to show that he must have been in a highly sensitive state.) The night before a certain examination, he mislaid a book which it was necessary for him to have. This worried him a good deal, but he worked along without it until 11 or 12, when he decided to take some rest, knowing that he would otherwise be unable to do justice to himself the next day. He went to sleep immediately, and, upon awakening shortly afterward, became conscious that (he then thought) he was dead. Being of a naturally speculative mind, he was very much interested in seeing what would happen and where he was going. Suddenly he became conscious of a counterpart of himself, standing on nothing, or floating in the air alongside of his bed. He describes it as much smaller than he himself really was. His consciousness then left his body and entered this counterpart. He found that he could move around at will, and, remembering his anxiety about his lost book, he suddenly started toward the library, passing through solid stone walls etc., without any trouble, until he stopped before a certain shelf where, in full view, he saw the book he wanted. He had searched through the books on that very shelf several times the evening before without finding it. Being satisfied, he returned to his bedroom, and having been successful in his journey to the library he reasoned that if he could pass through stone walls he could certainly get back into his body, and not being anxious to die he tried and woke up all right although feeling very badly. Next morning he went to the library and found the book where he had seen it the night before. As a scientist, he naturally has his own explanation for his experience. He says that we are conscious of much more than we are aware of (if the phrase is not too rash), and thinks that, when he searched for the book the night before, he really saw it, although unaware of that fact, and simply dreamed the rest. You are at liberty to publish this if so desired.

Yours fraternally, G. HIJO.

The explanation of the scientist does not necessarily contradict that of the occultist. The gentleman may or may not have seen the book on the

shelves before, for it is a truth well phrased that "we see more than we are aware of." The sub-conscious mind holds most things. He went to sleep in a highly nervous condition, hence with the plastic body (inner body) in a sensitive state. Upon it was stamped his strong desire for the book ; stamped by thought or will just as the sun stamps an image on a sensitized plate. That body obeyed the impulse given to it automatically, and the tale is a fair illustration of how the manas can enter and guide the thought-body which it has formed and evolved, *and which is itself*. This truth is important and should be studied. As for his "merely dreaming,"—what is dream? It is the going out of a part of our principles into the astral light. They may do so formlessly, or they may be formed, through their plasticity, into a body which mind cognizes as the counterpart of its habitual casing, but in either case dream is a departure into the astral light.

Another friend writes us. "I am reminded in reading your account of second sight (*In re* cross-walk) in the PATH for April, '88, p. 31 of a similar personal experience. I am of a somewhat sluggish temperament and not much subject to these affairs, but as the dénouement followed so truly in the way of the preliminary experience, I was somewhat startled at the outcome. The whole occurrence happened within two months. I will relate it.

Shortly after the present administration was installed into office at Washington, there was the customary change in the affairs of the local post-office here. The office was turned over to the control of adherents of the dominant political party, and all, or nearly all, of the old employees were notified that their services would no longer be required. Among the latter was a letter-carrier, one C—, with whom I was slightly acquainted, and in whose future movements (for some reason unknown to me) I felt an interest, and often I found myself mechanically speculating as to his then employment. Finally, about eight weeks ago I chanced to pass C— in the street. I surmised that he was idle, and the thought occurred to me: "What a splendid police officer C— would make; why does he not try to secure an appointment on the force?" My thoughts flew silently into space; I gave the matter no further consideration, and it did not occur to me again until, on the seventeenth of March past, in turning a street corner hurriedly I collided with a police officer walking in the opposite direction. The officer was C—. His appointment dated about three weeks before. Of course the above is fact. B."

Our correspondent also gives us the name of the officer and other data in corroboration of his story. But this is not needed; as we do not print any story in the Tea Table without having all reasonable security of the honesty of our correspondents. Still another friend says:

"My cousin wanted to get security for administration of estate; amount very large; he was not able to find a suitable person. He thought of one man, spoke of it to a relative here in the parlor; just then the man spoken of rang the bell and came in, saying he thought my cousin might want security and gave it to him then." (In such cases it would be interesting to compare notes in order to see which man had the thought first. Such persons are often "on the same ray," when thought works so swiftly between them. J.)

"I spoke to this cousin to-day of his brother's widow. He said he had not seen her for a long, long time. We went out for a walk, and met the widow on the third block."

In some places the astral light is more fluidic, more active than in others, just as some persons are more sensitive, and in these places impressions are quickly received.

JULIUS.

LITERARY NOTES.

THE JOHN W. LOVELL CO., 150 Worth St., New York, are about to issue a monthly series of publications upon Occultism at 50 cts. each or \$5.00 a year. The first will be Mabel Collins's *Blossom and the Fruit*; and then follow Dr. Anna Kingsford's *Dreams and Dream Stories*, Rita's *Sheba*, Edward Maitland's *The Pilgrim and the Shrine*. Dr. Kingsford's *The Perfect Way*, and Dr. Hartmann's *Magic White and Black*.

It is proper to state that this is not a pirated edition, but that the authors are remunerated for their consent to the American reprint:

THE THEOSOPHICAL REVIEW for August (Paris) contains the conclusion of H. P. Blavatsky's article on the "Beacon of the Unknown," in which she forcibly points out that altruism and union are the only conditions which conduce to success in either abstract or practical occultism, and urges the formation of harmonious and helpful groups whose members shall assist one another. Other articles are Amaravella's translation of *Gates of Gold*; *Science and Theosophy*, by Dr. F. de Courmelles; *What is Theosophy*, by Hermes. *The Wisdom of the Egyptians*, by Lambert, is a learned and valuable article on the 7 principles. A translation from the *Secret Doctrine*, a review of *New Dogmas*, by Nus, two striking poems, and the usual notes complete the number. The Hermes T. S. has formed a committee for the purpose of answering all inquirers, a plan which works well and helps those who answer as well as those who ask.

TESTIMONIA is a little series of brochures published by E. A. Sheldon, 253 Main St., Hartford, Conn. (\$1.00 a year, 10 cents each). No. 7 is "The Equation of Sex" by Miss Lydia Bell, covering 16 pages. The subject is as vast as it is interesting.

THE ASTRAL LIGHT, by Nizida. This little book of 180 pages, upon one of the most pregnant facts in Theosophical science, deserves warm greeting. The earlier part states what is known concerning the Astral Light and its contents, and the latter part treats most justly and discriminatingly of the true and the misleading in spiritualistic phenomena. The intervening chapters deal with individual, national, and racial evolution. It is not a book of revelations, nor does it even greatly add to those facts about the Astral Light with which most Theosophists are familiar, but it is a book of singularly vigorous and healthy tone, peculiarly stimulating and bracing to the moral motive, full of high aspiration and contagious resolve. It is hardly possible to read it without marked elevation of mind and a new impulse to endeavor, and for

this reason we estimate it as having rare value to sincere disciples. Not altogether felicitous, as the illustration of persecution in the present age, was the citation of the grudging of tobacco to paupers by rate-payers (page 98), and the word "transpire" should not be used in the sense of "occur" (page 108), but a very few small blemishes do not impair the worth of this truly excellent book.

CORRESPONDENCE.

PASADENA, CAL., August 22d, 1889.

I noticed in PATH an article on the "change which is coming," accompanied with a guess that this change might be the manufacture of gold. Has not Bellamy come nearer guessing the change—brotherhood and co-operation?

The article referred to, "A Dream of Gold," was only the speculation of one as to what would occur if gold could be made. He was not "guessing at the coming change." Edward Bellamy guessed well at *a*, but not at *the* change. The state Bellamy pictures will not be arrived at except through blood and fire, and perhaps after the fall in value of gold shall have driven the thought of *values* out of the people's mind. The working man is no doubt oppressed, but he is still human, and, given power, will exhibit the faults of those who now have it.—[Ed.]

THEOSOPHICAL ACTIVITIES.

AMERICA.

THE ARYAN T. S. of New York has resumed its meetings after the vacation. In the early summer two generous members offered \$40 towards the purchase of new books for the Library, provided \$60 were raised by the other members. This was accomplished, and, besides new books procured, many valuable pamphlets have been bound and the Library thoroughly overhauled. There are now about 220 books therein. A friend of the President, not himself an F. T. S., has presented the first six volumes of the *Theosophist*, and, if a few missing numbers can be procured, the Aryan T. S. will enjoy the possession of a complete set of the *Theosophist* from the beginning,—no small achievement, as all earlier numbers are out of print. At the meeting on Sept. 10th a paper upon "The Key-Note of Karma" was contributed by Bro. James M. Pryse, Charter-member of Satwa Lodge, Los Angeles, Calif; one on "Theosophy" by Bro. H. L. Patterson, Charter-member of Brooklyn T. S.; and one on "Broad Applications of Theosophical Doctrines" by William Q. Judge.

THE GENERAL SECRETARY'S FUND received from May 1st to September 11th: from Branches, \$151.50, from individuals, \$324.69.

MRS. VER PLANCK'S FUND has reached \$142, of which \$71 have been sent to the T. P. S.

BOSTON, MASS.—With the first Sunday in September the Boston Branch began its regular weekly meetings. A systematic study of the Bhagavad-Gita has been taken up. There are a number of new proposals for membership.

THE BLAVATSKY T. S. of Washington met again on September 11th, and the President delivered a "Digest of Theosophy" nearly two hours in length. Part of its fruit was an immediate desire to join the Society on the part of two

of the hearers. Eight new members have joined the Blavàtsky T. S. in as many weeks,—a rate which, if kept up, will soon make this one of our most powerful Branches. It meets at the house of the president, No. 1615 Madison st. N. W., Washington, D. C., and some of its members have secured the use of a part of a column in one of the daily papers. It has several colored members.

THE GOLDEN GATE LODGE held its usual open meetings in San Francisco and Oakland every Sunday during the past month. Original papers were read and lectures delivered by members before audiences ranging from 100 to 150. Some of the topics were "Why I am a Theosophist" by Prof. Charles H. Sykes; "Involution and Evolution" by Mrs. Sarah A. Harris; "Good and Evil" by Dr. J. A. Anderson; "The Constitution of Man" by Miss M. A. Walsh. Questions and answers follow each lecture, and full and free discussion upon the subject treated and general Theosophic topics is encouraged.

IT IS PURPOSED TO HOLD at some point in California during the month of either September or October an *ad interim* Convention of the Branches upon the Pacific Coast. This is for the purposes of mutual advancement, of the consideration of questions to be submitted to the next Annual Convention, and of appointing a regular delegate thereto; it being understood that no votes for officers or upon any other question except those for submission to the Annual Convention will be taken. The Branches projecting the scheme are the Bandhu, Point Loma, Excelsior, and Golden Gate.

APPLICATION for a Charter for a new Branch has been received from Kansas City, Mo., the applicants being Judge Henry N. Ess, Dr. J. P. Knoche, Messrs. George P. Olmstead, George F. Winter, J. H. Knoche, and Chancy P. Fairman.

INDIA.

ADYAR LIBRARY.—The library at Headquarters grows very valuable. Though less than three years have passed since its foundation, it has a very fine collection of Oriental books. In Buddhist literature it is richer than any other library in India. A recent valuable addition is a full set of the Pali *Tripitikas* engraved on palm leaves and comprising 60 vols. of 5,000 pages. 20 stylus writers were occupied on this for two years. It was presented by Mrs. Dias-Ilangakoon, F. T. S., of Ceylon. It cost about 3,500 rupees. Col. Olcott brought back Japanese Buddhist books numbering over 1,000.

In the department of Sanscrit literature and ancient philosophy the library is very rich.

BRO. CHAS. F. POWELL has been detailed by Col. Olcott to Ceylon to take charge of the Headquarters there and of the *Buddhist*, during the absence of Bro. Leadbeater on a tour of inspection through Ceylon for three months.

ENGLAND.

H. P. BLAVATSKY has returned to London from France in very much better health.

COL. H. S. OLCOTT is in England, and he expects to give a course of lectures through Great Britain. We hope he will visit Ireland. During his absence from India the former Commission will have charge of the Headquarters.

IN ENGLAND we can now see that H. P. Blavatsky has made the people think of Theosophy. When she arrived there four years ago it was almost unheard of; now all over England it is being gradually referred to. If even in ridicule, that is a beginning.

BRO. E. T. STURDY of New Zealand has returned to England, stopping at New York on his way.

ANNIE BESANT, the famous co-worker with Bradlaugh, has become co-editor of *Lucifer* and an earnest theosophist. Hereupon the various religious papers in England made a great fuss and became so inconsistent that, whereas hitherto they had denounced theosophy as devilish and atheistic, they now declare that Annie Besant has given up materialism and believes in God.

SWITZERLAND.

A THEOSOPHICAL RETREAT.—A society has been founded, we are asked to state, with the following name, officers, capital, and objects.

Its name is "*Fraternitas*."

Its officers are:

Countess C. Wachtmeister, F. T. S., president; Dr. A. Pioda, F. T. S., secretary; members, Dr. R. Thurman, Dr. Franz Hartmann.

Capital 50,000 francs divided into 500 fr. shares; no profits to be made, and only right of habitation given.

A house or chalet is to be built when capital is subscribed, upon land donated by Dr. Pioda and situated upon the mountains near Locarno.

When capital stock is taken a general assembly will be called, and then rules will be adopted. The funds will be deposited in Cantonal Bank, Ticino.

No distinctions of race, belief, or opinion are to be made. One end of the Society will be to afford to poor Theosophists a place of retreat.

Prices will be moderate, and the regimen will be vegetarian or not as suits those living there.

Subscriptions will be closed 31st December, 1889.

Address the secretary, DR. A. PIODA, *Locarno, Switzerland*.

CEYLON.

THE following new T. S. Branches were organized during Col. H. S. Olcott's last visit there in June and July.

Maha Mahindra T. S., at Anurathapura; *Ubayā Lokartha Sādhaka T. S.*, at Matale; *Ananda T. S.*, at Māwanella; *Maliyadeva T. S.*, at Kurunegala; *Sariputra T. S.*, at Kataluwa.

BRO. CHARLES F. POWELL publicly embraced the Buddhist religion at Ceylon lately, and then made an address in the Theosophical Hall at Colombo. The High Priest Rev. Sumangala with other priests was on the platform, and Sumangala delivered the opening address.

IN Ceylon the Theosophical movement is distinctly Buddhistic; in India it is Brahmanically philosophical; in England it is militant, lively, and interesting; in America it is startlingly rapid, with a mixture of all the rest.

NEWS OF DAMODAR.

DAMODAR K. MAVALANKAR is a name beloved by many of our older members. He left Adyar at end of 1884 or beginning of 1885, and some said he had gone to Tibet, others that he was dead. In *Theosophist* for September there is a letter from *Sriman Swamy* of Allahabad, who says that he had been in Tibet and there seen Damodar in L'hassa in March 1887 and had spoken with him. Bro. R. Harte has conversed with the Swami, who corroborated what he had written in the letter.

Man is sacrifice. His first twenty-four years are the morning, and the next forty-four years the midday, libation.—*Chandogya-Upanishad*.

OM.