



H. P. Blavatsky

on

Occultism



H.P. BLAVATSKY ON OCCULTISM

COMPILED BY
ERICA GEORGLADES

H. P. Blavatsky on Occultism

Compilation of texts by Helena Petrovna Blavatsky
Compiled by Erica Georgiades

Published by Theosophy Forward

E-book produced by the Rman Institute

Copyright © Theosophy Forward 2012
All rights reserved.





Erica Georgiades

FOREWORD

The present compilation is divided into two parts: Occultism and Yoga. The majority of the articles presented here are extracted from the magazines *Lucifer* and *The Theosophist*. When H.P.B. was the editor of these magazines, she included her own comments in footnote format. Although these footnotes are in later compilations, they are not published with the respective articles. As a result, that separation alters the context of H.P.B.'s commentaries. I have, therefore, embedded them with their original articles. This format gives the reader the impression of a dialogue between H.P.B. and the author. I hope the readers will find this approach useful.

This work also includes a very rare article entitled *A Treatise on the Yoga Philosophy* written in 1850 by N.C. Paul., and preserved at the British Museum in London. This article was re-printed in *The Theosophist* by H.P.B. and now is fully reproduced here with her commentaries. Some of the other articles do not have any comments by H.P.B., but they were published during the time H.P.B. was the editor of the magazines, so they are relevant. The present compilation is not presented in chronological order, because I have attempted to organize it in a way that gradually introduces the reader into the realms of Yoga and Occultism as depicted by H.P.B.

I express my gratitude to Jerry Hejka-Ekins (Alexandria West) and David Wittersen (TS-Pasadena) for providing me with the scanned copies of the articles reproduced here. Special thanks to Anton Rozman for his unswerving and committed work to design this online edition.

This online version is partial, as all the articles from the original compilation are not included.

Reproductions of articles are permitted providing they acknowledge Erica Georgiades as editor. H.P.B.'s articles, of course, are copyright free.

Athens, 2012
Erica Georgiades

CONTENTS

The Great Paradox
The Religion of the Future
The Future Occultist
Spiritual Progress
What is Truth?
The Search after Occultism
Practical Occultism - Important to Students
Practical Occultism
Is There no Hope?
Theosophist - Occultist and Worldly Duties
Chelaship as given in "Practical Occultism"
Are Chelas Mediums?
Occultism versus the Occult Arts
Magic
Lodges of Magic I
Lodges of Magic II
What Shall We Do for Our Fellow Men?
Let Every Man Prove His Own Work

The Great Paradox



Occultism is not the acquirement of powers, whether psychic or intellectual, though both are its servants. Neither is occultism the pursuit of happiness, as men understand the word; for the first step is sacrifice, the second, renunciation.

Anon. - *Lucifer*, September, 1887.

PARADOX would seem to be the natural language of occultism. Nay more, it would seem to penetrate deep into the heart of things, and thus to be inseparable from any attempt to put into words the truth, the reality which underlies the outward shows of life.

And the paradox is one not in words only, but in action, in the very conduct of life. The paradoxes of occultism must be lived, not uttered only. Herein lies a great danger, for it is only too easy to become lost in the intellectual contemplation of the path, and so to forget that the road can only be known by treading it.

One startling paradox meets the student at the very outset, and confronts him in ever new and strange shapes at each turn of the road. Such a one, perchance, has sought the path desiring a guide, a rule of right for the conduct of his life. He learns that the alpha and the omega, the beginning and the end of *life* is selflessness; and he feels the truth of the saying that only in the profound unconsciousness of self-forgetfulness can the truth and reality of being reveal itself to his eager heart.

The student learns that this is the one law of occultism, at once the science and the art of living, the guide to the goal he desires to attain. He is fired with enthusiasm and enters bravely on the mountain track. He then finds that his teachers do not encourage his ardent flights of sentiment; his all-forgetting yearning for the Infinite - on the outer plane of his actual life and consciousness. At least, if they do not actually damp his enthusiasm, they set him, as the first and indispensable task, to *conquer and control his body*. The student finds that far from being encouraged to live in the soaring thoughts of his brain, and to fancy he has reached that ether where is true freedom - to the forgetting of his body, and his external actions and personality - he is set down to tasks much nearer earth. All his attention and watchfulness are required on the outer plane; he must never forget himself, never lose hold over his body, his mind, his brain. He must even learn to control the expression of every feature, to check the action of each muscle, to be master of every slightest involuntary movement. The daily life around and within him is pointed out as the object of his study and observation. Instead of forgetting what are usually called the petty trifles, the little forgetfulness, the accidental slips of tongue or memory, he is forced to become each day more conscious of these lapses, till at last they seem to poison the air he breathes and stifle him, till he seems to lose sight and touch of the great world of freedom towards which he is struggling, till every hour of every day seems full of the bitter taste of self, and his heart grows sick with pain and the struggle of despair. And the darkness is rendered yet deeper by the voice within him, crying ceaselessly, "forget thyself. Beware, lest thou becomest self-concentrated - and the giant weed of spiritual selfishness take firm root in thy heart; beware, beware, beware!"

The voice stirs his heart to its depths, for he feels that the words are true. His daily and hourly battle is teaching him that self-centredness is the root of misery, the cause of pain, and his soul is full of longing to be free.

Thus the disciple is torn by doubt. He trusts his teachers, for he knows that through them speaks the same voice he hears in the silence of his own heart. But now they utter contradictory words; the one, the inner voice, bidding him forget himself utterly in the service of humanity; the other, the spoken word of those from whom he seeks guidance in his service, bidding him first to conquer his body, his outer self. And he knows better with every hour how badly he acquits himself in that battle with the Hydra, and he sees seven heads grow afresh in place of each one that he has lopped off.

At first he oscillates between the two, now obeying the one, now the other. But soon he learns that this is fruitless. For the sense of freedom and lightness, which comes at first when he leaves his outer self unwatched, that he may seek the inner air, soon loses its keenness, and some sudden shock reveals to him that he has slipped and fallen on the uphill path. Then, in desperation, he flings himself upon the treacherous snake of self, and strives to choke it into death; but its ever-moving coils elude his grasp, the insidious temptations of its glittering scales blind his vision, and again he becomes involved in the turmoil of the battle, which gains on him from day to day, and which at last seems to fill the whole world, and blot out all else beside from his consciousness. He is face to face with a crushing paradox, the solution of which must be lived before it can be really understood.

In his hours of silent meditation the student will find that there is one space of silence within him where he can find refuge from

thoughts and desires, from the turmoil of the senses and the delusions of the mind. By sinking his consciousness deep into his heart he can reach this place - at first only when he is alone in silence and darkness. But when the need for the silence has grown great enough, he will turn to seek it even in the midst of the struggle with self, and he will find it. Only he must not let go of his outer self, or his body; he must learn to retire into this citadel when the battle grows fierce, but to do so without losing sight of the battle; without allowing himself to fancy that by so doing he has won the victory. That victory is won only when all is silence without as within the inner citadel. Fighting thus, from within that silence, the student will find that he has solved the first great paradox.

But paradox still follows him. When first he thus succeeds in thus retreating into himself, he seeks there only for refuge from the storm in his heart. And as he struggles to control the gusts of passion and desire, he realises more fully what mighty powers he has vowed himself to conquer. He still feels himself, apart from the silence, nearer akin to the forces of the storm. How can his puny strength cope with these tyrants of animal nature?

This question is hard to answer in direct words; if, indeed, such an answer can be given. But analogy may point the way where the solution may be sought.

In breathing we take a certain quantity of air into the lungs, and with this we can imitate in miniature the mighty wind of heaven. We can produce a feeble semblance of nature: a tempest in a tea-cup, a gale to blow and even swamp a paper boat. And we can say: "I do this; it is *my* breath." But we cannot blow our breath against a hurricane, still less hold the trade winds in our lungs. Yet the powers of heaven are within us; the nature of the

intelligences which guide the world-force is blended with our own, and could we realise this and forget our outer selves, the very winds would be our instruments.

So it is in life. While a man clings to his outer self - aye, and even to any one of the forms he assumes when this "mortal coil" is cast aside - so long is he trying to blow aside a hurricane with the breath of his lungs. It is useless and idle such an endeavour; for the great winds of life must, sooner or later, sweep him away. But if he changes his altitude in *himself*, if he acts on the faith that his body, his desires, his passions, his brain, are not himself, though he has charge of them, and is responsible for them; if he tries to deal with them as parts of nature, then he may hope to become one with the great tides of being, and reach the peaceful place of safe self-forgetfulness at last.

"Faust."

Editor's Notes:

[1] Bertram Keightley associates the *nom de plume* Faust to H.P. Blavatsky. See editorial on *Reminiscences of H. P. Blavatsky* (Adyar: Theos. Publ. House, 1931).

Bibliographical Source:

Lucifer, Vol. I, No. 2, October, 1887, pp. 120-122.

The Religion of the Future



What the *true* occultist seeks, is not knowledge, or growth, or happiness, or power, for himself; but having become *conscious* that the harmony of which he forms part is broken on the outer plane, he seeks the means to resolve that discord into a higher harmony.

This harmony is Theosophy - Divine or Universal Wisdom - the root whence have sprung all "religions" that is all; "bonds which unite men together", which is the true meaning of the word religion.

Therefore, Theosophy is not a "religion", but religion itself, the very "binding of men together" in one Universal Brotherhood.

Lucifer, September, 1887.

Occultism teaches us that ideas based upon fundamental truths move in the eternity in a circle, revolving around and filling the space within the circuit of the limits allotted to our globe and the planetary or solar system; that, not unlike Plato's eternal, immutable essences, they pervade the sensible world, permeating the world of thought; and, that contrary to chemical affinities, they are attracted to, and assimilated by, homogeneous universals in certain brains exclusively the product of human mind, its thoughts and intuition; that in their perpetual flow they have their periods of intensity and activity, as their durations of morbid inactivity. During the former, and whenever a strong impulse is imparted on some given point of the globe to one of such fundamental truths, and a communion

between kindred eternal essences is strongly established between a philosopher's interior world of reflection and the exterior plane of ideas, then, cognate brains are affected on several points, and identical ideas will be generated and expression given to them often in almost identical terms.

The correctness of this doctrine was often ascertained by modern occultists, and is once more shown as something above a mere plausible conjecture just at present. A correspondent of our contemporary, the *Indian Mirror*, writing from Italy (see issue of March 31, 1883), tells us that it has been his good fortune since he came to Florence:

"To meet with a gentleman from Philadelphia, in the United States who has written a work, entitled "The Religion of the Future," which is still in manuscript. This gentleman, the author, was brought up as a Quaker, but would not be considered orthodox by that body now. His opinions have been modified so materially by his travels in England, Germany, and elsewhere, as to make him quite heretical.

It is the brief summary of the manuscript of *The Religion of the Future* - as given by the correspondent - that attracted our attention. The name of the Quaker gentleman is not mentioned; but had we been told that the work was written by our "Lay Chela," who, with regard to the fundamental doctrines explained by him, is the faithful amanuensis of one of the Himalayan Masters - we would have accepted it as a matter of fact. It is most probable that when *The Religion of the Future* is read in its completeness, there will be found more than one page and chapter, perchance, that will appear to the correctly-informed occultist as grotesque and heterodox. Yet though it may sin in its details, it is perfectly correct in its essential features as far as we understand it. Let our students of occult science judge.

The peculiar tenet of *The Religion of the Future* is that *Matter and Life are equally eternal and indestructible; that the Universal Life is the Supreme Being, not necessarily Omnipotent*, but of powers infinitely transcending anything of which we have a conception on earth; *that man, on becoming fitted for absorption by moral purity, is absorbed into this Universal Life or Supreme Being, being subject to frequent appearances on earth, until that moral purity is attained - and that the sum of all the experiences of the noblest of animated beings, from all parts of the Universe, is added constantly to the intelligence of the Universal Life.*

We have italicized the most striking passages. Rendered in plain language and amplified, the Arhat esoteric doctrine teaches that

"(1) "Matter and Life are equally eternal and indestructible,' for - they are one and identical; the purely subjective - hence (for physical science) unprovable and unverifiable - matter becoming the ONE life or what is generally termed 'Spirit.'

(2) The hypothetical deity (or God as a personal Being) as something unattainable by, and incomprehensible to, logic and reason, being never speculated upon or taught-since occult science takes nothing on faith-is classified with the highest of abstractions, and perceived and accepted in what we call 'UNIVERSAL LIFE.'

(3) Omnipotent only through, and in conjunction with, the immutable, eternal Laws of Nature which are thus the basis upon which Life works, it is not 'necessarily Omnipotent,' per se.

(4) That man is absorbed into, and becomes one with, the Universal Life, or ParaBrahman, only after he is entirely purified, i.e., disenthralled from matter and gone beyond the

sphere of sense - is a doctrine recognized alike by Buddhist, Hindu and other old Asiatic philosophies; as also

(5) that man is 'subject to frequent appearances on earth,' until his double evolution - moral and physical - is achieved throughout the seven Rounds and he has reached the ultimate perfection. The latter doctrine is carefully explained by 'Lay Chela' in the later 'Fragments of Occult Truth.' [1]

(6) And last, 'the sum of all the experiences' of man from all parts of the Universe, 'is added constantly to the intelligence of the Universal Life' - means simply this fundamental doctrine of the Secret Science: 'UNIVERSAL INTELLIGENCE is the sum total, or the aggregate of all the intelligences, past, present and future of the universe.' It is the Ocean of Intelligence formed of countless drops of intelligences, which proceed from, and return to it. If they were all taken out, to the last drop, there would be no more Ocean." (Book of the Arhats, Sect. IV, leaf 39.)

Editor's Notes:

[1] The lay chela H.P.B. refers to is Allan Octavian Hume (1829 - 1912). *Fragments of Occult Truth* was a series of three articles initially written by H.O. Hume, and later continued by A.P. Sinnett published in the *The Theosophist*. See *The Theosophist*, October 1881, pp. 17-22; March 1882, pp. 157-160; September 1882, pp. 307-314.

Bibliographical Source:

The Theosophist, Vol. IV, No. 8, May, 1883, pp. 205-206.

The Future Occultist

A woman-adept can produce high occultists
a race of "Buddhas and Christs," born "without sin".

The Theosophist - August 1884 H.P.B

[A letter sent to *The Theosophist*, signed by "A Hindu",
comments by H.P.B.]

H.P.B. - A correspondent of the *Indian Mirror*, an influential daily paper at Calcutta, writing under the heading of "Proper Education for our Ladies," says:

... "What constitutes real education?" The true aim of education, philosophically considered, should be the enlightenment of the mind. It should expand the mind, the breadth of vision and perception, and not limit it to a narrow circle. On the ordinary physical plane, reading and writing are no doubt, a great help for education, for they place before one various ideas to be taken cognisance of. At the same time, however, it must not be forgotten that they are but means to the end. One should, moreover, remember that there are other necessary means to the same end. One of these, and the most important, is the continued attention to the phenomenal side of nature in such a manner as to enable one to arrive at its noumenal side, by viewing it in all its aspects.

Our ancient Rishis have placed within our reach, if we would but have them, the means whereby we can study the relation of the manifested to the unmanifested, and trace the effect to its primal cause. It is such a broad and comprehensive education that we want, and not the present mockery of the same. If, in ancient days, the Aryans learnt at the feet of their mothers, and if their character and destiny "were formed even in gestation and with the sucking of the mother's milk" - it must have been due to the fact that the education of those days was of a cosmopolitan nature. We have undoubtedly to elevate the woman, but we have to elevate ourselves too. We have to endeavour to hasten the approach of the day when the scientific aspect of the "immaculate conception" will be realised. It would not be unprofitable here to quote the sentiments of an Eminent Occultist [1], published in the *Paradoxes of the Highest Science* [2]:

"... Woman must not be looked upon as only an appanage of man, since she was not made for his mere benefit or pleasure any more than he for hers; but the two must be realized as equal powers though unlike individualities.

"... Woman's mission is to become the mother of future occultists - of those who will be born without sin. On the elevation of woman the world's redemption and salvation hinge. And not till woman bursts the bonds of her sexual slavery, to which she has ever been subjected, will the world obtain an inkling of what she really is, and of her proper place in the economy of nature ...

H.P.B.'s comment: - The writer in the *Indian Mirror* has omitted the most important passage from the remarks of the "Eminent Occultist." The passage reads: - "Old India, the India of the

Rishis, made the first sounding with her plummet line in this ocean of Truth, but the Mahabharata India, with all her profundity of learning, has neglected and forgotten it." This remark will show that the present article treats of a practical reality and not of a fanciful theory. - **End of comment.**

"... Then the world will have a race of Buddhas and Christs, for the world will have discovered that individuals *have it in their own powers* to procreate Budha-like children or demons. When that knowledge comes, all dogmatic religions, and with these the demons, will die out ..." (Page 115.)

In short one may say that what mankind has first to get rid of, are the base passions and desires which appeal to their sensual appetites. The woman has to cease to be a slave; so has the man to become free; both have to break loose from the bondage of animal tendencies. Then will their natures be elevated; then will the woman be able to put herself en rapport with Prakriti, and man with Púrusha: the union of these two will produce a race of Buddhas, the children of the Virgin "without sin." These are our ideal men and women, but philosophy recognises that "the imagination realizes what it invents," a paradoxical truth beautifully put forth by Éliphas Lévi. And if those Hindus, who blindly worship their sacred book as also those who sneer at these latter without realising the meaning of what they contain, were but to turn to them with an enlightened eye, and comprehend their teachings by reading them between the lines, they will take the right step in the cause of progress, which should be real scope of education.

A Hindu.

26th March 1884.

H.P.B.'s comment - The above letter raises certain important questions. Some enquire how the world is to go on if all were to become occultists, one of the vital conditions of that order being celibacy. Others say that the ancient Rishis married, quoting some of the names mentioned in the Hindu religious books; and argues therefrom that celibacy is not an essential condition for progress in *practical* occultism. Generally, they put a literal interpretation upon what is beautifully conveyed by means of an allegory and insist upon the dead-letter sense being correct, whenever such a course is profitable in their narrow interests. They find it difficult to control the lower animal desires; and, in order to justify their conduct of persistence in hankering after sensual pleasures, they resort to these books as their authority, interpreting them in a manner most convenient to themselves. Of course, when any passages, even in their exoteric sense, conflict with the dictates of their "lower self," then others are quoted, which *esoterically* convey the same sense, although *exoterically* supporting their peculiar views. The question of the marriage of the *Rishis* is one of such disputed points. The readers of the *Theosophist* may recall here, with advantage, a passage occurring in the article under the heading of "Magicon," [3] where one of the occultists is said to have rejected the hand of a beautiful young lady [4], on the ground of his having taken the vow of celibacy, although he himself confesses further on to be courting a virgin whose name was "Sophia." [5] Now, it is explained there that "Sophia" is wisdom or the *Buddhi* - the spiritual soul (our sixth principle). This principle is everywhere represented as a "female," because it is passive in as much as it is merely the vehicle of the seventh principle. This latter - which is called *Atmán* when spoken of in connection with an individual and *Púrusha* when applied in its relation to the Universe - is the active male, for it is the CENTRE OF ENERGY

acting through and upon its female vehicle, the sixth principle.

The occultist, when he has identified himself thoroughly with his *Atmán*, acts upon the *Buddhi*, for, according to the laws of Cosmic Evolution, the *Púrusha* - the universal seventh principle - is perpetually acting upon and manifesting itself through *Prakriti* - the universal sixth principle. Thus the MAHATMA, who has become one with his seventh principle - which is identical with *Púrusha*, since there is no isolation in the spiritual monad - is practically a creator, for he has identified himself with the evolving and the manifesting energy of nature. It was in this sense that the Rishis are said to have married. And the union of *Śiva* and *Śakti* represents the same allegory. *Śiva* is the *Logos*, the *Vach*, manifested through the *Śakti*, and the union of the two produces the phenomenal creation, for until the Son is born, the Father and the Mother are non-existent. Now *Śakti* being a female principle, it is *fully* manifested through a woman, although, properly speaking, the *inner* man is neither male, nor female. It is only the preponderance of either of the two principles (positive and negative) which determines the sex. Now, this preponderance is determined by the Law of Affinity; and hence in a woman is manifested abnormally the occult power represented by *Śakti*. She is moreover gifted with a wonderfully vivid imagination - stronger than man's. And as the phenomenal is the realization or rather the manifestation of the IDEAL, which can be properly and strongly conceived only by a *powerful* IMAGINATION - a **WOMAN-ADEPT can produce high occultists - a race of "Buddhas and Christs," born "without sin."** The more and the sooner the animal sexual affinities are given up, the stronger and the sooner will be the manifestation of the higher occult powers which alone can produce the "immaculate conception." And this art is practically taught to the occultists at a very high stage of initiation. The "Adept," whether

the *Stula-Śarira* be male or female, is then able to bring a new being into existence by the manipulation of cosmic forces. *Anusuya*, a female adept of the ancient times, is thus said to have conceived immaculately *Durvasa*, *Dattatreya* and *Chandra* - the three distinct types of Adeptship. Thus it will be seen that the marriage of the occultist (who is, as already explained, neither male nor female) is a "holy union," devoid of sin, in the same manner as Krishna's union with thousands of Gôpies. Sensual-minded men have taken this fact up too literally, and, out of a wrong interpretation of the text, has arisen a sect which indulges in the most degrading practices. But, in fact, *Krishna* represents the seventh principle, while the *Gôpies* indicate the innumerable powers of that principle manifested through its "vehicle." Its union "without sin," or rather the action or manifestation of each of these powers through the "female principle" gives rise to the phenomenal appearances. In such a union the occultist is happy and "without sin" for the "conception" of his other-half - the female principle - is "immaculate." The very fact, that this stage pertains to one of the very highest initiations, shows that the time - when ordinary humanity, during the course of cosmic evolution, will, in this manner, be able to produce a race of "Buddhas," etc., born "without sin" - is yet very, very far off - perhaps attainable in the sixth or the seventh "round." But when once this possibility and the actuality of this fact is recognized, the course of living and education may be so moulded as to hasten the approach of that eventful day when on this earth will descend "the Kingdom of Heaven."

Editor's Notes:

[1] Eminent Oculist is a pseudonym for Kuthumi Lal Singh.

[2] This was the first of Éliphas Lévi's books to be translated into English. The original French version was published in 1856. This

translation (by an unknown hand) was first published in 1883 by the Theosophical Society, and re-issued in 1922, with additional extensive footnotes by 'an Eminent Occultist'

[3] "Magicon" or the *Secret System of a Society of unknown Philosophers*, is an article published in the magazine *Theosophist*. The article was probably written by Franz Hartmann, under de nom de plume an American Buddhist. See *The Theosophist*, 1884, V. April pg. 162, May, p. 193, June p. 216, July p. 233.

[4] In the article "Magicon" the occultist H.P.B. refers to is Gichtel: "The Princes of Germany and even the Sovereign consulted him, and ladies of all classes, old and young, rich and poor, fell in love with him, sought his acquaintance and his hand and were rejected by him". An enormously wealthy widow offered to marry him, but he gave her no hopes and withdrew into solitude, remaining shut in his chamber for over a month." "Magicon" *The Theosophist*, Vol. 5. N. 7, April 1884.

[5] "Gichtel's marriage to the heavenly Sophia (the Divine Wisdom) is related by St. Martin in the following allegorical term: "Sophia, his dear Divine Sophia, whom he loved so well and had never seen, came on Christmas day, 1673, and made him her first visit: he, in the third Principle ("linga-śarira") (mu) saw this shining, heavenly virgin (was initiated) ... and the marriage was consummated in ineffable delight. She, in distinct words, promised him conjugal fidelity - that she would never leave him ... She gave him to hope for a spiritual progeniture, etc." "Magicon" *The Theosophist*, Vol. 5. N. 7, April 1884.

Bibliographical source:

The Theosophist, August, 1884, pp. 263-64.

Through joy and sorrow, pain and pleasure, the soul comes to a knowledge of itself, then begins the task of learning the laws of life, that the discords may be resolved, and the harmony be restored.

Spiritual Progress



The eyes of wisdom are like the ocean depths; there is neither joy nor sorrow in them; therefore the soul of the occultist must become stronger than joy, and greater than sorrow.

Lucifer, September, 1887.

CHRISTINA ROSSETTI's well-known lines:

Does the road wind up-hill all the way?

Yes, to the very end.

Does the journey take the whole long day?

From morn to night, my friend.

are like an epitome of the life of those who are truly treading the path which leads to higher things. Whatever differences are to be found in the various presentations of the Esoteric Doctrine, as in every age it donned a fresh garment, different both in hue and texture to that which preceded; yet in every one of them we find the fullest agreement upon one point - the road to spiritual development. One only inflexible rule has been ever binding upon the neophyte, as it is binding now - the *complete* subjugation of the lower nature by the higher. From the Vedas and Upanishads (Upanishats) to the recently published *Light on the Path* [1], search as we may through the bibles of every race and cult, we find but one only way, - hard, painful, troublesome, by which men can gain the true spiritual insight. And how can it be otherwise, since all religions and all philosophies are but the

variants of the first teachings of the One Wisdom, imparted to men at the beginning of the cycle by the Planetary Spirit?

The true Adept, the developed man, must, we are always told, *become* - he cannot be made. The process is therefore one of growth through evolution, and this must necessarily involve a certain amount of pain.

The main cause of pain lies in our perpetually seeking the permanent in the impermanent, and not only seeking, but acting as if we had already found the unchangeable in a world of which the one certain quality we can predicate is constant change; and always, just as we fancy we have taken a firm hold upon the permanent, it changes within our very grasp, and pain results.

Again, the idea of growth involves also the idea of disruption: the inner being must continually burst through its confining shell or encasement, and such a disruption must also be accompanied by pain, not physical but mental and intellectual.

And this is how it is, in the course of our lives, the trouble that comes upon us is always just the one we feel to be the hardest that could possibly happen - it is always the one thing we feel we cannot possibly bear. If we look at it from a wider point of view, we shall see that we are trying to burst through our shell at its one vulnerable point; that our growth, to be real growth, and not the collective result of a series of excrescence, must progress evenly throughout, just as the body of a child grows, not first the head and then a hand, followed perhaps by a leg, but in all directions at once, regularly and imperceptibly. Man's tendency is to cultivate each part separately, neglecting the others in the meantime - every crushing pain is caused by the expansion of some neglected part, which expansion is rendered more difficult by the effects of the cultivation bestowed elsewhere.

Evil is often the result of over-anxiety, and men are always trying to do too much, they are not content to leave well alone, to do always just what the occasion demands and no more; they exaggerate every action and so produce karma to be worked out in a future birth.

One of the subtlest forms of this evil is the hope and desire of reward. Many there are who, albeit often unconsciously, are yet spoiling all their efforts by entertaining this idea of reward, and allowing it to become an active factor in their lives, and so leaving the door open to anxiety, doubt, fear, despondency - failure.

The goal of the aspirant for spiritual wisdom is entrance upon a higher plane of existence; he is to become a new man, more perfect in every way than he is at present, and if he succeeds, his capabilities and faculties will receive a corresponding increase of range and power, just as in the visible world we find that each stage in the evolutionary scale is marked by increase of capacity.

This is how it is that the Adept becomes endowed with marvelous powers that have been so often described, but the main point to be remembered is, that these powers are the natural accompaniments of existence on a higher plane of evolution, just as the ordinary human faculties are the natural accompaniments of existence on the ordinary human plane.

Many persons seem to think that adeptship is not so much the result of radical development as of additional construction; they seem to imagine that an Adept is a man, who, by going through a certain plainly defined course of training, consisting of minute attention to a set of arbitrary rules, acquires first one power and then another; and, when he has attained a certain number of these powers is forthwith dubbed an Adept. Acting on this

mistaken idea, they fancy that the first thing to be done towards attaining adeptship is to acquire "powers" - clairvoyance and the power of leaving the physical body and travelling to a distance are among those which fascinate the most.

To those who wish to acquire such powers for their own private advantage, we have nothing to say; they fall under the condemnation of all who act for purely selfish ends. But there are others, who, mistaking effect for cause, honestly think that the acquirement of abnormal powers is the only road to spiritual advancement. These look upon our Society as merely the readiest means to enable them to gain knowledge in this direction, considering it as a sort of occult academy, an institution established to afford facilities for the instruction of would-be miracle-workers. In spite of repeated protests and warnings, there are some minds in whom this notion seems ineradicably fixed, and they are loud in their expressions of disappointment when they find that what had been previously told them is perfectly true; that the Society was founded to teach no new and easy paths to the acquisition of "powers"; and that its only mission is to rekindle the torch of truth, so long extinguished for all but the very few, and to keep that truth alive by the formation of a fraternal union of mankind, the only soil in which the good seed can grow. The Theosophical Society does indeed desire to promote the spiritual growth of every individual who comes within its influence, but its methods are those of the ancient Rishis (Rsis) , its tenets those of the oldest Esotericism; it is no dispenser of patent nostrums composed of violent remedies which no honest dealer would dare to use.

In this connection we would warn all our members, and others who are seeking spiritual knowledge, to beware of persons offering to teach them easy methods of acquiring psychic gifts;

such gifts (*laukika*) are indeed comparatively easy of acquirement by artificial means, but fade out as soon as the nerve-stimulus exhausts itself. The real seership and Adeptship which is accompanied by true psychic development (*lokothra*, sometimes *lokottara*), once reached, is never lost.

It appears that various societies have sprung into existence since the foundation of the Theosophical Society, profiting by the interest the latter has awakened in matters of psychic research, and endeavoring to gain members by promising them easy acquirement of psychic powers. In India we have long been familiar with the existence of hosts of sham ascetics of all descriptions, and we fear that there is fresh danger in this direction, here, as well as in Europe and America. We only hope that none of our members, dazzled by brilliant promises, will allow themselves to be taken in by self-deluded dreamers, or, it may be, willful deceivers.

To show that some real necessity exists for our protests and warnings, we may mention that we have recently seen, enclosed in a letter from Benares, copies of an advertisement put forth by a so-called "Mahatma." He calls for "eight men and women who know English and any of the Indian vernaculars well"; and concludes by saying that "those who want to know particulars of the work and *the amount of pay*" should apply to his address, with enclosed postage stamps! Upon the table before us lies a reprint of "The Divine Pyramider", published in England last year, and which contains a notice to "*Theosophists who may have been disappointed in their expectations of Sublime Wisdom being freely dispensed by HINDU MAHATMAS*"; cordially inviting them to send in their names to the Editor, who will see them, "after a short probation", admitted into an Occult Brotherhood who "teach *freely* and WITHOUT

RESERVE all they find worthy to receive". Strangely enough, we find in the very volume in question Hermes Trismegistus saying:

"For this only, O Son, is the way to *Truth*, which our progenitors traveled in; and by which making their journey, they at length attained to the good. It is a venerable way and plain, but hard and difficult for the soul to go in that is in the body.

"Wherefore we must look warily to such kind of people, that being in ignorance they may be less evil for fear of that which is hidden and secret."

It is perfectly true that some Theosophists have been (through nobody's fault but their own) greatly disappointed because we have offered them no short cut to Yoga Vidya, and there are others who wish for practical work. And, significantly enough, those who have done least for the Society are loudest in fault-finding. Now, why do not these persons and all our members who are able to do so, take up the serious study of mesmerism? Mesmerism has been called the Key to the Occult Sciences, and it has this advantage that it offers peculiar opportunities for doing good to mankind. If in each of our branches we were able to establish a homeopathic dispensary with the addition of mesmeric healing, such as has already been done with great success in Bombay, we might contribute towards putting the science of medicine in this country on a sounder basis, and be the means of incalculable benefit to the people at large.

There are others of our branches, besides the one at Bombay, that have done good work in this direction, but there is room for infinitely more to be done than has yet been attempted. And the same is the case in the various other departments of the Society's work. It would be a good thing if the members of each

branch would put their heads together and seriously consult as to what tangible steps they can take to further the declared objects of the Society. In too many cases the members of the Theosophical Society content themselves with a somewhat superficial study of its books, without making any real contribution to its active work. If the Society is to be a power for good in this and other lands, it can only bring about this result by the active cooperation of every one of its members, and we would earnestly appeal to each of them to consider carefully what possibilities of work are within his power, and then to *earnestly set about carrying them into effect*. Right thought is a good thing, but thought alone does not count for much unless it is translated into action. There is not a single member in the Society who is not able to do *something* to aid the cause of truth and universal brotherhood; it only depends on his own will, to make that *something* an accomplished fact.

Above all we would reiterate the fact that the Society is no nursery for incipient Adepts; teachers cannot be provided to go round and give instruction to various branches on the different subjects which come within the Society's work of investigation; the Branches must study for themselves; books are to be had, and the knowledge there put forth must be practically applied by the various members: thus will be developed self-reliance and reasoning powers. We urge this strongly; for appeals have reached us that any lecturer sent to Branches must be practically versed in experimental psychology and clairvoyance (*i.e.*, looking into magic mirrors and reading the future, etc., etc.). Now we consider that such experiments should originate amongst members themselves to be of any value in the development of the individual or to enable him to make progress in his "uphill" path, and therefore earnestly recommend our members to *try* for them.

Editor's Notes:

[1] Prior to being printed as a booklet, *Light on the Path* by Mabel Collins (1851-1927) was published as an article in *Lucifer*.

Bibliographical source:

The Theosophist, Vol. VI, pp. 187-88, May 1885.

What is Truth?

It is beautiful to impede an unjust man; but if this be not possible,
it is beautiful not to act in conjunction with him.

Sin should be abstained from, not through fear,
but, for the sake of the becoming.

Many who have not learnt to argue rationally,
still live according to reason.

Vehement desires about any one thing render the soul blind with
respect to other things.

The equal is beautiful in everything, but excess and defect to me do not
appear to be so.

It is the property of a divine intellect to be always intently thinking about
the beautiful.

Golden Sentences of Democritus, Anona - *Lucifer*, December 1887.

"Truth is the Voice of Nature and of Time -
Truth is the startling monitor within us -
Naught is without it, it comes from the stars,
The golden sun, and every breeze that blows. ..."

- W. THOMPSON BACON

"... Fair Truth's immortal sun
Is sometimes hid in clouds; not that her light
Is in itself defective, but obscured
By my weak prejudice, imperfect faith

And all the thousand causes which obstruct
The growth of goodness. ..."

- HANNAH MORE

"WHAT IS TRUTH?" asked Pilate of one who, if the claims of the Christian Church are even approximately correct, must have known it. But He kept silent. And the truth which He did not divulge, remained unrevealed, for his later followers as much as for the Roman Governor. The silence of Jesus, however, on this and other occasions, does not prevent his present followers from acting as though they had received the ultimate and absolute Truth itself; and from ignoring the fact that only such Words of Wisdom had been given to them as contained a share of the truth, itself concealed in parables and dark, though beautiful, sayings (1).

This policy led gradually to dogmatism and assertion. Dogmatism in churches, dogmatism in science, dogmatism everywhere. The possible truths, hazily perceived in the world of abstraction, like those inferred from observation and experiment in the world of matter, are forced upon the profane multitudes, too busy to think for themselves, under the form of *Divine revelation* and *Scientific authority*. But the same question stands open from the days of Socrates and Pilate down to our own age of wholesale negation: is there such a thing as *absolute truth* in the hands of any one party or man? Reason answers, "there cannot be." There is no room for absolute truth upon any subject whatsoever, in a world as finite and conditioned as man is himself. But there are relative truths, and we have to make the best we can of them.

In every age there have been Sages who had mastered the absolute and yet could teach but relative truths. For none yet,

born of mortal woman in our race, has, or could have given out, the whole and the final truth to another man, for every one of us has to find that (to him) final knowledge *in* himself. As no two minds can be absolutely alike, each has to receive the supreme illumination *through* itself, according to its capacity, and from no *human* light. The greatest adept living can reveal of the Universal Truth only so much as the mind he is impressing it upon can assimilate, and no more. *Tot homines, quot sententiae* - [*there are as many opinions as there are men*] is an immortal truism. The sun is one, but its beams are numberless; and the effects produced are beneficent or maleficent, according to the nature and constitution of the objects they shine upon. Polarity is universal, but the polarizer lies in our own consciousness. In proportion as our consciousness is elevated towards absolute truth, so do we men assimilate it more or less absolutely. But man's consciousness again, is only the sunflower of the earth. Longing for the warm ray, the plant can only turn to the sun, and move round and round in following the course of the unreachable luminary: its roots keep it fast to the soil, and half its life is passed in the shadow. ...

Still each of us can relatively reach the Sun of Truth even on this earth, and assimilate its warmest and most direct rays, however differentiated they may become after their long journey through the physical particles in space. To achieve this, there are two methods. On the physical plane we may use our mental polariscope; and, analyzing the properties of each ray, choose the purest. On the plane of spirituality, to reach the Sun of Truth we must work in dead earnest for the development of our higher nature. We know that by paralyzing gradually within ourselves the appetites of the lower personality, and thereby deadening the voice of the purely physiological mind - that mind which depends upon, and is inseparable from, its medium or *vehicle*, the

organic brain - the animal man in us may make room for the spiritual; and once aroused from its latent state, the highest spiritual senses and perceptions grow in us in proportion, and develop *pari passu* [at an equal rate or pace] with the "divine man." This is what the great adepts, the Yogis in the East and the Mystics in the West, have always done and are still doing.

But we also know, that with a few exceptions, no man of the world, no materialist, will ever believe in the existence of such adepts, or even in the possibility of such a spiritual or psychic development. The (ancient) fool hath said in his heart, "There is no God"; the modern says, "There are no adepts on earth, they are figments of your diseased fancy." Knowing this we hasten to reassure our readers of the Thomas Didymus type. We beg them to turn in this magazine to reading more congenial to them; say to the miscellaneous papers on Hylo-Idealism, by various writers (2).

For *LUCIFER* tries to satisfy its readers of whatever "school of thought," and shows itself equally impartial to Theist and Atheist, Mystic and Agnostic, Christian and Gentile. Such articles as our editorials, the Comments on "Light on the Path," etc., etc. - are not intended for Materialists. They are addressed to Theosophists, or readers who know in their hearts that Masters of Wisdom do exist: and, though *absolute* truth is not on earth and has to be searched for in higher regions, that there still are, even on this silly, ever whirling little globe of ours, some things that are not even dreamt of in Western philosophy.

To return to our subject. It thus follows that, though "general *abstract* truth is the most precious of all blessings" for many of us, as it was for Rousseau, we have, meanwhile, to be satisfied with relative truths. In sober fact, we are a poor set of mortals at best, ever in dread before the face of even a relative truth, lest it

should devour ourselves and our petty little preconceptions along with us. As for an absolute truth, most of us are as incapable of seeing it as of reaching the moon on a bicycle. Firstly, because absolute truth is as immovable as the mountain of Mahomet, which refused to disturb itself for the prophet, so that he had to go to it himself. And we have to follow his example if we would approach it even at a distance. Secondly, because the kingdom of absolute truth is not of this world, while we are too much of it. And thirdly, because notwithstanding that in the poet's fancy man is

..... the abstract

Of all perfection, which the workmanship
Of heaven hath modeled.

in reality he is a sorry bundle of anomalies and paradoxes, an empty wind bag inflated with his own importance, with contradictory and easily influenced opinions. He is at once an arrogant and a weak creature, which, though in constant dread of some authority, terrestrial or celestial, will yet -

..... like an angry ape,

Play such fantastic tricks before high Heaven
As make the angels weep.

Now, since truth is a multifaced jewel, the facets of which it is impossible to perceive all at once; and since, again, no two men, however anxious to discern truth, can see even one of those facets alike, what can be done to help them to perceive it? As physical man, limited and trammled from every side by illusions, cannot reach truth by the light of his terrestrial perceptions, we say - develop in you the *inner* knowledge. From the time when the Delphic oracle said to the enquirer "Man,

know thyself," no greater or more important truth was ever taught. Without such perception, man will remain ever blind to even many a relative, let alone absolute, truth. Man has to *know himself*, i.e., acquire the *inner* perceptions which never deceive, before he can master any absolute truth. Absolute truth is the *symbol of Eternity*, and no *finite* mind can ever grasp the eternal, hence, no truth in its fullness can ever dawn upon it. To reach the state during which man sees and senses it, we have to paralyze the senses of the external man of clay. This is a difficult task, we may be told, and most people will, at this rate, prefer to remain satisfied with relative truths, no doubt. But to approach even terrestrial truths requires, first of all, *love of truth for its own sake*, for otherwise no recognition of it will follow. And who loves truth in this age for its own sake? How many of us are prepared to search for, accept, and carry it out, in the midst of a society in which anything that would achieve success *has to be built on appearances, not on reality, on self-assertion, not on intrinsic value*? We are fully aware of the difficulties in the way of receiving truth. The fair heavenly maiden descends only on a (to her) congenial soil - the soil of an impartial, unprejudiced mind, illuminated by pure Spiritual Consciousness; and both are truly rare dwellers in civilized lands. In our century of steam and electricity, when man lives at a maddening speed that leaves him barely time for reflection, he allows himself usually to be drifted down from cradle to grave, nailed to the Procrustean bed of custom and conventionality. Now conventionality - pure and simple - is a congenial LIE, as it is in every case a "*simulation of feelings according to a received standard*" (F. W. Robertson's definition); and where there is any simulation *there cannot be any truth*. How profound the remark made by Byron, that "truth is a gem that is found at a great depth; whilst on the surface of this world all things are weighed *by the false scales of custom*," is

best known to those who are forced to live in the stifling atmosphere of such social conventionalism, and who, even when willing and anxious to learn, dare not accept the truths they long for, for fear of the ferocious Moloch called Society.

Look around you, reader; study the accounts given by world-known travelers, recall the joint observations of literary thinkers, the data of science and of statistics. Draw the picture of modern society, of modern politics, of modern religion and modern life in general before your mind's eye. Remember the ways and customs of every cultured race and nation under the sun. Observe the doings and the moral attitude of people in the civilized centres of Europe, America, and even of the far East and the colonies, everywhere where the white man has carried the "benefits" of so-called civilization. And now, having passed in review all this, pause and reflect, and then name, *if you can*, that blessed *Eldorado*, that exceptional spot on the globe, *where TRUTH is the honored guest, and LIE and SHAM the ostracized outcasts*? YOU CANNOT. Nor can any one else, unless he is prepared and determined to add his mite to the mass of falsehood that reigns supreme in every department of national and social life. "Truth!" cried Carlyle, "truth, though the heavens crush me for following her, no falsehood, though a whole celestial Lubberland were the prize of Apostasy." Noble words, these. But how many think, and how many will dare to speak as Carlyle did, in our nineteenth century day? Does not the gigantic appalling majority prefer to a man the "paradise of Do-nothings," *the pays de Cocagne* of heartless selfishness? It is this majority that recoils terror-stricken before the most shadowy outline of every new and unpopular truth, out of mere cowardly fear, lest Mrs. Harris should denounce, and Mrs. Grundy condemn, its converts to the torture of being rent piecemeal by her murderous tongue.

SELFISHNESS, the first-born of Ignorance, and the fruit of the teaching which asserts that for every newly-born infant a new soul, *separate and distinct* from the Universal Soul, is "created" - this Selfishness is the impassable wall between the personal Self and Truth. It is the prolific mother of all human vices, *Lie* being born out of the necessity for dissembling, and *Hypocrisy* out of the desire to mask Lie. It is the fungus growing and strengthening with age in every human heart in which it has devoured all better feelings. Selfishness kills every noble impulse in our natures, and is the one deity, fearing no faithlessness or desertion from its votaries. Hence, we see it reign supreme in the world and in so-called fashionable society. As a result, we live, and move, and have our being in this god of darkness under his trinitarian aspect of Sham, Humbug, and Falsehood, called RESPECTABILITY.

Is this Truth and Fact, or is it slander? Turn whichever way you will, and you find, from the top of the social ladder to the bottom, deceit and hypocrisy at work for dear Self's sake, in every nation as in every individual. But nations, by tacit agreement, have decided that selfish motives in politics shall be called "noble national aspiration, patriotism," etc.; and the citizen views it in his family circle as "domestic virtue." Nevertheless, Selfishness, whether it breeds desire for aggrandizement of territory, or competition in commerce at the expense of one's neighbor, can never be regarded as a virtue. We see smooth-tongued DECEIT and BRUTE FORCE - the *Jachin* and *Boaz* [1] of every International Temple of Solomon - called Diplomacy, and we call it by its right name. Because the diplomat bows low before these two pillars of national glory and politics, and puts their masonic symbolism "in (cunning) strength shall this my house be established" into daily practice; *i.e.*, gets by deceit what he cannot obtain by force - shall we applaud him? A diplomat's

qualification - "dexterity or skill in securing advantages" - for one's own country at the expense of other countries, can hardly be achieved by speaking *truth*, but verily by a wily and deceitful tongue; and, therefore, *LUCIFER* calls such action - a *living*, and an evident LIE.

But it is not in politics alone that custom and selfishness have agreed to call deceit and lie virtue, and to reward him who lies best with public statues. Every class of Society lives on LIE, and would fall to pieces without it. Cultured, God-and-law-fearing aristocracy, being as fond of the forbidden fruit as any plebeian, is forced to lie from morn to noon in order to cover what it is pleased to term its "little peccadillos," but which TRUTH regards as gross immorality. Society of the middle classes is honeycombed with false smiles, false talk, and mutual treachery. For the majority religion has become a thin tinsel veil thrown over the corpse of spiritual faith. The master goes to church to deceive his servants; the starving curate - preaching what he has ceased to believe in - hoodwinks his bishop; the bishop - his God. *Dailies*, political and social, might adopt with advantage for their motto Georges Dandin's immortal query - "*Lequel de nous deux trompe-t-on ici?*" - Even Science, once the anchor of the salvation of Truth, has ceased to be the temple of *naked* Fact. Almost to a man the Scientists strive now only to force upon their colleagues and the public the acceptance of some personal hobby, of some new-fangled theory, which will shed lustre on their name and fame. A Scientist is as ready to suppress damaging evidence against a current scientific hypothesis in our times, as a missionary in heathen-land, or a preacher at home, to persuade his congregation that modern geology is a lie, and evolution but vanity and vexation of spirit. Such is the actual state of things in 1888 A.D., and yet we are

taken to task by certain papers for seeing this year in more than gloomy colors!

Lie has spread to such extent - supported as it is by custom and conventionalities - that even chronology forces people to lie. The suffixes A.D. and B.C. used after the dates of the year by Jew and Heathen, in European and even Asiatic lands, by the Materialist and the Agnostic as much as by the Christian, at home, are - a lie used to sanction another LIE.

Where then is even relative truth to be found? If, so far back as the century of Democritus, she appeared to him under the form of a goddess lying at the very bottom of a well, so deep that it gave but little hope for her release; under the present circumstances we have a certain right to believe her hidden, at least, as far off as the ever invisible *dark* side of the moon. This is why, perhaps, all the votaries of hidden truths are forthwith set down as lunatics. However it may be, in no case and under no threat shall *LUCIFER* be ever forced into pandering to any universally and tacitly recognized, and as universally practiced lie, but will hold to fact, pure and simple, trying to proclaim truth whensoever found, and under no cowardly mask. Bigotry and intolerance may be regarded as orthodox and sound policy, and the encouraging of social prejudices and personal hobbies at the cost of truth, as a wise course to pursue in order to secure success for a publication. Let it be so. The Editors of *LUCIFER* are Theosophists, and their motto is chosen: *Vera pro gratis* [*truth before favor*].

They are quite aware that *LUCIFER'S* libations and sacrifices to the goddess Truth do not send a sweet savory smoke into the noses of the lords of the press, nor does the bright "Son of the Morning" smell sweet in their nostrils. He is ignored when not abused as - *veritas odium paret* [*Truth creates hatred*]. Even his

friends are beginning to find fault with him. They cannot see *why it should not be a purely Theosophical magazine*, in other words, why it refuses to be dogmatic and bigoted. Instead of devoting every inch of space to theosophical and occult teachings, it opens its pages "to the publication of the most grotesquely heterogeneous elements and conflicting doctrines." This is the chief accusation, to which we answer - why not? Theosophy is divine knowledge, and knowledge is truth; every *true* fact, every sincere word are thus part and parcel of Theosophy. One who is skilled in divine alchemy, or even approximately blessed with the gift of the perception of truth, will find and extract it from an erroneous as much as from a correct statement. However small the particle of gold lost in a ton of rubbish, it is the noble metal still, and worthy of being dug out even at the price of some extra trouble. As has been said, it is often as useful to know what a thing *is not*, as to learn what it is. The average reader can hardly hope to find any fact in a sectarian publication under all its aspects, *pro* and *con*, for either one way or the other its presentation is sure to be biased, and the scales helped to incline to that side to which its editor's special policy is directed. A Theosophical magazine is thus, perhaps, the only publication where one may hope to find, at any rate, the unbiased, if still only approximate truth and fact. Naked truth is reflected in *LUCIFER* under its many aspects, for no philosophical or religious views are excluded from its pages. And, as every philosophy and religion, however incomplete, unsatisfactory, and even foolish some may be occasionally, must be based on a truth and fact of some kind, the reader has thus the opportunity of comparing, analyzing, and choosing from the several philosophies discussed therein. *LUCIFER* offers as many facets of the One universal jewel as its limited space will permit, and says to its readers: "Choose you this day whom ye will serve: whether the

gods that were on the other side of the flood which submerged man's reasoning powers and divine knowledge, or the gods of the Amorites of *custom* and *social falsehood*, or again, the Lord of (the highest) Self - the bright destroyer of the dark power of illusion?" Surely it is that philosophy that tends to diminish, instead of adding to, the sum of human misery, which is the best.

At all events, the choice is there, and for this purpose only have we opened our pages to every kind of contributors. Therefore do you find in them the views of a Christian clergyman who believes in his God and Christ, but rejects the wicked interpretations and the enforced dogmas of his ambitious proud Church, along with the doctrines of the Hylo-Idealist, who denies God, soul, and immortality, and believes in nought save himself. The rankest Materialists will find hospitality in our journal; aye, even those who have not scrupled to fill pages of it with sneers and personal remarks upon ourselves, and abuse of the doctrines of Theosophy, so dear to us. When a journal of *free thought*, conducted by an Atheist, inserts an article by a Mystic or Theosophist in praise of his occult views and the mystery of Para-Brahman, and passes on it only a few casual remarks, then shall we say *LUCIFER* has found a rival. When a Christian periodical or missionary organ accepts an article from the pen of a free-thinker deriding belief in Adam and his rib, and passes criticism on Christianity - its editor's faith - in meek silence, then it will have become worthy of *LUCIFER*, and may be said truly to have reached that degree of tolerance when it may be placed on a level with any Theosophical publication.

But so long as none of these organs do something of the kind, they are all sectarian, bigoted, intolerant, and can never have an idea of truth and justice. They may throw innuendoes against

LUCIFER and its editors, they cannot affect either. In fact, the editors of that magazine feel proud of such criticism and accusations, as they are witnesses to the absolute absence of bigotry, or arrogance of any kind in theosophy, the result of the divine beauty of the doctrines it preaches. For, as said, Theosophy allows a hearing and a fair chance to all. It deems no views - if sincere - entirely destitute of truth. It respects thinking men, to whatever class of thought they may belong. Ever ready to oppose ideas and views which can only create confusion without benefiting philosophy, it leaves their expounders personally to believe in whatever they please, and does justice to their ideas when they are good. Indeed, the conclusions or deductions of a philosophic writer may be entirely opposed to our views and the teachings we expound; yet his premises and statements of facts may be quite correct, and other people may profit by the adverse philosophy, even if we ourselves reject it, believing we have something higher and still nearer to the truth. In any case, our profession of faith is now made plain, and all that is said in the foregoing pages both justifies and explains our editorial policy.

This, however, as remarked by Richter, presents a certain danger. Some truth, to be sure, may be occasionally reflected as in a mirror on the spot we gaze upon, and thus reward the patient student. But, adds the German thinker, "I have heard that some philosophers in seeking for Truth, to pay homage to her, have seen their own image in the water and adored it instead." ...

It is to avoid such a calamity - one that has befallen every founder of a religious or philosophical school - that the editors are studiously careful not to offer the reader only those truths which they find reflected in their own personal brains. They offer the public a wide choice, and refuse to show bigotry and

intolerance, which are the chief landmarks on the path of Sectarianism. But, while leaving the widest margin possible for comparison, our opponents cannot hope to find *their faces* reflected on the clear waters of our *LUCIFER*, without remarks or just criticism upon the most prominent features thereof, if in contrast with theosophical views.

This, however, only within the cover of the public magazine, and so far as regards the merely intellectual aspect of philosophical truths. Concerning the deeper spiritual, and one may almost say religious, beliefs, no true Theosophist ought to degrade these by subjecting them to public discussion, but ought rather to treasure and hide them deep within the sanctuary of his innermost soul. Such beliefs and doctrines should never be rashly given out, as they risk unavoidable profanation by the rough handling of the indifferent and the critical. Nor ought they to be embodied in any publication except as hypotheses offered to the consideration of the thinking portion of the public.

Theosophical truths, when they transcend a certain limit of speculation, had better remain concealed from public view, for the "evidence of things not seen" is no evidence save to him who sees, hears, and senses it. It is not to be dragged outside the "Holy of Holies," the temple of the impersonal divine Ego, or the indwelling SELF. For, while every fact outside its perception can, as we have shown, be, at best, only a relative truth, a ray from the absolute truth can reflect itself only in the pure mirror of its own flame - our highest SPIRITUAL CONSCIOUSNESS. And how can the darkness (of illusion) comprehend the LIGHT that shineth in it?

(1) Jesus says to the "Twelve" - "Unto you is given the mystery of the kingdom of God; *but unto them that are without, all things are done in parables,*" etc. (Mark, iv, 11).

(2) *E.g.*, to the little article "Autocentricism" - on the same "philosophy," or again, to the apex of the Hylo-Idealist pyramid in this Number. It is a letter of protest by the learned Founder of the School in question, against a mistake of ours. He complains of our "coupling" his name with those of Mr. Herbert Spencer, Darwin, Huxley, and others, on the question of atheism and materialism, as the said lights in the psychological and physical sciences are considered by Dr. Lewins too flickering, too "compromising" and weak, to deserve the honourable appellation of Atheists or even Agnostics. See "Correspondence" in Double Column, and the reply by "The Adversary."

Editor's Notes:

[1] Boaz and Jachin, two pillars, stood in the porch of Solomon's Temple, the first Temple in Jerusalem (1 Kings 7:21; 2 Kings 11:14; 23:3).

Bibliographical source:

Lucifer, Vol. I pp. 425-434 February, 1888.

The Search after Occultism



"Occultism is the science of life, the art of living.

Anon - *Lucifer*, September 1887

BEING daily in receipt of numerous letters, written with the view of obtaining advice as to the best method of receiving information respecting Occultism, and the direct relation it bears to modern Spiritualism, and not having sufficient time at my disposal to answer these requests, I now propose to facilitate the mutual labour of myself and correspondents by naming herein a few of the principal works treating upon *Magism*, and the mysteries of such modern Hermetists.

To this I feel bound to add, respecting what I have stated before, to wit: that would-be aspirants must not lure themselves with the idea of any possibility of their becoming practical Occultists by mere book-knowledge. The works of the Hermetic philosophers were never intended for the masses, as Mr. Charles Sotheran, a learned member of the Society Rosa Crucis, in a late essay observes:

"Gabriel Rossetti in his disquisitions on the anti-papal spirit which produced the Reformation shows that the art of speaking and writing in a language which bears a double interpretation is of very great antiquity, that it was in practice among the priests of Egypt, brought thence by the Manichees,

whence it passed to the Templars and Albigenses, spread over Europe, and brought about the Reformation."

The ablest book that was ever written on Symbols and Mystic Orders, is most certainly Hargrave Jennings' *The Rosicrucians*, and yet it has been repeatedly called "obscure trash" in my presence, and that too, by individuals who were most decidedly well-versed in the rites and mysteries of modern Freemasonry. Persons who lack even the latter knowledge, can easily infer from this what would be the amount of information they might derive from still more obscure and mystical works; for if we compare Hargrave Jennings' book with some of the mediaeval treatises and ancient works of the most noted Alchemists and Magi, we might find the latter as much more obscure than the former - as regards language - as a pupil in celestial philosophy would find the Book of the Heavens, if he should examine a far distant star with the naked eye, rather than with the help of a powerful telescope.

Far from me, though, the idea of disparaging in anyone the laudable impulse to search ardently after Truth, however arid and ungrateful the task may appear at first sight; for my own principle has ever been to make the Light of Truth the beacon of my life. The words uttered by Christ eighteen centuries ago: "Believe and you will understand," can be applied in the present case, and repeating them with but a slight modification, I may well say: "Study and you will believe."

But to particularize one or another book on Occultism, to those who are anxious to begin their studies in the hidden mysteries of nature, is something the responsibility of which I am not prepared to assume. What may be clear to one who is intuitional, if read in the same book by another person might

prove meaningless. Unless one is prepared to devote to it his whole life, the superficial knowledge of Occult Sciences will lead him surely to become the target for millions of ignorant scoffers to aim their blunderbusses loaded with ridicule and chaff against. Besides this, it is in more than one way dangerous to select this science as a mere pastime. One must bear for ever in mind the impressive, fable of Oedipus, and beware of the same consequences. Oedipus unriddled but one-half of the enigma offered him by the Sphinx and caused its death; the other half of the mystery avenged the death of the symbolic monster, and forced the King of Thebes to prefer blindness and exile in his despair rather than face what he did not feel himself pure enough to encounter. He unriddled the man, the form, and had forgotten God, the idea.

If a man would follow in the steps of Hermetic philosophers he must prepare himself beforehand for martyrdom. He must give up personal pride and all selfish purposes, and be ready for everlasting encounters with friends and foes. He must part, once for all, with every remembrance of his earlier ideas, on all and on everything. Existing religions, knowledge, science, must rebecome a blank book for him, as in the days of his babyhood, for if he wants to succeed he must learn a new alphabet on the lap of Mother Nature, every letter of which will afford a new insight to him, every syllable and word an unexpected revelation. The two hitherto irreconcilable foes, science and theology - the Montecchi and Capuletti of the nineteenth century - will ally themselves with the ignorant masses against the modern Occultist. If we have outgrown the age of stakes, we are in the heyday, *per contra* [*on the contrary*], of slander, the venom of the press, and all these mephitic venticelli of calumny so vividly expressed by the immortal Don Basilio. To science it will be the duty - arid and sterile as a matter of course - of the Kabbalist to

prove that from the beginning of time there was but one positive science - Occultism; that it was the mysterious lever of all intellectual forces, the Tree of Knowledge of good and evil of the allegorical paradise, from whose gigantic trunk sprang in every direction boughs, branches and twigs, the former shooting forth straight enough at first, the latter deviating with every inch of growth, assuming more and more fantastical appearances, till at last one after the other lost its vital juice, got deformed, and, drying up, finally broke off, scattering the ground afar with heaps of rubbish. To theology the Occultist of the future will have to demonstrate that the Gods of the mythologies, the Elohim of Israel as well as the religious and theological mysteries of Christianity, to begin with the Trinity, sprang from the sanctuaries of Memphis and Thebes; that their mother Eve is but the spiritualized Psyche of old, both of them paying a like penalty for their curiosity, descending to Hades or hell, the latter to bring back to earth the famous Pandora's box, the former to search out and crush the head of the serpent - symbol of time and evil, the crime of both expiated by the pagan Prometheus and the Christian Lucifer; the first delivered by Hercules, the second conquered by the Saviour.

Furthermore, the Occultist will have to prove to Christian theology, publicly, what many of its priesthood are well aware of in secret, namely, that their God on earth was a Kabbalist, the meek representative of a tremendous Power, which, if misapplied, might shake the world to its foundations; and that of all their evangelical symbols, there is not one but can be traced up to its parent fount. For instance, their incarnated Verbum or Logos was worshipped at his birth by the three Magi led on by the star, and received from them the gold, the frankincense and myrrh - the whole of which is simply an excerpt from the Kabbalah our modern theologians despise, and the

representation of another and still more mysterious "Ternary" embodying allegorically in its emblems the highest secrets of the Kabbalah.

A clergy whose main object has ever been to make of their Divine Cross the gallows of Truth and Freedom, could not do otherwise than try and bury in oblivion the origin of that same cross, which, in the most primitive symbols of the Egyptians' magic, represents the key to heaven. Their anathemas are powerless in our days - the multitude is wiser; but the greatest danger awaits us just in that latter direction, if we do not succeed in making the masses remain at least neutral - till they come to know better - in this forthcoming conflict between Truth, Superstition and Presumption, or to express it in other terms, Occult Spiritualism, Theology and Science. We have to fear neither the miniature thunderbolts of the clergy, nor the unwarranted negations of science. But Public Opinion, this invisible, intangible, omnipresent, despotic tyrant - this thousand-headed Hydra, the more dangerous for being composed of individual mediocrities - is not an enemy to be scorned by any would-be Occultist, courageous as he may be. Many of the far more innocent Spiritualists have left their sheepskins in the clutches of this ever-hungry, roaring lion, for he is the most dangerous of our three classes of enemies. What will be the fate in such a case of an unfortunate Occultist, if he once succeeds in demonstrating the close relationship existing between the two? The masses of people, though they do not generally appreciate the science of truth or have real knowledge, on the other hand are unerringly directed by mere instinct; they have intuitionally - if I may be allowed to so express myself - an idea of what is formidable in its genuine strength. People will never conspire except against *real* Power. In their blind ignorance, the Mysteries and the Unknown have been, and

ever will be, objects of terror for them. Civilization may progress; human nature will remain the same throughout all ages.

Occultists, beware!

Let it be understood then that I address myself but to the truly courageous and persevering. Besides the danger expressed above, the difficulties in becoming a practical Occultist in this country are next to insurmountable. Barrier upon barrier, obstacles in every form and shape, will present themselves to the student; for the keys of the Golden Gate leading to the Infinite Truth lie buried deep, and the gate itself is enclosed in a mist which clears up only before the ardent rays of implicit faith. Faith alone - one grain of which as large as a mustard-seed, according to the words of Christ, can lift a mountain - is able to find out how simple becomes the Kabbalah to the Initiate once he has succeeded in conquering the first abstruse difficulties. The dogma of it is logical, easy and absolute. The necessary union of ideas and signs; the trinity of words, letters, numbers, and theorems; the religion of it can be compressed into a few words. "It is the Infinite condensed in the hand of an infant," says Éliphas Lévi. Ten ciphers, twenty-two alphabetical letters, one triangle, a square and a circle. Such are the elements of the Kabbalah from whose mysterious bosom sprang all the religions of the past and present; which endowed all the Freemasonic associations with their symbols and secrets, which alone can reconcile human reason with God and Faith, Power with Freedom, Science with Mystery, and which has alone the keys of present, past and future.

The first difficulty for the aspirant lies in the utter impossibility of his comprehending, as I said before, the meaning of the best books written by Hermetic philosophers. These, who mainly lived in the mediaeval ages, prompted on the one hand by their

duty towards their brethren, and by their desire to impart only to them and their successors the glorious truths, and on the other very naturally desirous to avoid the clutches of the bloodthirsty Christian Inquisition, enveloped themselves more than ever in mystery. They invented new signs and hieroglyphs, renovated the ancient symbolical language of the high priests of antiquity, who had used it as a sacred barrier between their holy rites and the ignorance of the profane, and created a veritable Kabbalistic slang. This latter, which continually blinded the false neophyte, attracted towards the science only by his greediness for wealth and power which he would have surely misused were he to succeed, is a living, eloquent, clear language, but it is and can become such only to the true disciple of Hermes.

But were it even otherwise, and could books on Occultism, written in a plain and precise language be obtained in order to get initiated in the Kabbalah, it would not be sufficient to understand and meditate on certain authors. Galatinus and Pic de la Mirandola, Paracelsus and Robertus de Fluctibus do not furnish one with the key to the practical mysteries. They simply state what can be done and why it is done; but they do not tell one *how* to do it. More than one philosopher who has by heart the whole of the Hermetic literature, and who has devoted to the study of it upwards of thirty or forty years of his life, fails when he believes he is about reaching the final great result. One must understand the Hebrew authors, such as *Sepher Yetzirah*, for instance, learn by heart the great book of the *Zohar* in its original tongue, master the *Kabbalah Denudata* from the Collection of 1684 (Paris); follow up the Kabbalistic pneumatics at first, and then throw oneself headlong into the turbid waters of that mysterious unintelligible ocean, called the *Talmud*, this compilation of "absurd monstrosities" according to some blind

profanes, the final key to all the Hermetists in its dogmatical and allegoriacal signs.

Where I to name two of the books which contain the most of the occult information which was devired and utilized by greatest Kabalists of the mediaeval ages - Paracelsus was one of them - I might astonish many of my correspondent "craving for knowledge," and they might let it pass unnoticed. Adepts more learned than I will nevertheless endorse the truths of my assertion. For prudence sake I prefer quoting from a book, written by one of our greatest modern occultists.

"Among the sacred books of the Christians," says Éliphas Lévi, "there exist two works which, strange to say, the Infallible Church does not even pretend to understand and never tried to explain: the *Prophecy of Ezekiel* and the *Apocalypse*, two Kabalistic treatises, reserved without doubt for the commentaries of the Magi kings, books closed with the seven seals to the faithful Christian, but perfectly clear to the Infidel initiated in the Occult Sciences.

Thus the works on Occultism, were not, I repeat, written for the masses, but for those of the Brethren who make the solution of the mysteries of the Kabbalah the principal object of their lives, and who are supposed to have conquered the first abstruse difficulties of the Alpha of Hermetic philosophy.

To fervent and persevering candidates for the above science, I have to offer but one word of advice, "try and become." One single journey to the Orient, made in the proper spirit, and the possible emergencies arising from the meeting of what may seem no more than the chance acquaintances and adventures of any traveller, may quite as likely as not throw wide open to the zealous student the heretofore closed doors of the final mysteries. I will go farther and say that such a journey,

performed with the omnipresent idea of the one object, and with the help of a fervent will, is sure to produce more rapid, better, and far more practical results, than the most diligent study of Occultism in books - even though one were to devote to it dozens of years.

In the name of Truth, yours,
H. P. BLAVATSKY.

Bibliographical source:

Spiritual Scientist, Boston, Vol. III, September 23, 1875, pp. 25-7.

Practical Occultism - Important to Students



"In every age there have been Sages who had mastered the absolute and yet could teach but relative truths. For none yet, born of mortal woman in our race, has, or could have given out, the whole and the final truth to another man, for every one of us has to find that (to him) final knowledge in himself.

H.P.B. "What is Truth?"

As some of the letters in the CORRESPONDENCE of this month show, there are many people who are looking for practical instruction in Occultism. It becomes necessary, therefore, to state once for all:

- (a) The essential difference between theoretical and practical Occultism; or what is generally known as Theosophy on the one hand, and Occult science on the other, and:
- (b) The nature of the difficulties involved in the study of the latter.

It is easy to become a Theosophist. Any person of average intellectual capacities, and a leaning toward the metaphysical; of pure, unselfish life, who finds more joy in helping his neighbor than in receiving help himself; one who is ever ready to sacrifice his own pleasures for the sake of other people; and who loves Truth, Goodness and Wisdom for their own sake, not for the benefit they may confer - is a Theosophist.

But it is quite another matter to put oneself upon the path which leads to the knowledge of what is good to do, as to the right discrimination of good from evil; a path which also leads a man to that power through which he can do the good he desires, often without even apparently lifting a finger.

Moreover, there is one important fact with which the student should be made acquainted. Namely, the enormous, almost limitless, responsibility assumed by the teacher for the sake of the pupil. From the Gurus of the East who teach openly or secretly, down to the few Kabalists in Western lands who undertake to teach the rudiments of the Sacred Science to their disciples - those western Hierophants being often themselves ignorant of the danger they incur - one and all of those "Teachers" are subject to the same inviolable law. From the moment they begin *really* to teach, from the instant they confer any power - whether psychic, mental or physical - on their pupils, they take upon themselves all the sins of that pupil, in connection with the Occult Sciences, whether of omission or commission, until the moment when initiation makes the pupil a Master and responsible in his turn. There is a weird and mystic religious law, greatly revered and acted upon in the Greek, half-forgotten in the Roman Catholic, and absolutely extinct in the Protestant Church. It dates from the earliest days of Christianity, and has its basis in the law just stated, of which it was a symbol and an expression. This is the dogma of the absolute sacredness of the relation between the god-parents who stand sponsors for a child (1). These tacitly take upon themselves all the sins of the newly baptized child - (anointed as at the initiation, a mystery truly!) - until the day when the child becomes a responsible unit, knowing good and evil. Thus it is clear why the "Teachers" are so reticent, and why "Chelas" are required to serve a seven years' probation to prove their fitness,

and develop the qualities necessary to the security of both Master and pupil.

Occultism is not magic. It is *comparatively* easy to learn the trick of spells and the methods of using the subtler, but still material, forces of physical nature; the powers of the animal soul in man are soon awakened; the forces which his love, his hate, his passion, can call into operation, are readily developed. But this is Black Magic - *Sorcery*. For it is the motive, and the *motive alone*, which makes any exercise of power become black, malignant, or white, beneficent Magic. It is impossible to employ *spiritual* forces if there is the slightest tinge of selfishness remaining in the operator. For, unless the intention is entirely unalloyed, the spiritual will transform itself into the psychic, act on the astral plane, and dire results may be produced by it. The powers and forces of animal nature can equally be used by the selfish and revengeful, as by the unselfish and the all-forgiving; the powers and forces of spirit lend themselves only to the perfectly pure in heart - and this is DIVINE MAGIC.

What are then the conditions required to become a student of the "Divina Sapientia"? For let it be known that no such instruction can possibly be given unless these certain conditions are complied with, and rigorously carried out during the years of study. This is a *sine qua non*. No man can swim unless he enters deep water. No bird can fly unless its wings are grown, and it has space before it and courage to trust itself to the air. A man who will wield a two-edged sword, must be a thorough master of the blunt weapon, if he would not injure himself - or what is worse - others, at the first attempt.

To give an approximate idea of the conditions under which alone the study of Divine Wisdom can be pursued with safety, that is,

without danger that Divine will give place to Black Magic, a page is given from the "private rules", with which every instructor in the East is furnished. The few passages which follow are chosen from a great number and explained in brackets.

1 - The place selected for receiving instruction must be a spot calculated not to distract the mind, and filled with "influence-evolving" (magnetic) objects. The five sacred colours gathered in a circle must be there among other things. The place must be free from any malignant influences hanging about in the air.

(The place must be set apart, and used for no other purpose. The five "sacred colours" are the prismatic hues arranged in a certain way, as these colours are very magnetic. By "malignant influences" are meant any disturbances through strifes, quarrels, bad feelings, etc., as these are said to impress themselves immediately on the astral light, i.e., in the atmosphere of the place, and to hang "about in the air". This first condition seems easy enough to accomplish, yet - on further consideration, it is one of the most difficult ones to obtain.)

2 - Before the disciple shall be permitted to study "face to face", he has to acquire preliminary understanding in a select company of other lay *upasakas* (disciples), the number of whom must be odd.

("Face to face", means in this instance a study independent or apart from others, when the disciple gets his instruction face to face either with himself (his higher, Divine Self) or - his guru. It is then only that each receives *his due* of information, according to the use he has made of his knowledge. This can happen only toward the end of the cycle of instruction.)

3 - Before thou (the teacher) shall impart to thy *Lanoo* (disciple) the good (holy) words of LAMRIN or shall permit him "to make ready" for *Dubjed* [1], thou shalt take care that his mind is

thoroughly purified and at peace with all, especially with *his other Selves*. Otherwise the words of Wisdom and of the good Law shall scatter and be picked up by the winds.

("Lamrim" is a work of practical instructions, by Tson-kha-pa, in two portions, one for ecclesiastical and exoteric purposes, the other for esoteric use. "To make ready" for *Dubjed*, is to prepare the vessels used for seership, such as mirrors and crystals. The "other selves" refers to the fellow-students. Unless the greatest harmony reigns among the learners, no success is possible. It is the teacher who makes the selections according to the magnetic and electric natures of the students, bringing together and adjusting most carefully the positive and the negative elements.)

4 - The *upasakas* while studying must take care to be united as the fingers on one hand. Thou shalt impress upon their minds that whatever hurts one should hurt the others; and if the rejoicing of one finds no echo in the breasts of the others, then the required conditions are absent, and it is useless to proceed.

(This can hardly happen if the preliminary choice made was consistent with the magnetic requirements. It is known that chelas otherwise promising and fit for the reception of truth, had to wait for years on account of their temper and the impossibility they felt to put themselves in tune with their companions. For -)

5 - The co-disciples must be tuned by the guru as the strings of a lute (*vina*), each different from the others, yet each emitting sounds in harmony with all. Collectively they must form a key-board answering in all its parts to thy lightest touch (the touch of the Master). Thus their minds shall open for the harmonies of Wisdom, to vibrate as knowledge through each and all, resulting in effects pleasing to the presiding gods (tutelary or patron-angels) and useful to the *Lanoo*. So shall Wisdom be impressed for ever on their hearts and the harmony

of the law shall never be broken.

6 - Those who desire to acquire the knowledge leading to the *Siddhis* (occult powers) have to renounce all the vanities of life and of the world (here follows enumeration of the *Siddhis*).

7 - None can feel the difference between himself and his fellow-students, such as "I am the wisest", "I am more holy and pleasing to the teacher, or in my community, than my brother", etc., - and remain an *upasaka*. His thoughts must be predominantly fixed upon his heart, chasing therefrom every hostile thought to any living being. It (the heart) must be full of the feeling of its non-separateness from the rest of beings as from all in Nature; otherwise no success can follow.

8 - A *Lanoo* (disciple) has to dread external living influence alone (magnetic emanations from living creatures). For this reason, while at one with all, in his *inner nature*, he must take care to separate his outer (external) body from every foreign influence: none must drink out of, or eat in his cup but himself. He must avoid bodily contact (*i.e.*, being touched or touch) with human, as with animal being.

(No pet animals are permitted, and it is forbidden even to touch certain trees and plants. A disciple has to live, so to say, in his own atmosphere in order to individualize it for occult purposes.)

9 - The mind must remain blunt to all but the universal truths in nature, lest the "Doctrine of the Heart" should become only the "Doctrine of the Eye" (*i.e.*, empty exoteric ritualism).

10 - No animal food of whatever kind, nothing that has life in it, should be taken by the disciple. No wine, no spirits or opium should be used; for these are like the *Lhamayin* (evil spirits), who fasten upon the unwary, they devour the understanding. (Wine and Spirits are supposed to contain and preserve the bad

magnetism of all the men who helped in their fabrication; the meat of each animal, to preserve the psychic characteristics of its kind.)

11 - Meditation, abstinence in all, the observation of moral duties, gentle thoughts, good deeds and kind words, as goodwill to all and entire oblivion of Self, are the most efficacious means of obtaining knowledge and preparing for the reception of higher wisdom.

12 - It is only by virtue of a strict observance of the foregoing rules that a *Lanoo* can hope to acquire in good time the *Siddhis* of the *Arhats*, the growth which makes him become gradually One with the UNIVERSAL ALL.

These 12 extracts are taken from among some 73 rules, to enumerate which would be useless as they would be meaningless in Europe. But even these few are enough to show the immensity of the difficulties which beset the path of the would-be "Upasaka", who has been born and bred in Western lands [2].

All Western, and especially English, education is instinct with the principle of emulation and strife; each boy is urged to learn more quickly, to outstrip his companions, and to surpass them in every possible way. What is mis-called "friendly rivalry" is assiduously cultivated, and the same spirit is fostered and strengthened in every detail of life.

With such ideas "educated into" him from his childhood, how can a Western bring himself to feel towards his co-students "as the fingers on one hand"? Those co-students, too, are not of his own election, or chosen by himself from personal sympathy and appreciation. They are chosen by his teacher on far other grounds, and he who would be a student must first be strong enough to kill out in his heart all feelings of dislike and antipathy

to others. How many Westerns are ready even to attempt this in earnest?

And then the details of daily life, the command not to touch even the hand of one's nearest and dearest. How contrary to Western notions of affection and good feeling! How cold and hard it seems. Egotistical too, people would say, to abstain from giving pleasure to others for the sake of one's own development. Well, let those who think so defer till another lifetime the attempt to enter the path in real earnest. But let them not glory in their own fancied unselfishness. For, in reality, it is only the seeming appearances which they allow to deceive them, the conventional notions, based on emotionalism and gush, or so-called courtesy, things of the unreal life, not the dictates of Truth.

But even putting aside these difficulties, which may be considered "external", though their importance is none the less great, how are students in the West to "attune themselves" to harmony as here required of them? So strong has personality grown in Europe and America, that there is no school of artists even whose members do not hate and are not jealous of each other. "Professional" hatred and envy have become proverbial; men seek each to benefit himself at all costs, and even the so-called courtesies of life are but a hollow mask covering these demons of hatred and jealousy.

In the East the spirit of "non-separateness" is inculcated as steadily from childhood up, as in the West the spirit of rivalry. Personal ambition, personal feelings and desires, are not encouraged to grow so rampant there. When the soil is naturally good, it is cultivated in the right way, and the child grows into a man in whom the habit of subordination of one's lower to one's higher Self is strong and powerful. In the West men think that their own likes and dislikes of other men and things are guiding

principles for them to act upon, even when they do not make of them the law of their lives and seek to impose them upon others.

Let those who complain that they have learned little in the Theosophical Society lay to heart the words written in an article in the Path for last February: - "The key in each degree is the *aspirant himself*". It is not "the fear of God" which is "the beginning of Wisdom", but the knowledge of SELF which is WISDOM ITSELF.

How grand and true appears, thus, to the student of Occultism who has commenced to realize some of the foregoing truths, the answer given by the Delphic Oracle to all who came seeking after Occult Wisdom - words repeated and enforced again and again by the wise Socrates: - MAN KNOW THYSELF.

(1) So holy is the connection thus formed deemed in the Greek Church, that a marriage between god-parents of the same child is regarded as the worst kind of incest, is considered illegal and is dissolved by law; and this absolute prohibition extends even to the children of one of the sponsors as regards those of the other.

(2) Be it remembered that all "Chelas", even lay disciples, are called Upasaka until after their first initiation, when they become Lanoo-Upasaka. To that day, even those who belong to Lamaseries and are set apart, are considered as "laymen".

Editor's Notes:

(1) Dubjed (Tibetan) Seership through mirrors or crystals, etc. See BCW 9:158.

Bibliographical source:

Lucifer, Vol. II, pp. 150-154, April 1888.

Practical Occultism



"Those who desire to acquire the knowledge leading to the Siddhis (occult powers) have to renounce all the vanities of life and of the world."

Practical Occultism - Important to Students, H.P.B.

[A letter sent to *Lucifer* by S. E., comments by H.P.B.]

"In a very interesting article in last month's number entitled 'Practical Occultism' it is stated that from the moment a 'Master' begins to teach a 'chela' he takes on himself all the sins of that chela in connection with the occult sciences until the moment when initiation makes the chela a master and responsible in his turn.

"For the Western mind, steeped as it has been for generations in 'Individualism,' it is very difficult to recognize the justice and consequently the truth of this statement, and it is very much to be desired that some further explanation should be given for a fact which some few may feel intuitively but for which they are quite unable to give any logical reason."

S. E.

H.P.B.'s comments: - The best logical reason for it is the fact that even in common daily life, parents, nurses, tutors and instructors are generally held responsible for the habits and

future ethics of a child. The little unfortunate wretch who is trained by his parents to pick pockets in the streets is not responsible for the sin, but the effects of it fall heavily on those who have impressed on his mind that it was the right thing to do. Let us hope that the Western Mind, although being steeped in Individualism," has not become so dulled thereby as not to perceive that there would be neither logic nor justice were it otherwise. And if the moulders of the plastic mind of the yet unreasoning child must be held responsible, in this world of effects, for his sins of omission and commission during his childhood and for the effects produced by their early training in after life, how much more the "Spiritual Guru"? The latter taking the student by the hand leads him into, and introduces him to a world entirely unknown to the pupil. For this world is that of the invisible but ever potent CAUSALITY, the subtle, yet never-breaking thread that is the action, agent and power of Karma, and Karma itself in the field of divine mind. Once acquainted with this no adept can any longer plead ignorance in the event of even an action, good and meritorious in its motive, producing evil as its result; since acquaintance with this mysterious realm gives the means to the Occultist of foreseeing the two paths opening before every premeditated as unpremeditated action, and thus puts him in a position to know with certainty what will be the results in one or the other case. So long, then, as the pupil acts upon this principle, but is too ignorant to be sure of his vision and powers of discrimination, is it not natural that it is the guide who should be responsible for the sins of him whom he has led into those dangerous regions?

Bibliographical source:

Lucifer, Vol. II, May, 1888, pp. 257-258.

Is There no Hope?

"On the tree of silence hangs the fruit of peace. The secret thou wouldst not tell to thine enemy, tell it not to thy friend.

(Arabic Proverb.)

[A letter from David Crichton to Lucifer, comments by H.P.B.]

I think, after reading the conditions necessary for Occult study given in the April number of *LUCIFER*, that it would be as well for the readers of this magazine to give up all hopes of becoming Occultists. In Britain, except inside a monastery, I hardly think it possible that such conditions could ever be realized. In my future capacity of medical doctor (if the gods are so benign) the eighth condition would be quite exclusive; this is most unfortunate, as it seems to me that the study of Occultism is peculiarly essential for a successful practice of the medical profession.

I have the following question to ask you, and will be glad to be favored with a reply through the medium of *LUCIFER*. Is it possible to study Occultism in Britain?

Before concluding, I feel compelled to inform you that, I admire your magazine as a scientific production, and that I really and truly classify it along with the "Imitation of Christ" among my text books of religion.

David Crichton, Marischall College, Aberdeen.

H.P.B.'s comment - This is a too pessimistic view to entertain. One may study with profit the Occult Sciences without rushing into the higher Occultism. In the case of our correspondent especially, and in his future capacity of medical doctor, "the Occult knowledge of simples and minerals, and the curative powers of certain things in Nature," is far more important and useful than metaphysical and psychological Occultism or *Theophany*. And this he can do better by studying and trying to understand Paracelsus and the two Van Helmonts, than by assimilating Patanjali and the methods of Taraka Raja-Yoga.

It is possible to study "Occultism" (the Occult sciences or arts is more correct) in Britain, as on any other point of the globe; though owing to the tremendously adverse conditions created by the intense selfishness that prevails in the country, and a magnetism which is repellent to a free manifestation of Spirituality - solitude is the best condition for study.

Bibliographical source:

Lucifer, Vol. II, May, 1888, pp. 259-260.

Theosophist - Occultist and Wordly Duties

"Behold me! an offspring of Darkness and Light.
With soft, tender petals of radiant white,
With golden heart mystery, full of perfume
That is Soul of my Breath - the Secret of Bloom.

Infinity's centre is heart of the rose,
And th' breath of Creation its perfume that flows
Through ages and eons and time yet untold -
But the Soul of the Breath I may not unfold.

Whisper of a Rose by Mora
Lucifer, January 1888

[A letter from L.M.C to the Editor of *Lucifer*, comments by H.P.B.]

A Correspondent from New York writes:

... The Editors of *Lucifer* would confer a great benefit on those who are attracted to the movement which they advocate, if they would state:

(1.) Whether a would-be-theosophist-occultist is required to abandon his worldly ties and duties such as family affection, love of parents, wife, children, friends, etc.?

I ask this question because it is rumoured here that some theosophical publications have so stated, and would wish to know whether such a *sine qua non* condition really exists in your

Rules? The same, however, is found in the New Testament. "He that loveth father or mother more than me, is not worthy of me: and he that loveth son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me, etc., etc.," is said in *Matthew* (x, 37). Do the MASTERS of Theosophy demand as much?

Yours in the Search of Light.
L. M. C.

H.P.B.'s comment - This is an old, old question, and a still older charge against theosophy, started first by its enemies. We emphatically answer, NO; adding that no *theosophical* publication could have rendered itself guilty of such a FALSEHOOD and calumny. No follower of theosophy, least of all a disciple of the "Masters of Theosophy" (the *chela* of a *guru*), would ever be accepted on such conditions. Many were the candidates, but "few chosen." Dozens were refused, simply because married and having a sacred duty to perform to wife and children(1). None have ever been asked to forsake father or mother; for he who, being necessary to his parent for his support, leaves him or her to gratify his own selfish consideration or thirst for knowledge, however great and sincere, is "*unworthy*" of the Science of Sciences, "or ever to approach a holy MASTER."

Our correspondent must surely have confused in his mind Theosophy with Roman Catholicism, and Occultism with the dead-letter teachings of the Bible. For it is only in the Latin Church that it has become a meritorious action, which is called serving God and Christ, to "abandon father and mother, wife and children," and every duty of an honest man and citizen, in order to become a monk. And it is in St. *Luke's Gospel* that one reads the terrible words, put in the mouth of Jesus: "*If any man come*

to me, and hate not his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea, and his own life also, HE CANNOT BE MY DISCIPLE." (xiv, 26.)

Saint [?] Jerome teaches, in one of his writings, "If thy father lies down across thy threshold, if thy mother uncovers to thine eyes the bosom which suckled thee, *trample on thy father's lifeless body, TRAMPLE ON THY MOTHER'S BOSOM, and with eyes unmoistened and dry, fly to the Lord, who calleth thee!*"

Surely then, it is not from any *theosophical* publication that our correspondent could have learnt such an infamous charge against theosophy and its MASTERS - but rather in some *anti-Christian*, or too dogmatically "Christian" paper.

Our society has never been "more Catholic than the Pope." It has done its best to follow out the path prescribed by the Masters; and if it has failed in more than one respect to fulfill its arduous task, the blame is certainly not to be thrown on either Theosophy, or its Masters, but on the limitations of human nature. The *Rules*, however, of *chelaship*, or discipleship, are there, in many a Sanskrit and Tibetan volume. In Book IV of *Kiu-ti*, in the chapter on "*the Laws of Upasans*" (disciples), the qualifications expected in a "regular *chela*" are

- "(1.) Perfect physical health (2).
- (2.) Absolute mental and physical purity.
- (3.) Unselfishness of purpose; universal charity; pity for all animate beings.
- (4.) Truthfulness and unswerving faith in the laws of Karma.
- (5.) A courage undaunted in the support of truth, even in the face of peril to life.
- (6.) An intuitive perception of one's being the vehicle of the

manifested divine *Atmán* (spirit).

(7.) Calm indifference for, but a just appreciation of, everything that constitutes the objective and transitory world.

(8.) Blessings of both parents (3) and *their permission to become an Upasaka* (chela); and

(9.) Celibacy, and freedom from any obligatory duty."

The two last rules are most strictly enforced. No man *convicted of disrespect to his father or mother, or unjust abandonment of his wife*, can ever be accepted even as a lay chela.

This is sufficient, it is hoped. We have heard of chelas who, having failed, perhaps in consequence of the neglect of some such duty, for one or another reason, have invariably thrown the blame and responsibility for it on the teaching of the Masters. This is but natural in poor and weak human beings who have not even the courage to recognize their own mistakes, or the rare nobility of publicly confessing them, but are always trying to find a scapegoat. Such we pity, and leave to the Law of Retribution, or Karma. It is not these weak creatures, who can ever be expected to have the best of the enemy described by the wise *Kiratarjuniya of Bharavi*:

"The enemies which rise within the body,
Hard to be overcome - the evil passions -
Should manfully be fought, who conquers these
Is equal to the conqueror of worlds." (xi, 32.)

We have received several communications for publication, bearing on the subjects discussed in the editorial of our last issue, "Let every man prove his own work". A few brief remarks may be made, not in reply to any of the letters - *which, being*

anonymous, and containing no card from the writers, cannot be published (nor are such noticed, as a general rule) - but to the ideas and accusations contained in one of them, a letter signed "M." Its author takes up the cudgels on behalf of the Church. He objects to the statement that this institution lacks the enlightenment necessary to carry out a true system of philanthropy. He appears, also, to demur to the view that "the practical people either go on doing good unintentionally and often do "harm" and points to the workers amid our slums as a vindication of Christianity - which, by-the-bye, was in no sense attacked in the editorial so criticized.

To this, repeating what was said, we maintain that more mischief has been done by emotional charity than sentimentalists care to face. Any student of political economy is familiar with this fact, which passes for a truism with all those who have devoted attention to the problem. No nobler sentiment than that which animates the unselfish philanthropist is conceivable; but the question at issue is not summed up in the recognition of this truth. The practical results of his labors have to be examined. We have to see whether he does not sow the seeds of a greater - while relieving a lesser - evil.

The fact that "thousands are making great efforts in all the cities throughout our land " to meet want, reflects immense credit on the character of such workers. It does not affect their creed, for such natures would remain the same, whatever the prevailing dogmas chanced to be. It is certainly a very, poor illustration of the fruits of centuries of dogmatic Christianity that England should be so honey-combed with misery and poverty as she is - especially on the biblical ground that a tree must be judged by its fruits! It might, also, be argued, that the past history of the Churches, stained as it is with persecutions, the suppression of

knowledge, crime and brutality, necessitates the turning over of a new leaf. The difficulties in the way are insuperable. "Churchianity" has, indeed, done its best to keep up with the age by assimilating the teachings of, and making veiled truces with, science, but it is incapable of affording a true spiritual ideal to the world.

The same Church-Christianity assails with fruitless pertinacity, the ever-growing host of Agnostics and Materialists, but is *absolutely ignorant, as the latter, of the mysteries beyond the tomb*. The great necessity for the Church, according to Professor Flint, is to keep the leaders of European thought within its fold. By such men it is, however, regarded as an anachronism. The Church is eaten up with skepticism within its own walls; free-thinking clergymen being now very common. This constant drain of vitality has reduced the true religion to a very low ebb, and it is to infuse a new current of ideas and aspirations into modern thought, in short, to supply a logical basis for an elevated morality, a science and philosophy which is suited to the knowledge of the day, that Theosophy comes before the world. Mere physical philanthropy, apart from the infusion of new influences and ennobling conceptions of life into the minds of the masses, is worthless. The gradual assimilation by mankind of great spiritual truths will alone revolutionize the face of civilization, and ultimately result in a far more effective panacea for evil, than the mere tinkering of superficial misery. Prevention is better than cure. Society creates its own outcasts, criminals, and profligates, and then condemns and punishes its own Frankenstein's, sentencing its own progeny, the "bone of its bone, and the flesh of its flesh," to a life of damnation on earth. Yet that society recognizes and enforces most hypocritically Christianity - *i.e.*, "Churchianity." Shall we then, or shall we not, infer that the latter is unequal to the requirements of mankind?

Evidently the former, and most painfully and obviously so, in its present dogmatic form, which makes of the beautiful ethics preached on the Mount, a Dead Sea fruit, a whited sepulchre, and no better.

Furthermore, the same "M.," alluding to Jesus as one with regard to whom there could be only two alternatives, writes that he "was either the Son of God or the vilest impostor who ever trod this earth." We answer, not at all. Whether the Jesus of the New Testament ever lived or not, whether he existed as an historical personage, or was simply a lay figure around which the Bible allegories clustered - the Jesus of Nazareth of Matthew and John is the ideal for every would-be sage and Western candidate-Theosophist to follow. That such an one as he, was a "Son of God," is as undeniable as that he was neither the only "Son of God," nor the first one, nor even the last who closed the series of the "Sons of God," or the children of Divine Wisdom, on this earth. Nor is that other statement that in "His life he [Jesus] has ever spoken of himself as co-existent with Jehovah, the Supreme, the Centre of the Universe," correct, whether in its dead letter, or hidden mystic sense. In no place does Jesus ever allude to "*Jehovah*"; but, on the contrary, attacking the Mosaic laws and the alleged Commandments given on Mount Sinai, he disconnects himself and his "Father" most distinctly and emphatically from the Sinaitic tribal God. The whole of Chapter V, in the *Gospel of Matthew*, is a passionate protest of the "man of peace, love and charity," against the cruel, stern, and selfish commandments of "the man of war," the "Lord" of Moses (*Exod.*, xv, 3). "Ye have heard that it hath been said by them of old times," - so and so - "But I say unto you," quite the reverse. Christians who still hold to the Old Testament and the Jehovah of the Israelites, are at best *schismatic Jews*. Let them be that, by all means, if they will so have it; but they have no right to call

themselves even *Chrestians*, let alone *Christians* (4).

It is a gross injustice and untruth to assert, as our anonymous correspondent does, that "the freethinkers are notoriously unholy in their lives." Some of the noblest characters, as well as deepest thinkers of the day, adorn the ranks of Agnosticism, Positivism and Materialism. The latter are the worst enemies of Theosophy and Mysticism; but this is no reason why strict justice should not be done unto them. Colonel Ingersoll, a rank materialist, and the leader of free thought in America, is recognized, even by his enemies, as an ideal husband, father, friend and citizen, one of the noblest characters that grace the United States. Count Tolstoy is a freethinker who has long parted with the orthodox Church, yet his whole life is an exemplar of Christ-like altruism and self-sacrifice. Would to goodness every "Christian" should take those two "*infidels*" as his models in private and public life. The munificence of many freethinking philanthropists stands out in startling contrast with the apathy of the monied dignitaries of the Church. The above fling at the "enemies of the Church," is as absurd as it is contemptible.

"What can you offer to the dying woman who fears to tread alone the DARK UNKNOWN?" we are asked. Our Christian critic here frankly confesses (a) that Christian dogmas have only developed *fear* of death, and (b) the *agnosticism* of the *orthodox believer* in Christian theology as to the future *post-mortem* state. It is, indeed, difficult to appreciate the peculiar type of bliss which orthodoxy offers its believers in - damnation.

The dying man - the average Christian - with a *dark* retrospect in life can scarcely appreciate this boon; while the Calvinist or the Predestinarian, who is brought up in the idea that God may have pre-assigned him from eternity to everlasting misery, through no

fault of that man, but simply because he is God, is more than justified in regarding the latter as ten times worse than any devil or fiend that unclean human fancy could evolve.

Theosophy, on the contrary, teaches that *perfect, absolute justice* reigns in nature, though short-sighted man fails to see it in its details on the material and even psychic plane, and that every man determines his own future. The true Hell is life on Earth, as an effect of Karmic punishment following the preceding life during which the evil causes were produced. The Theosophist fears *no hell* but confidently expects rest and bliss during the *interim* between two incarnations, as a reward for all the unmerited suffering he has endured in an existence into which he was ushered by Karma, and during which he is, in most cases, as helpless as a torn-off leaf whirled about by the conflicting winds of social and private life. Enough has been given out at various times regarding the conditions of post-mortem existence, to furnish a solid block of information on this point. Christian theology has nothing to say on this burning question, except where it veils its ignorance by mystery and dogma; but Occultism, unveiling the symbology of the Bible, explains it thoroughly.

(1) We know but two cases of *married "chelas"* being accepted; but both these were Brahmins and had *child-wives*, according to Hindu custom, and they were *Reformers* more than *chelas*, trying to abrogate child-marriage and slavery. Others had to obtain the consent of their wives before entering the "Path," as is usual in India since long ages.

(2) This rule I applies only to the "temple chelas," who must be perfect.

(3) Or one, if the other is dead.

(4) See "The Esoteric Character of the Gospels," in this number [see. *Lucifer*, Vol. 4, Dec. 1887].

Bibliographical source:

Lucifer, Vol. I, No. 4, December, 1887, pp. 325-328.

Chelaship as given in "Practical Occultism"

"It should never be forgotten that Occultism is concerned with the inner man who must be strengthened and freed from the dominion of the physical body and its surroundings, which must become his servants. Hence the first and chief necessity of Chelaship is a spirit of absolute unselfishness and devotion to Truth; then follow self-knowledge and self-mastery.

H.P.B.

[A letter fom C.S. from Stockholm to *Lucifer*, with comments by H.P.B.]

As you kindly invite questions relating to Theosophy, I make free to put forward some doubts, which I should feel very thankful if you would solve.

1. How are the *nine* actually known planets to be reconciled with the *seven* of Theosophy?

H.P.B.'s comment - The reasons are stated in *The Secret Doctrine* in several places. - **End of comment**.

2. How may it be possible for anyone who has no independent means to subsist upon to enter upon Chelaship? It seems as if the very first indispensable rule laid down in the April number of *LUCIFER*, would render it absolutely impossible for any person, who has to earn his bread in any way, save perhaps that of

writing books, to mount even the first steps of the ladder. Or does it mean, perchance, that some other human being should always sacrifice himself, should toil and labour many years of his life in order to facilitate the sublime aspirings to Adeptship - of another? One would think, in that case, that the humbler brother or sister (humanly, not kindredly speaking) was on the righter track to perfection according to the precepts of Theosophy.

H.P.B.'s comment - Chelaship has nothing *whatever* to do with means of subsistence or anything of the kind, for a man can isolate his mind entirely from his body and its surroundings. Chelaship is a *state of mind*, rather than a life according to hard and fast rules on the physical plane. This applies especially to the earlier, probationary period, while the rules given in *Lucifer* for April last pertain properly to a later stage, that of actual occult training and the development of occult powers and insight. These rules indicate, however, the mode of life which ought to be followed by all aspirants *so far as practicable*, since it is the most helpful to them in their aspirations.

It should never be forgotten that Occultism is concerned with the *inner man* who must be strengthened and freed from the dominion of the physical body and its surroundings, which must become his servants. Hence the *first* and chief necessity of Chelaship is a spirit of absolute unselfishness and devotion to Truth; then follow self-knowledge and self-mastery. These are all-important; while outward observance of fixed rules of life is a matter of secondary moment. - **End of comment**.

3. Has any woman ever attained to Adeptship proper? Will her intellectual and spiritual nature and gifts permit it, even while supposing that her physical nature might endure the hardships

therefrom indispensable? It should seem that the ultimate fate of "Fleta" in her incarnation tends to demonstrate the negative answer to this question. But, on the other hand, it would testify of a, least said, curious partiality on the part of the "All-love" and "All-wisdom" to have denied woman, that half of humanity which is said to be the counter-type of even that Wisdom - *Love* being the masculine, *Wisdom* the feminine, principle in Deity - the means and possibilities to claim and attain the same high wisdom which is attainable for men.

H.P.B.'s comment - Fleta is a picture of a black magician once her fate. She is the Queen of Duggas, selfish to the core and sacrificing all and everything to her desire for power.

Woman has as good a chance as any man has to reach high Adeptship. Why she does not succeed in this direction in Europe is simply due to her early education and the social prejudice which causes her to be regarded as inferior to man. This prejudice, amounting to a curse in Christian lands, was mainly derived from the Jewish Bible, and man has profited by it.

Bibliographical source:

Lucifer, Vol. IV, June 1889, pp. 347-348.

Are Chelas Mediums?



"Occultists do not believe in any communication with the "spirits of the deceased" in the ordinary acceptance of the term, for the simple reason that they know that the spirits of "the deceased" cannot and do not come down and communicate with us.

H.P.B.

ACCORDING to the newest edition of the *Imperial Dictionary*, by John Ogilvie, L.L.D., "A medium is a person through whom the action of another being is said to be manifested and transmitted by animal magnetism, or a person through whom spiritual manifestations are claimed to be made; especially one who is said to be capable of holding intercourse with the spirits of the deceased."

As Occultists do not believe in any communication with the "spirits of the deceased" in the ordinary acceptance of the term, for the simple reason that they know that the spirits of "the deceased" cannot and do not come down and communicate with us; and as the above expression "by animal magnetism" would probably have been modified, if the editor of the *Imperial Dictionary* had been an Occultist, we therefore are only concerned with the first part of the definition of the word "Medium," which says: "A Medium is a person, through whom the action of another being is said to be manifested and transmitted"; and we should like to be permitted to add: "By the

either consciously or unconsciously active will of that other being."

It would be extremely difficult to find on earth a human being, who could not be more or less influenced by the "Animal Magnetism" or by the active Will (which sends out that "Magnetism") of another. If the beloved General rides along the front, the soldiers become all "Mediums." They become filled with enthusiasm, they follow him without fear, and storm the death-dealing battery. One common impulse pervades them all; each one becomes the "Medium" of another, the coward becomes filled with heroism, and only he, who is no medium at all and therefore insensible to epidemic or endemic moral influences, will make an exception, assert his independence and run away.

The "revival preacher" will get up in his pulpit, and although what he says is the most incongruous nonsense, still his actions and the lamenting tone of his voice are sufficiently impressive to produce "a change of heart" amongst, at least, the female part of his congregation, and if he is a powerful man, even sceptics "that come to scoff, remain to pray." People go to the theatre and shed tears or "split their sides" with laughter according to the character of the performance, whether it be a pantomime, a tragedy or a farce. There is no man, except a genuine block-head, whose emotions and consequently whose actions cannot be influenced in some way or other, and thereby the action of another be manifested or transmitted through him. All men and all women and children are therefore Mediums, and a person who is not a Medium is a monster, an abortion of nature; because he stands without the pale of humanity.

The above definition can therefore hardly be considered sufficient to express the meaning of the word "Medium" in the

popular acceptance of the term, unless we add a few words, and say. "A medium is a person through whom the action of another being is said to be manifested and transmitted to an abnormal extent by the consciously or unconsciously active will of that other being." This reduces the number of "Mediums" in the world to an extent proportionate to the space around which we draw the line between the normal and abnormal, and it will be just as difficult to determine who is a medium and who is not a medium, as it is to say where sanity ends and where insanity begins. Every man has his little weaknesses," and every man has his little "mediumship"; that is to say, some vulnerable point by which he may be taken unawares. The one may therefore not be considered really insane; neither can the other be called a "medium." Opinions often differ, whether a man is insane or not, and so they may differ as to his mediumship. Now in practical life a man may be very eccentric, but he is not considered insane, until his insanity reaches such a degree that he does not know any more what he is doing, and is therefore unable to take care of himself or his business.

We may extend the same line of reasoning to Mediums, and say that only such persons shall be considered mediums, who allow other beings to influence them in the above described manner to such an extent that they lose their self-control and have no more power or will of their own to regulate their own actions. Now such a relinquishing of self-control may be either active or passive, conscious or unconscious, voluntary or involuntary, and differs according to the nature of the beings, who exercise the said active influence over the medium.

A person may consciously and voluntarily submit his will to another being and become his slave. This other being may be a human being, and the medium will then be his obedient servant

and may be used by him for good or for bad purposes. This other "being" may be an idea, such as love, greediness, hate, jealousy, avarice, or some other passion, and the effect on the medium will be proportionate to the strength of the idea and the amount of self-control left in the medium. This "other being" may be an elementary or an elemental, and the poor medium become a epileptic, a maniac or a criminal. This "other being" may be the man's own higher principle, either alone or put into rapport with another ray of the collective universal spiritual principle, and the "medium" will then be a great genius, a writer, a poet, an artist, a musician, an inventor, and so on. This "other being" may be one of those exalted beings, called Mahatmas, and the conscious and voluntary medium will then be called their "Chela."

Again, a person may never in his life have heard the word "Medium" and still be a strong Medium, although entirely unconscious of the fact. His actions may be more or less influenced unconsciously by his visible or invisible surroundings. He may become a prey to Elementaries or Elementals, even without knowing the meaning of these words, and he may consequently become a thief, a murderer, a ravisher, a drunkard or a cut-throat, and it has often enough been proved that crimes frequently become epidemic; or again he may by certain invisible influences be made to accomplish acts which are not at all consistent with his character such as previously known. He may be a great liar and for once by some unseen influence be induced to speak the truth; he may be ordinarily very much afraid and yet on some great occasion and on the spur of the moment commit an act of heroism; he may be a street-robber and vagabond and suddenly do an act of generosity, etc. Furthermore, a medium may know the sources from which the influence comes, or in more explicit terms, "the nature of the

being, whose action is transmitted through him," or he may not know it. He may be under the influence of his own seventh principle and imagine to be in communication with a personal Jesus Christ, or a saint; he may be in rapport with the "intellectual" ray of Shakespeare and write Shakespearean poetry, and at the same time imagine that the personal spirit of Shakespeare is writing through him, and the simple fact of his believing this or that, would make his poetry neither better nor worse. He may be influenced by some Adept to write a great scientific work and be entirely ignorant of the source of his inspiration, or perhaps imagine that it was the "spirit" of Faraday or Lord Bacon that is writing through him, while all the while he would be acting as a "Chela," although ignorant of the fact.

From all this it follows that the exercise of mediumship consists in the more or less complete giving up of self-control, and whether this exercise is good or bad, depends entirely on the use that is made of it and the purpose for which it is done. This again depends on the degree of knowledge which the mediumistic person possesses, in regard to the nature of the being to whose care he either voluntarily or involuntarily relinquishes for a time the guardianship of his physical or intellectual powers. A person who entrusts indiscriminately those faculties to the influence of every unknown power, is undoubtedly a "crank," and cannot be considered less insane than the one who would entrust his money and valuables to the first stranger or vagabond that would ask him for the same. We meet occasionally such people, although they are comparatively rare, and they are usually known by their idiotic stare and by the fanaticism with which they cling to their ignorance. Such people ought to be pitied instead of blamed, and if it were possible, they should be enlightened in regard to the danger which they incur; but whether a Chela, who consciously and willingly lends for a

time his mental faculties to a superior being, whom he knows, and in whose purity of motives, honesty of purpose, intelligence, wisdom and power he has full confidence, can be considered a "Medium" in the vulgar acceptance of the term, is a question which had better be left to the reader - after a due consideration of the above - to decide for himself.

Bibliographical source:

The Theosophist, Vol. V, June, 1884, p.210.

Occultism Versus the Occult Arts

"Will is the exclusive possession of man on this our plane of consciousness. It divides him from the brute in whom instinctive desire only is active.

DESIRE, in its widest application, is the one creative force in the Universe. In this sense it is indistinguishable from Will; but we men never know desire under this form while we remain only men. Therefore Will and Desire are here considered as opposed.

Thus Will is the offspring of the Divine, the God in man; Desire the motive power of the animal life.

Most of men live in and by desire, mistaking it for will. But he who would achieve must separate will from desire, and make his will the ruler; for desire is unstable and ever changing, while will is steady and constant.

Both will and desire are absolute creators, forming the man himself and his surroundings. But will creates intelligently - desire blindly and unconsciously. The man, therefore, makes himself in the image of his desires, unless he creates himself in the likeness of the Divine, through his will, the child of the light.

His task is twofold: to awaken the will, to strengthen it by use and conquest, to make it absolute ruler within his body; and, parallel with this, to purify desire.

Knowledge and will are the tools for the accomplishment of this purification.

H.P.B., *Lucifer*, p. 97. V. 1. London, October 14th, 1887.

*"I oft have heard, but ne'er
believed till now,
There are, who can by potent spells
Bend to their crooked purpose Nature's laws."*

MILTON

In this month's "Correspondence" several letters testify to the strong impression produced on some minds by our last month's article "Practical Occultism." Such letters go far to prove and strengthen two logical conclusions.

(a) There are more well-educated and thoughtful men who believe in the existence of Occultism and Magic (the two differing vastly) than the modern materialist dreams of, and -

(b) That most of the believers (comprising many theosophists) have no definite idea of the nature of Occultism and confuse it with the Occult sciences in general, the "Black art" included.

Their representations of the powers it confers upon man, and of the means to be used to acquire them are as varied as they are fanciful. Some imagine that a master in the art, to show the way, is all that is needed to become a Zanoni. Others, that one has but to cross the Canal of Suez and go to India to bloom forth as a Roger Bacon or even a Count St. Germain. Many take for their ideal Margrave with his ever-renewing youth, and care little for the soul as the price paid for it. Not a few, mistaking "Witch-of-Endorism" pure and simple, for Occultism - "through the yawning Earth from Stygian gloom, call up the meagre ghost to walks of light," and want, on the strength of this feat, to be regarded as full blown Adepts. "Ceremonial Magic" according to the rules mockingly laid down by Éliphas Lévi, is another imagined *after-ego* of the philosophy of the Arhats of old. In short, the prisms through which Occultism appears, to those

innocent of the philosophy, are as multicoloured and varied as human fancy can make them.

Will these candidates to Wisdom and Power feel very indignant if told the plain truth? It is not only useful, but it has now become necessary to disabuse most of them and before it is too late. This truth may be said in a few words: There are not in the West half-a-dozen among the fervent hundreds who call themselves "Occultists," who have even an approximately correct idea of the nature of the Science they seek to master. With a few exceptions, they are all on the highway to Sorcery. Let them restore some order in the chaos that reigns in their minds, before they protest against this statement. Let them first learn the true relation in which the Occult Sciences stand to Occultism, and the difference between the two, and then feel wrathful if they still think themselves right. Meanwhile, let them learn that Occultism differs from Magic and other secret Sciences as the glorious sun does from a rush-light, as the immutable and immortal Spirit of Man reflection of the absolute, causeless and unknowable ALL - differs from the mortal clay - the human body.

In our highly civilized West, where modern languages have been formed, and words coined, in the wake of ideas and thoughts - as happened with every tongue - the more the latter became materialized in the cold atmosphere of Western selfishness and its incessant chase after the goods of this world, the less was there any need felt for the production of new terms to express that which was tacitly regarded as absolute and exploded "superstition." Such words could answer only to ideas which a cultured man was scarcely supposed to harbour in his mind. "Magic," a synonym for jugglery; "Sorcery," an equivalent for crass ignorance; and "Occultism," the sorry relic of

crack-brained, mediaval Fire-philosophers, of the Jacob Boehmes and the St. Martins, are expressions believed more than amply sufficient to cover the whole field of "thimble-rigging." They are terms of contempt, and used generally only in reference to the dross and residues of the dark ages and its preceding aons of paganism. There fore have we no terms in the English tongue to define and shade the difference between such abnormal powers, or the sciences that lead to the acquisition of them, with the nicety possible in the Eastern languages - pre-eminently the Sanskrit. What do the words "miracle" and "enchantment" (words identical in meaning after all, as both express the idea of producing wonderful things *by breaking the laws of nature* (!!)) as explained by the accepted authorities) convey to the minds of those who hear, or who pronounce them? A Christian - *breaking* "of the laws of nature," notwithstanding - while believing firmly in the *miracles*, because said to have been produced by God through Moses, will either scout the enchantments performed by Pharaoh's magicians, or attribute them to the devil. It is the latter whom our pious enemies connect with Occultism, while their impious foes, the infidels, laugh at Moses, Magicians, and Occultists, and would blush to give one serious thought to such "superstitions." This, because there is no term in existence to show the difference; no words to express the lights and shadows and draw the line of demarcation between the sublime and the true, the absurd and the ridiculous. The latter are the theological interpretations which teach the "breaking of the laws of Nature" by man, God, or devil; the former - the *scientific* "miracles" and enchantments of Moses and the Magicians *in accordance with natural laws*, both having been learned in all the Wisdom of the Sanctuaries, which were the "Royal Societies" of those days - and in true OCCULTISM. This last word is certainly misleading, translated

as it stands from the compound word *Gupta-Vidya*, "Secret Knowledge." But the knowledge of what? Some of the Sanskrit terms may help us.

There are four (out of the many other) names of the various kinds of Esoteric Knowledge or Sciences given, even in the esoteric Puranas. There is

- (1) *Yajna-Vidya*, (1) knowledge of the occult powers awakened in Nature by the performance of certain religious ceremonies and rites.
- (2) *Mahavidya*, the "great knowledge," the magic of the Kabalists and of the Tantrika worship, often Sorcery of the worst description.
- (3) *Gúhya-Vidya*, knowledge of the mystic powers residing in Sound (Ether), hence in the Mantras (chanted prayers or incantations) and depending on the rhythm and melody used; in other words a magical performance based on Knowledge of the Forces of Nature and their correlation; and
- (4) ATMA-VIDYA, a term which is translated simply "knowledge of the Soul," true *Wisdom* by the Orientalists, but which means far more.

This last is the only kind of Occultism that any theosophist who admires *Light on the Path*, and who would be wise and unselfish, ought to strive after. All the rest is some branch of the "Occult Sciences," *i.e.*, arts based on the knowledge of the ultimate essence of all things in the Kingdoms of Nature - such as minerals, plants and animals - hence of things pertaining to the realm of *material* nature, however invisible that essence may be, and howsoever much it has hitherto eluded the grasp of

Science. Alchemy, Astrology, Occult Physiology, Chiromancy, exist in Nature and the *exact* Sciences -perhaps so called, because they are found in this age of paradoxical philosophies the reverse - have already discovered not a few of the secrets of the above *arts*. But clairvoyance, symbolised in India as the "Eye of Śiva," called in Japan, "Infinite Vision," is *not* Hypnotism, the illegitimate son of Mesmerism, and is not to be acquired by such arts. All the others may be mastered and results obtained, whether good, bad or indifferent; but *Atma-Vidya* sets small value on them. It includes them all and may even use them occasionally, but it does so after purifying them of their dross, for beneficent purposes, and taking care to deprive them of every element of selfish motive. Let us explain: Any man or woman can set himself or herself to study one or all of the above specified "Occult Arts" without any great previous preparation, and even without adopting any too restraining mode of life. One could even dispense with any lofty standard of morality. In the last case, of course, ten to one the student would blossom into a very decent kind of sorcerer, and tumble down headlong into black magic. But what can this matter? The Voodoos and the Dugpas eat, drink and are merry over heca-tombs of victims of their infernal arts. And so do the amiable gentlemen vivisectionists and the *diploma-ed* "Hypnotizers" of the Faculties of Medicine; tube only difference between the two classes being that the Voodoos and Dugpas are *conscious*, and the Charcot-Richet crew *unconscious*, Sorcerers. Thus, since both have to reap the fruits of their labours and achievements in the black art, the Western practitioners should not have the punishment and reputation without the profits and enjoyments they may get therefrom. For we say it again, *hypnotism* and *vivisection* as practiced in such schools, are schools, are *Sorcery* pure and simple, *minus* a

knowledge that the Voodoos and Dugpas enjoy, and which no Charcot-Richet can procure for himself in fifty years of hard study and experimental observation. Let then those who will dabble in magic, whether they understand its nature or not, but who find the rules imposed upon students too hard, and who, therefore lay *Atma-Vidya* or Occultism aside - go without it. Let them become magicians by all means, even though they do become *Voodoos* and *Dugpas* for the next ten incarnations.

But the interest of our readers will probably centre on those who are invincibly attracted towards the "Occult," yet who neither realise the true nature of what they aspire towards, nor have they become passion-proof, far less truly unselfish.

How about these unfortunates, we shall be asked, who are thus rent in twain by conflicting forces? For it has been said too often to need repetition, and the fact itself is patent to any observer, that when once the desire for Occultism has really awakened in a man's heart, there remains for him no hope of peace, no place of rest and comfort in all the world. He is driven out into the wild and desolate spaces of life by an ever-gnawing unrest he cannot quell. His heart is too full of passion and selfish desire to permit him to pass the Golden Gate; he cannot find rest or peace in ordinary life. Must he then inevitably fall into sorcery and black magic, and through many incarnations heap up for himself a terrible Karma? Is there no other road for him?

Indeed there is, we answer. Let him aspire to no higher than he feels able to accomplish. Let him not take a burden upon himself too heavy for him to carry. Without ever becoming a "Mahatma," a Buddha or a Great Saint, let him study the philosophy and the "Science of Soul," and he can become one of the modest benefactors of humanity, without any superhuman powers. *Siddhis* (or the Arhat powers) are only for those who are able to

"lead the life," to comply with the terrible sacrifices required for such a training, and to comply with them *to the very letter*. Let them know at once and remember always, that *true Occultism or Theosophy* is the "Great Renunciation of SELF," unconditionally and absolutely, in thought as in action. It is ALTRUISM, and it throws him who practises it out of calculation of the ranks of the living altogether. "Not for himself, but for the world, he lives," as soon as he has pledged himself to the work. Much is forgiven during the first years of probation. But, no sooner is he "accepted" than his personality must disappear, and he has to become *a mere beneficent force in Nature*. There are two poles for him after that, two paths, and no midway place of rest. He has either to ascend laboriously, step by step, often through numerous incarnations and *no Devachanic break*, the golden ladder leading to Mahatmaship (the *Arhat* or *Bodhisattva* condition), or - he will let himself slide down the ladder at the first false step, and roll down into Dugpaship. ...

All this is either unknown or left out of sight altogether. Indeed, one who is able to follow the silent evolution of the preliminary aspirations of the candidates, often finds strange ideas quietly taking possession of their minds. There are those whose reasoning powers have been so distorted by foreign influences that they imagine that animal passions can be so sublimated and elevated that their fury, force, and fire can, so to speak, be turned inwards; that they can be stored and shut up in one's breast, until their energy is, not expanded, but turned toward higher and more holy purposes: namely, until *their collective and unexpanded strength enables their possessor to enter the true Sanctuary of the Soul* and stand therein in the presence of the Master - the HIGHER SELF! For this purpose they will not struggle with their passions nor slay them. They will simply, by a strong effort of will put down the fierce flames and keep them at

bay within their natures, allowing the fire to smoulder under a thin layer of ashes. They submit joyfully to the torture of the Spartan boy who allowed the fox to devour his entrails rather than part with it. Oh, poor blind visionaries!

As well hope that a band of drunken chimney-sweeps, hot and greasy from their work, may be shut up in a Sanctuary hung with pure white linen, and that instead of soiling and turning it by their presence into a heap of dirty shreds, they will become masters in and of the sacred recess, and finally emerge from it as immaculate as that recess. Why not imagine that a dozen of skunks imprisoned in the pure atmosphere of a *Dgon-pa* (a monastery) can issue out of it impregnated with all the perfumes of the incenses used? ... Strange aberration of the human mind. Can it be so? Let us argue.

The "Master" in the Sanctuary of our souls is "the Higher Self" - the divine spirit whose consciousness is based upon and derived solely (at any rate during the mortal life of the man in whom it is captive) from the Mind, which we have agreed to call the *Human Soul* (the "Spiritual Soul" being the vehicle of the Spirit). In its turn the former (the *personal* or human soul) is a compound in its highest form, of spiritual aspirations, volition, and divine love; and in its lower aspect, of animal desires and terrestrial passions imparted to it by its associations with its vehicle, the seat of all these. It thus stands as a link and a medium between the animal nature of man which its higher reason seeks to subdue, and his divine spiritual nature to which it gravitates, whenever it has the upper hand in its struggle with the *inner animal*. The latter is the instinctual "animal Soul" and is the hotbed of those passions, which, as just shown, are lulled instead of being killed, and locked up in their breasts by some imprudent enthusiasts. Do they still hope to turn thereby the

muddy stream of the animal sewer into the crystalline waters of life? And where, on what neutral ground can they be imprisoned so as not to affect man? The fierce passions of love and lust are still alive and they are allowed to still remain in the place of their birth - *that same animal soul*, for both the higher and the lower portions of the "Human Soul" or Mind reject such inmates, though they cannot avoid being tainted with them as neighbours. The "Higher Self" or Spirit is as unable to assimilate such feelings as water to get mixed with oil or unclean liquid tallow. It is thus the mind alone, the sole link and medium between the man of earth and the Higher Self - that is the only sufferer, and which is in the incessant danger of being dragged down by those passions that may be re-awakened at any moment, and perish in the abyss of matter. And how can it ever attune itself to the divine harmony of the highest Principle, when that harmony is destroyed by the mere presence, within the Sanctuary in preparation, of such animal passions? How can harmony prevail and conquer, when the soul is stained and distracted with the turmoil of passions and the terrestrial desires of the bodily senses, or even of the "Astral man"?

For this "Astral" - the shadowy "double" (in the animal as in man) is not the companion of the *divine* Ego but of the *earthly body*. It is the link between the personal SELF, the lower consciousness of Manas and the Body, and is the vehicle of *transitory, not of immortal life*. Like the shadow projected by man, it follows his movements and impulses slavishly and mechanically, and leans therefore to matter without ever ascending to Spirit. It is only when the power of the passions is dead altogether, and when they have been crushed and annihilated in the retort of an unflinching will; when not only all the lusts and longings of the flesh are dead, but also the recognition of the personal Self is killed out and the "astral" has been reduced in consequence to a

cipher, that the Union with the "Higher Self" can take place. Then when the "Astral" reflects only the conquered man, the still living but no more the longing, selfish personality, then the brilliant *Augoeides*, the divine SELF, can vibrate in conscious harmony with both the poles of the human Entity - the man of matter purified, and the ever pure Spiritual Soul - and stand in the presence of the MASTER SELF, the Christos of the mystic Gnostic, blended, merged into, and one with IT forever(2).

How then can it be thought possible for a man to enter the "straight gate" of occultism when his daily and hourly thoughts are bound up with worldly things, desires of possession and power, with lust, ambition and duties, which, however honourable, are still of the earth earthy? Even the love for wife and family - the purest as the most unselfish of human affections - is a barrier to *real* occultism. For whether we take as an example the holy love of a mother for her child, or that of a husband for his wife, even in these feelings, when analyzed to the very bottom, and thoroughly sifted, there is still selfishness in the first, and an *égoïsme à deux* in the second instance. What mother would not sacrifice without a moment's hesitation hundreds of thousands of lives for that of the child of her heart? and what lover or true husband would not break the happiness of every other man and woman around him to satisfy the desire of one whom he loves? This is but natural, we shall be told. Quite so; in the light of the code of human affections; less so, in that of divine universal love. For, while the heart is full of thoughts for a little group of *selves*, near and dear to us, how shall the rest of mankind fare in our souls? What percentage of love and care will there remain to bestow on the "great orphan"? And how shall the "still small voice" make itself heard in a soul entirely occupied with its own privileged tenants? What room is there left for the needs of Humanity *en bloc* to impress

themselves upon, or even receive a speedy response? And yet he who would profit by the wisdom of the universal mind, has to reach it through *the whole of Humanity* without distinction of race, complexion, religion or social status. It is *altruism*, not *ego-ism* even in its most legal and noble conception, that can lead the unit to merge its little Self in the Universal Selves. It is to these needs and to this work that the true disciple of true Occultism has to devote himself, if he would obtain *theo-sophy*, divine Wisdom and Knowledge.

The aspirant has to choose absolutely between the life of the world and the life of Occultism. It is useless and vain to endeavour to unite the two, for no one can serve two masters and satisfy both. No one can serve his body and the higher Soul, and do his family duty and his universal duty, without depriving either one or the other of its rights; for he will either lend his ear to the "still small voice" and fail to hear the cries of his little ones, or, he will listen but to the wants of the latter and remain deaf to the voice of Humanity. It would be a ceaseless, a maddening struggle for almost any married man, who would pursue *true practical Occultism*, instead of its *theoretical* philosophy. For he would find himself ever hesitating between the voice of the impersonal divine love of Humanity, and that of the personal, terrestrial love. And this could only lead him to fail in one or the other, or perhaps in both his duties. Worse than this. For, *whoever indulges after having pledged himself to OCCULTISM in the gratification of a terrestrial love or lust*, must feel an almost immediate result; that of being irresistibly dragged from the impersonal divine state down to the lower plane of matter. Sensual, or even mental self-gratification, involves the immediate loss of the powers of spiritual discernment; the voice of the MASTER can no longer be distinguished from that of one's passions *or even that of a Dugpa*; the right from wrong;

sound morality from mere casuistry. The Dead Sea fruit assumes the most glorious mystic appearance, only to turn to ashes on the lips, and to gall in the heart resulting in: -

Depth ever deepening,
darkness darkening still;
Folly for wisdom, guilt for innocence;
Anguish for rapture, and for hope despair.

And once being mistaken and having acted on their mistakes, most men shrink from realizing their error, and thus descend deeper and deeper into the mire. And, although it is the intention that decides primarily *white or black* magic is exercised, yet the results even of involuntary, unconscious sorcery cannot fail to be productive of bad Karma. Enough has been said to show that *sorcery is any kind of evil influence exercised upon other persons, who suffer, or make other persons suffer, in consequence*. Karma is a heavy stone splashed in the quiet waters of Life; and it must produce ever widening circles of ripples, carried wider and wider, almost *ad infinitum*. Such causes produced have to call forth effects, and these are evidenced in the just laws of Retribution.

Much of this may be avoided if people will only abstain from rushing into practices neither the nature nor importance of which they understand. No one is expected to carry a burden beyond his strength and powers. There are "natural-born magicians"; Mystics and Occultists by birth, and by right of direct inheritance from a series of incarnations and aons of suffering and failures. These are passion-proof, so to say. No fires of earthly origin can fan into a flame any of their senses or desires; no human voice can find response in their souls, except the great cry of Humanity. These only may be certain of success. But they can

be met only far and wide, and they pass through the narrow gates of Occultism because they carry no personal luggage of human transitory sentiments along with them. They have got rid of the feeling of the lower personality, paralyzed thereby the "astral" animal, and the golden, but narrow gate is thrown open before them. Not so with those who have to carry yet for several incarnations the burden of sins committed in previous lives, and even in their present existence. For such, unless they proceed with great caution, the golden gate of Wisdom may get transformed into the wide gate and the broad way "that leadeth unto destruction," and therefore "many be they that enter in thereby." This is the Gate of the Occult arts, practised for selfish motives and in the absence of the restraining and beneficent influence of ATMA-VIDYA. We are in the Kali-Yuga and its fatal influence is a thousand-fold more powerful in the West than it is in the East; hence the easy preys made by the Powers of the Age of Darkness in this cyclic struggle, and the many delusions under which the world is now labouring. One of these is the relative facility with which men fancy they can get at the "Gate" and cross the threshold of Occultism without any great sacrifice. It is the dream of most Theosophists, one inspired by desire for Power and personal selfishness, and it is not such feelings that can ever lead them to the coveted goal. For, as well said by one believed to have sacrificed himself for Humanity-"narrow is the gate and straightened the way that leadeth unto life" eternal, and therefore "few be they that find it." So straight indeed, that at the bare mention of some of the preliminary difficulties the affrighted Western candidates turn back and retreat with a shudder. ...

Let them stop here and attempt no more in their great weakness. For if, while turning their backs on the narrow gate, they are dragged by their desire for the Occult one step in the

direction of the broad and more inviting Gates of that golden mystery which glitters in the light of illusion, woe to them! It can lead only to Dugpa-ship, and they will be sure to find themselves very soon landed on that *Via Fatale* of the *Inferno*, over whose portal Dante read the words: -

Per me si va nella citta' dolente
Per me si va nell'eterno dolore
Per me si va tra la perduta gente. ...

[*Through me one goes into the city of sorrow
Through me one goes into eternal pain,
Through me one goes among the lost people.*]

(1)"The Yajna," say the *Brahmans*, "exists from eternity, for it proceeded forth from the Supreme One. ... in whom it lay dormant from 'no beginning.' It is the key to TRIVIDYA, the thrice sacred science contained in the Rig verses, which teaches the Yagus or sacrificial mysteries. The Yajna 'exists as an invisible thing at all times; it is like the latent power of electricity in an electrifying machine, requiring only the operation of a suitable apparatus in order to be elicited. It is supposed to extend from the *Ahavaniya* or sacrificial fire to the heavens, forming a bridge or ladder by means of which the sacrificer can communicate with the world of gods and spirits, and even ascend when alive to their abodes." - Martin Hauge's *Aitareya-Brahmanam*.

"This *Yajna* is again one of the forms of the Akaśa; and the mystic word calling it into existence and pronounced mentally by the initiated Priest is the *Lost Word* receiving impulse through WILL-POWER." (*Isis Unveiled*, Vol. I, Intr. See *Aitareya- Brahmanam*, Haug.)

(2) Those who would feel inclined to see three *Egos* in one man will show themselves unable to perceive the metaphysical meaning. Man is

a trinity composed of Body, Soul and Spirit; but *man* is nevertheless *one*, and is surely not his body. It is the latter which is the property, the transitory clothing of the man. The three "Egos" are MAN in his three aspects on the astral, intellectual or psychic, and the Spiritual planes, or states.

Bibliographical source:

Lucifer, Vol. II, May, 1888, pp. 173-181.

Magic

"Our Society believes in no miracle, diabolical or human, nor in anything which eludes the grasp of either philosophical and logical induction, or the syllogistic method of deduction."

H.P.B.

In *The Indian Tribune* of March 15th appears a letter upon the relations of the Theosophical Society with the Arya Samaj. The writer seems neither an enemy of our cause, nor hostile to the Society; therefore I will try in a gentle spirit to correct certain misapprehensions under which he labours.

As he signs himself "A Member," he must, therefore, be regarded by us as a *Brother*. And yet he seems moved by an unwarranted fear to a hasty repudiation of too close a connection between our Society and his Samaj, lest the fair name of the latter be compromised before the public by some strange notions of ours. He says:

I have been surprised to hear that the Society embraces people who believe in magic. Should this, however, be the belief of the Theosophical Society, I could only assure your readers that the Arya Samaj is not in common with them in this respect. ... Only as far as *Vedic learning* and *Vedic philosophy* is concerned, their objects may be said to be similar.

It is these very points I now mean to answer.

The gist of the whole question is as to the correct definition of the word "Magic," and understanding of what Vaidic "learning and philosophy" are. If by Magic is meant the popular superstitious belief in sorcery, witchcraft and ghosts in general; if it involves the admission that *supernatural* feats may be performed; if it requires faith in *miracles* - that is to say, phenomena outside natural law; then, on behalf of every Theosophist, whether a sceptic yet unconverted, a believer in and student of phenomena pure and simple, or even a modern Spiritualist so-called - *i.e.*, one who believes mediumistic phenomena to be necessarily caused by returning human Spirits - we emphatically repudiate the accusation.

We did not see *The Civil and Military Gazette*, which seems so well acquainted with our doctrines; but if it meant to accuse any Theosophists of any such belief, then, like many other *Gazettes* and *Reviews*, it talked of that which it knew nothing about.

Our Society believes in *no* miracle, diabolical or human, nor in anything which eludes the grasp of either philosophical and logical induction, or the syllogistic method of deduction. But if the corrupted and comparatively modern term of "Magic" is understood to mean the higher study and knowledge of Nature and deep research into her hidden powers - those Occult and mysterious laws which constitute the ultimate essence of every element - whether with the ancients we recognize but four or five, or with the moderns over sixty; or, again, if by Magic is meant that ancient study within the sanctuaries, known as the "worship of the Light," or divine and spiritual wisdom - as distinct from the worship of darkness or ignorance - which led the initiated High-priests of antiquity among the Aryans, Chaldaans, Medes and Egyptians to be called Maha, Magi or Maginsi, and by the Zoroastrians Meghistam (from the root Meh'ah, great,

learned, wise) - then, we Theosophists "plead guilty."

We do study that "Science of sciences," extolled by the Eclectics and Platonists of the Alexandrian Schools, and *practised* by the Theurgists and the Mystics of every age. If Magic gradually fell into disrepute, it was not because of its intrinsic worthlessness, but through misconception and ignorance of its primitive meaning, and especially the cunning policy of Christian theologians, who feared lest many of the phenomena produced by and *through* natural (though Occult) law should give the direct lie to, and thus cheapen, "Divine biblical miracle," and so forced the people to attribute every manifestation that they could not comprehend or explain to the direct agency of a personal devil. As well accuse the renowned Magi of old of having had no better knowledge of divine truth and the hidden powers and possibilities of physical law than their successors, the uneducated Parsi Mobeds, or the Hindu Maharajas of that shameless sect known as the Vallabhacaryas, both of whom yet derive their appellation from the Persian word Mog or Mag, and the Sanskrit Maha. More than one glorious truth has thus tumbled down through human ignorance from the sublime unto the ridiculous.

Plato, and even the sceptical Lucian, both recognized the high wisdom and profound learning of the Magi; and Cicero, speaking of those who inhabited Persia in his times, calls them "sapientium et doctorum genus majorum." And if so, we must evidently believe that these Magi or "magicians" were not such as London sees at a shilling a seat - nor yet certain fraudulent spiritual mediums. The Science of such Theurgists and Philosophers as Pythagoras, Plotinus, Porphyry, Proclus, Bruno, Paracelsus, and a host of other great men, has now fallen into disrepute. But had our Brother Theosophist, Thomas

Alva Edison, the inventor of the telephone and the phonograph, lived in the days of Galileo, he would have surely expiated on the rack or at the stake his sin of having found the means to fix on a soft surface of metal, and preserve for long years, the sounds of the human voice, for his talent would have been pronounced the gift of hell. And yet, such an abuse of brute power to suppress truth would not have changed a scientific discovery into a foolish and disreputable superstition.

But our friend "A Member," consenting to descend to our level in one point at least, admits himself that in "Vedic learning and philosophy" the Arya Samaj and the Theosophical Society are upon a common ground. Then, I have something to appeal to as an authority which will be better still than the so-much-derided Magic, Theurgy and Alchemy. It is the *Vedas* themselves, for "Magic" is brought into every line of the sacred books of the Aryans. Magic is indispensable for the comprehension of either of the six great schools of Aryan philosophy. And it is precisely to understand them, and thus enable ourselves to bring to light the hidden *summum bonum* [NE. *the greatest or supreme good*] of that mother of all Eastern Philosophies known as the *Vedas*, and the later Brahmanical literature, that we study it. Neglect this study, and we, in common with all Europe, would have to set Max Müller's interpretations of the *Vedas* far above those of Svamin Dyananda Saraswati, as given in his *Veda Bhashya*. And we would have to let the Anglo-German Sanskritist go uncontradicted, when he says that with the exception of the *Rik*, none other of the four sacred books is deserving of the name of *Veda*, especially the *Atharvaveda*, which is absurd, magical nonsense, composed of sacrificial formulas, charms and incantations (see his *Lecture on the Vedas*). This is, therefore, why, disregarding every misconception, we humbly beg to be allowed to follow the analytical method of such students and

practitioners of "Magic" as Kapila - mentioned in the *Śvetāśvatara Upanishad* as the Rishi nourished with knowledge by the God himself -

Patanjali, the great authority of the Yoga, Śankaracharya of theurgic memory, and even Zoroaster, who certainly learned his wisdom from the initiated Brahmans of Aryāvarta. And we do not see why, for that, we should be held up to the world's scorn, as either superstitious fools or hallucinated enthusiasts, by our own brother of the Arya-Samaj. I will say more. While the latter is, perhaps, in common with other "members" of the same Samaj, unable and perfectly helpless to defend Svamin Dyananda against the sophistry of such partial scoffers as a certain Pandit Mahesa Chandra Nyayaratna, of Calcutta, who would have us believe the *Veda Bhashya* a futile attempt at interpretation; we, Theosophists, do not shrink from assuming the burden. When the Svamin affirms that Agni and Ívara are identical, the Calcutta Pandit calls it "stuff." To him Agni means the coarse, visible fire, with which one melts his ghee and cooks his rice cakes. Apparently he does not know, as he might, if he had studied "Magic" - that is to say, had familiarized himself with the views about the divine Fire or Light, "whose external body is Flame," held by the mediaval Rosicrucians (the Fire-Philosophers) and all their initiated predecessors and successors - that the Vedic Agni is in fact and deed Ívara and nothing else. The Svamin makes no mistake when he says:

For Agni is all the deities and Vishnu is all the deities. For these two (divine) bodies, Agni and Vishnu, are the two ends of the sacrifice.

At one end of the ladder which stretches from heaven to earth is Ívara - Spirit, Supreme Being, subjective, invisible and incomprehensible; at the other his visible manifestation,

"sacrificial fire."

So well has this been comprehended by every religious Philosophy of antiquity that the enlightened Parsi worships not gross flame, but the divine Spirit within, of which it is the visible type; and even in the Jewish *Bible* there is the unapproachable Jehovah and his down-rushing fire which consumes the wood upon the altar and licks up the water in the trench about it (1 *Kings*, xviii. 38). There is also the visible manifestation of God in the burning bush of Moses, and the Holy Ghost, in the Gospels of the Christians, descending like tongues of flame upon the heads of the assembled disciples on the day of Pentecost. There is not an Esoteric Philosophy or rather Theosophy, which did not apprehend this deep spiritual idea, and each and all are traceable to the Vaidic sacred books. Says the author of *The Rosicrucians* in his chapter on "The Nature of Fire," and quoting R. Fludd, the mediaval Theosophist and Alchemist:

Wonder no longer then, if, in the religions of the Aryans, Medes and Zoroastrians, rejected so long as an idolatry, the ancient Persians and their masters, the Magi, concluding that they saw "All" in this supernaturally magnificent Element [fire] fell down and worshipped it; making of it the visible representation of the truest, but yet, in man's speculations, in his philosophies, nay, in his commonest reason, impossible God; God being everywhere and in us, and indeed us, in the God-lighted man, and impossible to be contemplated or known outside, being *All*.

This is the teaching of the mediaval Fire-Philosophers known as the Brothers of the Rosie-Cross, such as Paracelsus, Kunrath, Van Helmont, and that of all the Illuminati and Alchemists who succeeded these, and who claimed to have discovered the eternal Fire, or to have "found out God in the Immortal Light" -

that light whose radiance shone through the Yogis. The same author remarks of them:

Already, in their determined climbing unto the heights of thought, had these Titans of mind achieved, past the cosmical through the shadowy borders of the Real and Unreal, into Magic. For is Magic wholly false?

- he goes on to ask. No; certainly not, when by Magic is understood the higher study of divine, and yet not supernatural law, though the latter be, as yet, undiscovered by exact and materialistic phenomena, such as those which are believed in by nearly twenty millions of well-educated, often highly enlightened and learned persons in Europe and America. These are as real, and as well authenticated by the testimony of thousands of unimpeached witnesses, and as scientifically and mathematically proved as the latest discoveries of our Brother T. A. Edison. If the term "fool" is applicable to such men of Science and giants of intellect of the two hemispheres, as W. Crookes, F.R.S., Alfred Russel Wallace, the greatest Naturalist of Europe and a successful rival of Darwin, and as Flammarion, the French Astronomer, Member of the Academy of Sciences of France, and Professor Zöllner, the celebrated Leipzig Astronomer and Physicist, and Professor Hare, the great Chemist of America, and many another no less eminent Scientist, unquestioned authorities *upon any other question* but the so-called spiritual phenomena, and all firm Spiritualists themselves, often converted only after years of careful investigation - then, indeed, we Theosophists would not find ourselves in bad company, and would deem it an honour to be called "fools" were we even firm orthodox Spiritualists ourselves - *i.e.*, believers in perambulating ghosts and materialized bhutas - which we are not. But we are believers in the phenomena of

the Spiritualists (even if we do doubt their "spirits"), for we happen to know them to be actual facts. It is one thing to reject unproved theory, and quite another to battle against well-established facts. Everyone has a right to doubt, until further and stronger evidence, whether these modern phenomena which are inundating the Western countries, are *all* produced by disembodied "spirits" - for it happens to be hitherto a mere speculative doctrine raised up by enthusiasts; but no one is authorized - unless he can bring to contradict the fact, something better and weightier than the mere negations of sceptics - to deny that such phenomena do occur. If we Theosophists (and a very small minority of us), disclaim the agency of "spirits" in such manifestations, it is because we can prove in most instances to the Spiritualists, that many of their phenomena, whether of physical or psychological nature, can be reproduced by some of our Adepts at will, and without any aid of "spirits" or resort to either divine or diabolical miracle, but simply by developing the Occult powers of the man's *Inner Self* and studying the mysteries of Nature. That European and American sceptics should deny such interference by Spirits, and, as a consequence discredit the phenomena themselves, is no cause for wonder. Scarcely liberated from the clutches of the Church, whose terrible policy, barely a century ago, was to torture and put to death every person who either doubted biblical "divine" miracle, or endorsed one which theology declared diabolical, it is but the natural force of reaction which makes them revel in their new-found liberty of thought and action. One who denies the Supreme and the existence of his own Soul, is not likely to believe in either Spirits or phenomena, without abundant proof. But that Eastern people, Hindus especially, of any sect, should disbelieve, is indeed an anomaly, considering that they all are taught the transmigration of Souls, and spiritual as well as

physical evolution. The sixteenth chapter of the *Mahabharata*, *Harivanśa Parva*, is full of spiritual phenomena and the raising of Spirits. And if, ashamed of the now termed "superstitions" of their forefathers, young India turns, sunflower-like, but to the great luminaries of the West, this is what one of the most renowned men of Science of England, A. R. Wallace - a Fellow of the Royal as well as a member of the Theosophical Society - says of the phenomena in his *Contributions to the Theory of Natural Selection*, and *On Miracles and Modern Spiritualism*, thus confirming the belief of old India:

Up to the time when I first became acquainted with the facts of Spiritualism, I was a confirmed philosophical sceptic. I was so thorough and confirmed a Materialist, that I could not at that time find a place in my mind for the conception of spiritual existence, or for any other genesis in the universe than matter and force. Facts, however, "are stubborn things."

Having explained how he came to become a Spiritualist, he considers the spiritual theory and shows its compatibility with natural selection. Having, he says:

Been led, by a strict induction from facts, to a belief - firstly, in the existence of a number of preter-human intelligences of various grades; and secondly, that some of these intelligences, although usually invisible and intangible to us, can and do act on matter, and do influence our minds - I am surely following a strictly logical and scientific course, in seeing how far this doctrine will enable us to account for some of those residual phenomena which Natural Selection alone will not explain. In the tenth chapter of my *Contributions to the Theory of Natural Selection* I have pointed out what I consider to be some of these residual phenomena; and I have suggested that they may be due to the action of *some of the various intelligences above*

referred to. I maintained, and still maintain, that this view is one which is logically tenable, and is in no way inconsistent with a thorough acceptance of the grand doctrine of evolution through Natural Selection.

Would not one think he hears in the above the voices of Manu, Kapila and many other Philosophers of old India, in their teachings about the creation, evolution and growth of our planet and its living world of animal as well as human species? Does the great modern Scientist speak less of "Spirits" and spiritual beings than Manu, the antediluvian scientist and prehistoric legislator? Let young and sceptical India read and compare the old Aryan ideas with those of modern Mystics, Theosophists, Spiritualists, and a few great Scientists, and then laugh at the *superstitious* theories of both.

For four years we have been fighting out our great battle against tremendous odds. We have been abused and called traitors by the Spiritualists, for believing in other beings in the invisible world besides their departed Spirits; we were cursed and sentenced to eternal damnation, with free passports to hell, by the Christians and their clergy; ridiculed by sceptics, looked upon as audacious lunatics by society, and tabooed by the conservative press. We thought we had drunk to the dregs the bitter cup of gall. We had hoped that at least in India, the country *par excellence* of psychological and metaphysical Science, we would find firm ground for our weary feet. But lo! here comes a brother of ours who, without even taking the trouble to ascertain whether or not the rumours about us are true, in case we do believe in either Magic or Spiritualism - Well! We impose ourselves upon no one. For more than four years we lived and waxed in power if not in wisdom - which latter our humble deputation of Theosophists was sent to search for here, so that we might impart "Vaidic learning and philosophy" to the millions

of famished souls in the West, who are familiar with phenomena, but wrongly suffer themselves to be misled through their mistaken notions about ghosts and bhutas. But if we are to be repulsed at the outset by any considerable party of Arya Samajists, who share the views of "A Member," then will the Theosophical Society, with its 45,000 or so of Western Spiritualists, have to become again a distinct and independent body, and do as well as it can without a single "member" to enlighten it on the absurdity of Spiritualism and Magic.

H. P. BLAVATSKY,
Bombay, March, 1879.

Bibliographical source:

The Deccan Star, Bombay, March 30th, 1879.



Lodges of Magic I

"Occult truth cannot be absorbed by a mind that is filled with preconception, prejudice, or suspicion."

H.P.B.

"When fiction rises pleasing to the eye,
Men will believe, because they love the lie;
But Truth herself, if clouded with a frown,
Must have some solemn proofs to pass her down."

CHURCHILL.

ONE of the most esteemed of our friends in occult research, propounds the question of the formation of "working Lodges" of the Theosophical Society, for the development of adeptship. If the practical impossibility of forcing this process has been shown once, in the course of the theosophical movement, it has scores of times. It is hard to check one's natural impatience to tear aside the veil of the Temple. To gain the divine knowledge, like the prize in a classical tripos, by a system of coaching and cramming, is the ideal of the average beginner in occult study. The refusal of the originators of the Theosophical Society to encourage such false hopes, has led to the formation of bogus Brotherhoods of *Luxor* (and Armley Jail?) as speculations on human credulity. How enticing the bait for gudgeons in the following specimen prospectus, which a few years ago caught some of our most earnest friends and Theosophists.

"Students of the Occult Science, searchers after truth, and Theosophists who may have been disappointed in their expectations of Sublime Wisdom being freely dispensed by HINDU MAHATMAS, are cordially invited to send in their names to ..., when, if found suitable, they can be admitted, after a short probationary term, as Members of an Occult Brotherhood, who do not boast of their knowledge or attainments, but teach freely" (at £1 to £5 *per* letter?), "and without reserve" (the nastiest portions of P. B. Randolph's "Eulis", "all they find worthy to receive" (read: teachings on a commercial basis; the cash going to the teachers, and the extracts from Randolph and other "love-philter" sellers to the pupils!). (1)

If rumour be true, some of the English rural districts, especially Yorkshire, are overrun with fraudulent astrologers and fortune-tellers, who pretend to be Theosophists, the better to swindle a higher class of credulous patrons than their legitimate prey, the servant-maid and callow youth. If the "lodges of magic," suggested in the following letter to the Editors of this Magazine, were founded, without having taken the greatest precautions to admit only the best candidates to membership, we should see these vile exploitations of sacred names and things increase an hundredfold. And in this connection, and before giving place to our friend's letter, the senior Editor of *LUCIFER* begs to inform her friends that she has never had the remotest connection with the so-called "H (ermetic) B (rotherhood) of L(uxor)," and that all representations to the contrary are false and dishonest. There is a secret body - whose diploma, or Certificate of Membership, is held by Colonel Olcott alone among modern men of white blood - to which that name was given by the author of "Isis Unveiled" for convenience of designation, (2) but which is known among Initiates by quite another one, just as the personage known to the public under

the pseudonym of "Koot Hoomi," is called by a totally different name among his acquaintance. What the real name of that society is, it would puzzle the "Eulian" phallicists of the "H. B. of L." to tell. The real names of Master Adepts and Occult Schools are never, *under any circumstances*, revealed to the profane; and the names of the personages who have been talked about in connection with modern Theosophy, are in the possession only of the two chief founders of the Theosophical Society. And now, having said so much by way of preface, let us pass on to our correspondent's letter. He writes:

"A friend of mine, a natural mystic, had intended to form, with others, a Branch T.S. in his town. Surprised at his delay, I wrote to ask the reason. His reply was that he had heard that the T.S. only met and talked, and did nothing practical. I always did think the T.S. ought to have Lodges in which something practical should be done. Cagliostro understood well this craving of humans for something before their eyes, when he instituted the Egyptian Rite, and put it in practice in various Freemason lodges. There are many readers of *LUCIFER* in - shire. Perhaps in it there might be a suggestion for students to form such lodges for themselves, and to try, by their united wills, to develop certain powers in one of the number, and then through the whole of them in succession. I feel sure numbers would enter such lodges, and create a great interest for Theosophy."

"A."

In the above note of our venerable and learned friend is the echo of the voices of ninety-nine hundredths of the members of the Theosophical Society: one-hundredth only have the correct idea of the function and scope of our Branches. The glaring mistake generally made is in the conception of adeptship and the path

thereunto. Of all thinkable undertakings that of trying for adeptship is the most difficult. Instead of being obtainable within a few years or one lifetime, it exacts the unremitting struggles of a series of lives, save in cases so rare as to be hardly worth regarding as exceptions to the general rule. The records certainly show that a number of the most revered Indian adepts became so despite their births in the lowest, and seemingly most unlikely, castes. Yet it is well understood that they had been progressing in the upward direction throughout many previous incarnations, and, when they took birth for the last time, there was left but the merest trifle of spiritual evolution to be accomplished, before they became great living adepts. Of course, no one can say that one or all of the possible members of our friend A.'s ideal Cagliostroian lodge might not also be ready for adeptship, but the chance is not good enough to speculate upon: Western civilization seems to develop fighters rather than philosophers, military butchers rather than Buddhas. The plan "A." proposes would be far more likely to end in mediumship than adeptship. Two to one there would not be a member of the lodge who was chaste from boyhood and altogether untainted by the use of intoxicants. This is to say nothing of the candidates' freedom from the polluting effects of the evil influences of the average social environment. Among the indispensable pre-requisites for psychic development, noted in the mystical Manuals of all Eastern religious systems, are a pure place, pure diet, pure companionship, and a pure mind. Could "A." guarantee these? It is certainly desirable that there should be some school of instruction for members of our Society; and had the purely exoteric work and duties of the Founders been less absorbing, probably one such would have been established long ago. Yet not for practical instruction, on the plan of Cagliostro, which, by-the-by, brought direful suffering upon his head, and

has left no marked traces behind to encourage a repetition in our days. "When the pupil is ready, the teacher will be found waiting," says an Eastern maxim. The Masters do not have to hunt up recruits in special shire lodges, nor drill them through mystical non-commissioned officers: time and space are no barriers between them and the aspirant; where thought can pass they can come. Why did an old and learned Kabalist like "A." forget this fact? And let him also remember that the potential adept may exist in the White chapels and Five Points of Europe and America, as well as in the cleaner and more "cultured" quarters; that some poor ragged wretch, begging a crust, may be "whiter-souled" and more attractive to the adept than the average bishop in his robe, or a cultured citizen in his costly dress. For the extension of the theosophical movement, a useful channel for the irrigation of the dry fields of contemporary thought with the water of life, Branches are needed everywhere; not mere groups of passive sympathisers, such as the slumbering army of churchgoers, whose eyes are shut while the "devil" sweeps the field; no, not such. Active, wide-awake, earnest, unselfish Branches are Deeded, whose members shall not be constantly unmasking their selfishness by asking "What will it profit us to join the Theosophical Society, and how much will it harm us?" but be putting to themselves the question "Can we not do substantial good to mankind by working in this good cause with all our hearts, our minds, and our strength?" If "A." would only bring his - shire friends, who pretend to occult leanings, to view the question from this side, he would be doing them a real kindness. The Society can get on without them, but they cannot afford to let it do so. Is it profitable, moreover, to discuss the question of a Lodge receiving even theoretical instruction, until we can be sure that all the members will accept the teachings as coming from the

alleged source? Occult truth cannot be absorbed by a mind that is filled with preconception, prejudice, or suspicion. It is something to be perceived by the intuition rather than by the reason; being by nature spiritual, not material. Some are so constituted as to be incapable of acquiring knowledge by the exercise of the spiritual faculty; e.g. the great majority of physicists. Such are slow, if not wholly incapable of grasping the ultimate truths behind the phenomena of existence. There are many such in the Society; and the body of the discontented are recruited from their ranks. Such persons readily persuade themselves that later teachings, received from exactly the same source as earlier ones, are either false or have been tampered with by chelas, or even third parties. Suspicion and inharmony are the natural result, the psychic atmosphere, so to say, is thrown into confusion, and the reaction, even upon the stauncher students, is very harmful. Sometimes vanity blinds what was at first strong intuition, the mind is effectually closed against the admission of new truth, and the aspiring student is thrown back to the point where he began. Having jumped at some particular conclusion of his own without full study of the subject, and before the teaching had been fully expounded, his tendency, when proved wrong, is to listen only to the voice of his self-adulation, and cling to his views, whether right or wrong. The Lord Buddha particularly warned his hearers against forming beliefs upon tradition or authority, and before having thoroughly inquired into the subject.

An instance. We have been asked by a correspondent why he should not "be free to suspect some of the so-called 'precipitated' letters as being forgeries," giving as his reason for it that while some of them bear the stamp of (to him) undeniable genuineness, others seem from their contents and style, to be imitations. This is equivalent to saying that he has such an

unerring spiritual insight as to be able to detect the false from the true, though he has never met a Master, nor been given any key by which to test his alleged communications. The inevitable consequence of applying his untrained judgment in such cases, would be to make him as likely as not to declare false what was genuine, and genuine what was false. Thus what *criterion* has any one to decide between one "precipitated" letter, or another such letter? Who except their authors, or those whom they employ as their *amanuenses* (the *chelas* and disciples), can tell? For it is hardly one out of a hundred "occult" letters that is ever written by the hand of the Master, in whose name and on whose behalf they are sent, as the Masters have neither need nor leisure to write them; and that when a Master says, "I wrote that letter," it means only that every word in it was dictated by him and impressed under his direct supervision. Generally they make their chela, whether near or far away, write (or precipitate) them, by impressing upon his mind the ideas they wish expressed, and if necessary aiding him in the picture-printing process of precipitation. It depends entirely upon the *chela's* state of development, how accurately the ideas may be transmitted and the writing-model imitated. Thus the non-adept recipient is left in the dilemma of uncertainty, whether, if one letter is false, all may not be; for, as far as intrinsic evidence goes, all come from the same source, and all are brought by the same mysterious means. But there is another, and a far worse condition implied. For all that the recipient of "occult" letters can possibly know, and on the simple grounds of probability and common honesty, the unseen correspondent who would tolerate one *single fraudulent line in his name*, would wink at an unlimited repetition of the deception. And this leads directly to the following. All the so-called *occult* letters being supported by identical proofs, *they have all to stand or fall together*. If one is to

be doubted, then all have, and the series of letters in the "Occult World," "Esoteric Buddhism," etc., etc., may be, and there is no reason why they should not be in such a case - *frauds*, "clever impostures," and "forgeries," such as the ingenuous though stupid agent of the "S.P.R." [NE. Society for Psychical Research] has made them out to be, in order to raise in the public estimation the "scientific" acumen and standard of his "Principals."

Hence, not a step in advance would be made by a group of students given over to such an unimpressible state of mind, and without any guide *from the occult side* to open their eyes to the esoteric pitfalls. And where are such guides, so far, in our Society? "They be blind leaders of the blind," both falling into the ditch of vanity and self-sufficiency. The whole difficulty springs from the common tendency to draw conclusions from insufficient premises, and play the oracle before ridding oneself of that most stupefying of all psychic anesthetics - IGNORANCE.

(1) Documents on view at *LUCIFER* Office, viz., Secret MSS. written in the handwriting of - (name suppressed for past considerations), "Provincial Grand Master of the Northern Section." One of these documents bears the heading, "A brief Key to the Eulian Mysteries," *i.e.* Tantric black magic on a phallic basis. NO; the members of this Occult Brotherhood "do not boast of their knowledge." Very sensible on their part: least said soonest mended.

(2) In "Isis Unveiled," vol. ii, p. 308. It may be added that the "Brotherhood of Luxor" mentioned by Kenneth Mackenzie (*vide* his *Royal Masonic Cyclopaedia*) as having its seat in America, had, after all, nothing to do with the Brotherhood mentioned by, and known to us, as was ascertained after the publication of "Isis" from a letter written by this late Masonic author to a friend in New York. The Brotherhood Mackenzie knew of was simply a Masonic Society on a rather more

secret basis, and, as he stated in the letter, he had *heard of, but knew nothing of our* Brotherhood, which having had a branch at Luxor (Egypt), was thus purposely referred to by us under this name alone. This led some schemers to infer that there was a regular Lodge of Adepts of that name, and to assure some credulous friends and Theosophists that the "H. B. of L." was either identical or a branch Of the same, supposed to be near Lahore! - which was the most flagrant untruth.

Bibliographical source:

Lucifer, Vol. III, October, 1888, pp. 89-93.

Lodges of Magic II



"Esoteric philosophy, the occult hygiene of mind and body, the unlearning of false beliefs and the acquisition of true habits of thought, are more than sufficient for a student during his period of probation, and those who rashly pledge themselves in the expectation of acquiring forthwith "magic powers" will meet only with disappointment and certain failure.

H.P.B.

[A letter from A.E. [George William Russell], sent to *Lucifer*, comments by H.P.B.]

NOTHING that has yet appeared in your magazine has been so much in concord with my own humble views as your Editorial in the October Number on "Lodges of Magic".

"I am not a *proclaimed* Theosophist. I do not belong to the Society. For some reasons I am sorry, for many reasons I am glad. And one of the most cogent of the latter is the almost certain degeneracy of any Society or Sect formed by mortal hands. I mean no disrespect to the founders of the T. S. They were animated by the purest motives; inspired by the noblest resolves.

But, being human, they cannot control the admission of members. They cannot read the heart, nor know the mind. And, consequently, the T. S. is not representative of Theosophy, but

only of itself - a gathering of many earnest seekers after truth, many powerful intellects, many saints, and many sinners and lovers of curiosity.

If I have learned aright the lesson you have endeavored to teach, it is this. That development must be harmonious, and must be unconscious.

The danger which attends the *desire to know* is that the knowledge to be gained too often becomes the goal of our endeavours, instead of being the means whereby to become perfect. And by "perfect" I mean Union with the Absolute.

A young man, whose intellect is of the keenest, and with great power of assimilating and applying knowledge, is devoured by a desire to attain a lofty ideal. He feels there may be something beyond the facts of material science, beyond the anthropomorphic religions of the day.

Drifting into that mysterious current which is now flowing through the Century, he becomes attracted by Theosophy. For a while he studies it with avidity, strives to live "the life", to permeate himself with its teaching.

His intellect is satisfied for the time.

But, alas! he commits the fatal fault of forgetting that he has a soul. He does not, indeed, forget that *he* is immortal, but he neglects to feed his soul on Spiritual things.

His science becomes wider, he grasps the idea of universality - and generally becomes a rank pessimist.

But, through the above mentioned fault, Mystic Union with the Higher Self becomes more and more phantasmal. He recognizes its necessity, but postpones the ordeal.

"First let me prove the lower realms of Nature", he cries, and

plunges into the phenomena of spiritualism, table rapping, and the evocation of spooks. He declares that Knowledge is Power, and carries his assertion to no further issue. He is remonstrated with. He replies that it is necessary to test all experience, and construes that axiom into a law that Karma is to be molded and shaped by the conscious Ego. Carried to a logical conclusion, his rendering of the axiom would lead him into the lowest depths of vice to the hurt of his higher nature. He would seek in this transient incarnation to gratify every lust, passion and ideal of his personality. Whereas, surely the true meaning of the Law is that the Ego *must* of necessity taste of every experience in its progression up the Scale; *must* pass through every grade, ascend every step of the ladder.

It does not mean that when we know the good we must follow evil, nor that our higher must sometimes be actively degraded to the level of our lower self.

And so, step by step, it seems to me our neophyte wanders towards the broad path that leadeth to destruction. Confident that he is able to use the little knowledge he has gained, assured of his own powers, and disdainful of the terrors that lie in lurk for him, he goes on his way. His weapon is Self-Confidence and his armor Ignorance.

There is no turning back when once the path is trod, and the only hope is in his being vanquished in the *first* trial. Should he conquer his earliest foe, he will only meet a direr fate.

Now, is this Theosophy? If so, I will have none of it. I own I should like to see phenomena, to "call spirits from the vasty deep with success".

H.P.B.'s comment - It is not in the Theosophical Society that our correspondent can ever hope to evoke spooks or see any

physical phenomena. **End of comment.**

But I do not flatter myself that this longing is of a pure nature. If I did not sometimes wish to take a short cut to knowledge, I should not be a man *as we know him*. But I believe this desire after manifestation to be of the earth, earthy. With faith we can do all things, yet we should not desire **to do** all things, but simply to have the faith.

I recognise the essentiality of establishing the scientific basis of Theosophy, of studying it from all sides. I do not wish to be merely a metaphysical mystic. I am sadly afraid, however, that most of us followers of Theosophy are but just out of our swaddling clothes. We must have our toys and picture books.

My ideal is to worship the One God in spirit and in truth. Is that the aim of the T.S.?

H.P.B's comment - There is no Religion higher than Truth" is the motto of our Society. **End of comment.**

I have expressed myself to you, not with any wish to see my feeble endeavour in print, nor from any presumptuous thought that I have written anything new or authoritative. Much less have I written in any carping or judging spirit. I have no right or desire to criticise people better than myself, but I feel it on me to ask for an assurance that the T. S. as a whole is doing the work it is meant to do - not merely expanding the Intellect of the World, but also drawing the Soul of Humanity towards its Higher Self.

A. E. [George Russell]

P.S. - Is not the "Esoteric Section" of the T. S. likely to run counter to the views of your Editorial on Lodges of Magic? Who

is to ensure that the Esoteric Members are not only willing to, but **will** "abide by its rules"?

6th November, 1888.

A. E. [George William Russell]

H.P.B's comment - Our correspondent's question is a natural one - coming from a European. No, it does not run counter, because *it is not* a lodge of magic, but of training. For however often the true nature of the occult training has been stated and explained, few Western students seem to realize how searching and inexorable are the tests which a candidate must pass *before power* is entrusted to his hands. Esoteric philosophy, the occult hygiene of mind and body, the unlearning of false beliefs and the acquisition of true habits of thought, are more than sufficient for a student during his period of probation, and those who rashly pledge themselves in the expectation of acquiring forthwith "magic powers" will meet only with disappointment and certain failure.

Bibliographical source:

Lucifer, Vol. III, December 1888, pp 339-341.

What Shall We Do for Our Fellow Men?



"Real self-development on the esoteric lines is action. Inaction in a deed of mercy becomes an action in a deadly sin."

H.P.B.

[A letter from Hübbe Schleiden to *Lucifer*, comments by H.P.B.]

You have obliged my friends and myself by answering or annotating my letter to you in your number of July 15th. Will you allow us to continue this discussion? Several letters which I have received in consequence of this correspondence not only from Germany, but also from England,[1] make it appear likely that your readers on the other side of the Channel also take an interest in this all-important question. As the purport of my former communication has been misunderstood, I have now made this question the title of my present letter, in order to emphasize the point. My friends and I did not ask: Shall we do *anything* for our fellow-men or *nothing*? but: *What* shall we do for them?

You agree with us - as your note d to my last letter (p. 431) (1) unmistakably shows - that the ultimate Goal which the mystic or the occultist have to strive for, is not perfection IN existence (the "world") but *absolute being*: that is, we have to strive for deliverance FROM all existence in any of the three worlds or planes of existence. The difference of opinions, however, is this: Shall we now, nevertheless, assist all our fellow-men

indiscriminately in their *worldly* affairs; shall we occupy ourselves with their national and individual Karma, in order to help them to improve the "world" and to live happily *in* it; shall we strive with them to realize socialistic problems, to further science, arts and industries, to teach them cosmology, the evolution of man and of the universe, etc., etc., - or on the other hand, shall we only do the best we can to show our fellow-men the road of wisdom that will lead them out of the world and as straight as possible towards their acknowledged goal of absolute existence (*Paranirvana, Moksa, Atma*)? Shall we consequently only work for those who are willing to get rid of all individual existence and yearning to be delivered from all selfishness, from all strivings, who are longing only for eternal peace?

H.P.B.'s comment: - As the undersigned accepts for her views and walk in life no authority dead or living, no system of philosophy or religion but one - *namely, the esoteric teachings of ethics and philosophy of those she calls "MASTERS"* - answers have, therefore, to be given strictly in accordance with these teachings. My first reply then is: Nothing of that which is conducive to help man, collectively or individually, to live - not "happily" - but less *unhappily* in this world, ought to be indifferent to the Theosophist-Occultist. It is no concern of his whether his help benefits a man in his *worldly* or *spiritual* progress; his first duty is to be ever ready to help if he can, without stopping to philosophize. It is because our clerical and lay Pharisees too often offer a Christian dogmatic tract, instead of the simple bread of life to the wretches they meet - whether these are starving physically or morally - that pessimism, materialism and despair win with every day more ground in our age. Weal and woe, or happiness and misery, are relative terms. Each of us

finds them according to his or her predilections; one in worldly, the other in intellectual pursuits, and no one system will ever satisfy all. Hence, while one finds his pleasure and rest in family joys, another in "Socialism" and the third in a "longing only for eternal peace," there may be those who are starving for truth, in every department of the science of nature, and who consequently are yearning to learn the esoteric views about "cosmology the evolution of man and of the universe." - **End of comment.**

According to our opinion the latter course is the right one for a mystic; the former one we take to be a statement of our views. Your notes to my former letter are quite consistent with this view, for in your note *c* you say: "Paranirvana is reached only when the Manvantara has closed and during the 'night' of the universe or Pralaya." If the final aim of paranirvana *cannot* be attained individually, but only solidarity by the whole of the present humanity, it stands to reason, that in order to arrive at our consummation we have not only to do the best we can for the suppression of our own self, but we have to work first for the world-process to hurry all the worldly interests of Hottentots and the European vivisectors having sufficiently advanced to see their final goal of salvation are ready to join us in striving towards that deliverance

H.P.B.'s comment: - According to our opinion as there is no essential difference between a "mystic" and a "Theosophist-Esotericist" or Eastern Occultist, the above-cited course is not "the right one for a mystic." One, who while "yearning to be delivered from all selfishness" directs at the same time all his energies only to that portion of humanity which is of his own way of thinking, shows himself not only very *selfish*

but is guilty of prejudice and partiality. When saying that *Para*, or *Paranirvana* rather, is reached only at the Manvantaric close, I never meant to imply the "planetary" but the whole *Cosmic Manvantara*, i.e., at the end of "an age" of Brahma, not one "Day." For this is the only time when during the *universal* Pralaya mankind (i.e., not only the terrestrial *mankind* but that of every "man" or "*manu*-bearing" globe, star, sun or planet) will reach "solidarily" Paranirvana, and even then it will not be the whole mankind, but only those portions of the mankinds which will have made themselves ready for it. Our correspondent's remark about the "Hottentots" and "European vivisectors" seems to indicate to my surprise that my learned Brother has in his mind only our little unprogressed *Terrene* mankind? - **End of comment.**

You have the great advantage over us, that you speak with absolute certainty on all these points, in saying: "this is the esoteric doctrine," and "such is the teaching of my masters." We do not think that we have any such certain warrant for our belief; on the contrary, we want to learn, and are ready to receive, wisdom, wherever it may offer itself to us. We know of no authority or divine revelation; for, as far as we accept Vedantic or Buddhistic doctrines, we only do so because we have been convinced by the reasons given; or, where the reasons prove to be beyond our comprehension, but where our intuition tells us: this, nevertheless, is likely to be true, we try our best to make our understanding follow our intuition.

H.P.B.'s comment - I speak "with absolute certainty" only so far as my own *personal* belief is concerned. Those who have not the *same warrant* for their belief as I have, would be very credulous and foolish to accept it on blind faith. Nor does the

writer believe any more than her correspondent and his friends in any "authority" let alone "divine revelation"! Luckier in this than they are, I need not even rely in this as they do on my *intuition*, as there is no *infallible* intuition. But what I do believe in is:

- 1), the unbroken oral teachings revealed by living *divine* men during the infancy of mankind to the elect among men;
- (2), that it has reached us *unaltered*; and
- (3), that the MASTERS are thoroughly versed in the science based on such uninterrupted teaching. - **End of comment.**

In reference, therefore, to your note e.[1] it was not, nor is it, our intention "to inflict any criticism on you"; on the contrary we should never waste time with opposing anything we think wrong; we leave that to its own fate; but we try rather to get at positive information or arguments, wherever we think they may offer themselves. Moreover, we have never denied, nor shall we ever forget, that we owe you great and many thanks for your having originated the present movement and for having made popular many striking ideas hitherto foreign to European civilization. We should now feel further obliged to you, if you (or your masters) will give us some reasons, which could make it appear likely to us, why *parnirvana* could not be attained by any *jivá* at any time (a).

H.P.B.'s comment - (a). There is some confusion here. I never said that no *jivá* could attain Paranirvana, nor meant to infer that "the final goal can only be reached solidarily" by our present humanity. This is to attribute to me an ignorance to which I am not prepared to plead guilty, and in his turn my correspondent has misunderstood me. But as every system in India teaches several kinds of *pralayas* as also of Nirvanic or "Moksa" states,

Dr. Hübbe-Schleiden has evidently confused the *Prakritika* with the *Naimittika* Pralaya, of the Viśishtadvaita Vedantins. I even suspect that my esteemed correspondent has imbibed more of the teachings of this particular sect of the three Vedantic schools than he had bargained for; that his "Brahmin Guru" in short, of whom there are various legends coming to us from Germany, has coloured his pupil far more with the philosophy of Śrī Ramanujacharya, than with that of Śrī Śankaracharya. But this is a trifle connected with circumstances beyond his control and of a Karmic character. His aversion to "Cosmology" and other sciences including theogony, and as contrasted with "Ethics" pure and simple, dates also from the period he was taken in hand by the said learned guru. The latter expressed it personally to us, after his sudden *salto mortali* from esotericism - too difficult to comprehend and therefore to teach - to *ethics* which anyone who knows a Southern language or two of India, can impart by simply translating his texts from philosophical works with which the country abounds. The result of this is, that my esteemed friend and correspondent talks Viśishtadvaitism as unconsciously as M. Jourdain talked "prose," while believing he argues from the Mahayana and Vedantic standpoint - pure and simple. If otherwise, I place myself under correction. But how can a Vedantin speak of *Jivá* as though these were *separate* entities and independent of JIVATMA, the one universal soul! This is a purely Viśishtadvaita doctrine which asserts that Jivatman is different in each individual from that in another individual? He asks "why paranirvana could *not* be attained by any *jivá* at any time." We answer that if by "jivá" he means the "Higher Self" or the *divine ego* of man, only - then we say it may reach Nirvana, not Paranirvana, but even this, only when one becomes *Jivanmukta*, which does not mean "at any time." But if he understands by "Jivá" simply the *one life* which, the

Viśishtadvaitas say, is contained in every particle of matter, separating it from the *Śarira* or body that contains it, then, we do not understand at all what he means. For, we do not agree that Pára-Brahman only *pervades* every Jivá, as well as each particle of matter, but say that Pára-Brahman is inseparable from every Jivá, as from every particle of matter since it is the *absolute*, and that IT is in truth that Jivatman itself *crystallized* - for want of a better word. Before I answer his questions, therefore I must know whether he means by Paranirvana, the same as I do, and of which of the *Pralayas* he is talking. Is it of the *Prakritika* Maha Pralaya, which takes place every 311,040,000,000,000 years; or of the *Naimittika* Pralaya occurring after each *Brahma Kalpa* equal to 1,000 Maha Yugas, or which? Convincing reasons can be given then only when two disputants understand each other. I speak from the esoteric standpoint almost identical with the *Ádvaita* interpretation: Dr. Hübbe -Schleiden argues from that of - let him say *what* system, for, lacking omniscience, I cannot tell. - **End of comment.**

and why the final goal can only be reached solidarily by the whole of the humanity living at present. In order to further this discussion, I will state here some of the reasons which appear to speak against this view, and I will try to further elucidate some of the consequences of acting in accordance with each of these two views:

1. The unselfishness of the Altruist has a very different character according to which of the two views he takes. To begin with *our* view, the true Mystic who believes that he can attain deliverance from the world and from his individuality independent of the Karma of any other entities, or of the whole humanity, is an Altruist, because and so far as he is a monist,

that is to say, on account of the *fan twam asi*. Not the form or the individuality, but the *being* of all entities is the same and is his own; in proportion as he feels his own *avidya, ajnana* or unwisdom, so does he feel that of other entities, and has compassion with them on that account (*b*). To take now the other view: Is not the altruism of an

H.P.B.'s comment - (*b*). To feel "compassion" without an adequate practical result ensuing from it is not to show oneself an "Altruist" but the reverse. Real self-development on the esoteric lines is *action*. "Inaction in a deed of mercy becomes an action in a deadly sin." (*Vide* "The Two Paths" in *The Voice of the Silence*, p. 31.) - **End of comment**.

occultist who sees himself tied to the Karma of all his fellow-men, and who, on that account, labours for and with them, rather an egotistical one? For is not at the bottom of his "unselfishness" the knowledge that he cannot work out his own salvation at any lesser price? The escape from selfishness for such a man is self-sacrifice for the "world"; for the mystic, however, it is self-sacrifice to the eternal, to absolute being. Altruism is certainly considered one of the first requirements of any German Theosopher; we cannot or will not speak for others - but we are rather inclined to think that altruism had never been demanded in this country in the former sense (of self-sacrifice for the "world"), but only in the latter sense of self-sacrifice to the eternal (*c*).

H.P.B.'s comment - (*c*). An Occultist does not feel "himself tied to the Karma of all his fellow-men," no more than one man feels his legs motionless because of the paralysis of another man's legs. But this does not prevent the fact that the legs of both are

evolved from, and contain the same ultimate essence of the ONE LIFE. Therefore, there can be no *egotistical* feeling in his labours for the less favoured brother. Esoterically, there is no other way, means or method of sacrificing oneself "to the eternal" than by working and sacrificing oneself for the collective spirit of Life, embodied in, and (for us) represented in its highest divine aspect by Humanity alone.

Witness the *Nirmanakaya* - the sublime doctrine which no Orientalist understands to this day but which Dr. Hubbe-Schleiden can find in the 2nd and 3rd Treatises in *The Voice of the Silence*. Naught else shows forth the eternal; and in no other way than this can any mystic or occultist truly reach the eternal, whatever the Orientalists and the vocabularies of Buddhist terms may say, for the real meaning of the *Trikaya*, the triple power of Buddha's embodiment, and of Nirvana in its triple negative and positive definitions has ever escaped them.

If our correspondent believes that by calling himself "theosopher" in preference to "theosophist" he escapes thereby any idea of *sophistry* connected with his views, then he is mistaken. I say it in all sincerity, the opinions he expresses in his letters are in my humble judgment the very fruit of *sophistry*. If I have misunderstood him, I stand under correction. - **End of comment**.

2. It is a misunderstanding if you think in your note *e*, that we are advocating entire "withdrawal or isolation from the world." We do so as little as yourself, but only recommend an "ascetic life," as far as it is necessary to prepare anyone for those tasks imposed upon him by following the road of *final* deliverance from the world. But the consequence of your view seems to lead to joining the world in a *worldly* life, and until

good enough reasons are given for it, we do not approve of this conduct. That we should have to join our fellow-men in all their *worldly* interests and pursuits, in order to assist them and hasten them on to the solidary and common goal, is contrary to our intuition (a). To strive for the

H.P.B.'s comment - (a). It is difficult to find out how the view expressed in my last answer can lead to such an inference, or where I have advised my brother Theosophists to join men "in all their *worldly* interests and pursuits"! Useless to quote here again that which is said in note a, for everyone can turn to the passage and see that I have said nothing of the kind. For one precept I can give a dozen. "Not nakedness, not matted hair, not dirt, not fasting or lying on the earth ... not sitting motionless, can purify one who is full of doubt," says *Dhammapada* (verse 141). "Neither abstinence from fish or flesh, nor going naked, nor the shaving of the head, nor matted hair, etc., etc., will cleanse a man not free from delusions," says *Amagandha Sutta* (7, 11). This is what I meant. Between salvation through dirt and stench, like St. Labro and some Fakirs, and worldly life with an eye to every interest, there is a long way. Strict asceticism in the midst of the world, is more meritorious than avoiding those who do not think as we do, and thus losing an opportunity of showing them the truth. - **End of comment**.

deliverance *from* the world by furthering and favoring the world-process seems rather a round-about method. Our inclination leads us to retire from all *worldly* life, and to work apart - from a monastery or otherwise - together with and for all *those* fellow-men who are striving for the same goal of deliverance, and who are willing to rid themselves of all karma, their own as well as that of others. We would assist

also *all* those who have to remain in wordly life, but who are already looking forward to the same goal of release, and who join us in doing their best to attain this end. We make no secret of our aims or our striving; we lay our views and our reasons before *anyone* who will hear them, and we are ready to receive amongst us *anyone* who will *honestly* join us (b). Above all,

H.P.B.'s comment - (b). So do we. And if, not all of us live up to our highest ideal of wisdom, it is only because we are *men*, not gods, after all. But there is one thing, however, we never do (those in the esoteric circle, at any rate): *we set ourselves as examples to no men*, for we remember well that precept in *Amagandha Sutta* that says: "Self-praise, disparaging others, conceit, evil communications (denunciations), these constitute (moral) uncleanness"; and again, as in the *Dhammapada*, "The fault of others is easily perceived, but that of oneself is difficult to perceive; the faults of others one lays open as much as possible, but one's own fault one hides, as a cheat hides the bad die from the gambler." - **End of comment**.

however, we are doing our best to live up to our highest ideal of wisdom; and perhaps the good example may prove to be more useful to our fellow-men than any organized propaganda of teaching.

By the by, in your note you couple together *Schopenhauer* and *Eduard von Hartmann*. In this question, however, both are of opposite opinions. Schopenhauer, like most German mystics and theosophers, represents the views of Vedanta and (exoteric) Buddhism, that final salvation can, and can only, be individually attained independent of time and the karma of others. Hartmann, however, verges much more towards your

opinion, for he does not believe in *individual* consummation and deliverance from the world; he thinks all mysticism and particularly that which is now known as Indian philosophy, an error, and demands of everyone as an altruistic duty to give himself up to the world-process, and to do his best in order to hasten its end. (He is the "clever modern philosopher" whom I have mentioned on page 435) (c).

H.P.B's comment - (c). As I have never read von Hartmann, and know very little of Schopenhauer, nor do they interest me, I have permitted myself only to bring them forward as examples of the worst kind of pessimism; and you corroborate what I said, by what you state of Hartmann. If, however, as you say, Hartmann thinks "Indian philosophy an error," then he cannot be said to *verge* toward *my* opinion, as I hold quite a contrary view. India might return the compliment with interest. - **End of comment.**

3. There is, and can be, no doubt that Vedanta and (exoteric) Buddhism do not hold your view, but ours. Moreover, one could scarcely dispute that Lord Buddha - whatever esoteric doctrine he may have taught - founded monasteries, or that he favored and assisted in doing so. Whether he expected all his disciples to become Bodhisattvas may be doubtful, but he certainly pointed out the "happy life" of a Bhikshu as the road to salvation; he expressly abstained from teaching cosmology or any worldly science; he never meddled with the worldly affairs of men, but every assistance he rendered them was entirely restricted to showing them the road to deliverance from existence. And just the same with Vedanta. It prohibits any attachment to worldly views and interests, or enquiries after cosmology or evolution *a fortiori* socialism and any other

world-improvement. All this Vedanta calls *Ajnana* (Buddhism: *Āvidya*), while *Jnana* or wisdom - the only aim of a sage (*Jnani*) - is but the striving for the realization of the eternal (true reality, *Atma*) (a).

H.P.B's comment - It depends on what you call Vedanta - whether the Dwaita, or the Viśishtadvaita. That we differ from all these, is no news, and I have spoken of it repeatedly. Yet in the esotericism of the *Upanishads*, when correctly understood, and our esotericism, there will not be found much difference. Nor have I ever disputed any of the facts about Buddha as now brought forward; although these are facts from only his *exoteric* biography. Nor has he invented or drawn from his inner consciousness the philosophy he taught, but only the method of his rendering it. Buddhism being simply esoteric *Bodhism* taught before him secretly in the *arcana* of the Brahmanical temples, contains, of course, more than one doctrine of which the Lord Buddha never spoke of in public. But this shows in no way that he did not teach them to his Arhats. Again, between "attachment to worldly views or interests" and the study of Cosmology, which is *not* "a worldly science" however, there is an abyss. One pertains to religious and philosophical asceticism, the other is necessary for the study of *Occultism* - which is not Buddhistic, but universal. Without the study of cosmogony and theogony which teach the hidden value of every force in Nature and their direct correspondence to, and relation with, the forces in man (or the principles), no occult psycho-physics or *knowledge of man* as he truly is, is possible. No one is forced to study esoteric philosophy unless he likes it, nor has anyone ever confused Occultism with Buddhism or Vedantism. - **End of comment.**

Ajnani (misprinted in the July number page 436: *agnam*) signified just the same as what is rendered by "fool" in the English translations of the Dhammapada and the Suttas. It is never understood "intellectually" and certainly does not mean an *ignoramus*, on the contrary, the scientists are rather more likely to be *ajnanis* than any "uneducated" mystic. *Ajnani* expresses always a relative notion. **Jnani** is anyone who is striving for the self-realization of the eternal; a *perfect* jnani is only the **jivanmukta**, but anyone who is on the road of development to this end may be (relatively) called **jnani**, while anyone who is less advanced is comparatively an *ajnani*. As, however, every *jnani* sees the ultimate goal *above* himself, he will call himself an *ajnani*, until he has attained *jivanmukta*; moreover, no true mystic will ever call any fellow-man a "fool" in the intellectual sense of the word, for he lays very little stress on intellectuality. To him anyone is a "fool" only in so far as he cares for (worldly) existence and strives for anything else than wisdom, deliverance, paranirvana. And this turn of mind is entirely a question of the "will" of the individuality. The "will" of the *ajnani* is carrying him from spirit into matter (descending arch of the cycle), while the "will" of the *jnani* disentangles him from matter and makes him soar up towards "spirit" and out of all existence. This question of overcoming the "dead point" in the circle is by no means one of intellectuality; it is quite likely that a sister of mercy or a common labourer may have turned the corner while the Bacons, Goethes, Humboldts, etc., may yet linger on the descending side of existence tied down to it by their individual wants and desires (b).

H.P.B.'s comment - (b). *Ajnan*, instead of *ajnani* was of course a printer's mistake. With such every Journal and Magazine

abounds, in Germany, I suppose, as much as in England, and from which *LUCIFER* is no more free than the Sphinx. It is the printer's and the proof-reader's Karma. But it is a worse mistake, however, to translate *Ajnani* by "fool," all the Beals, Oldenbergs, Webers, and Hardys, to the contrary. Gnana (or, Jnana, rather) is Wisdom certainly, but even more, for it is the spiritual knowledge of things divine, unknown to all but those who attain it - and which saves the *Jivanmuktas* who have mastered both Karmayoga and Jnana yoga. Hence, if all those who have not jnana (or gnana) at their fingers' end, are to be considered "fools" this would mean that the whole world save a few Yogis is composed of fools, which would be *out-carlyeing* Carlyle in his opinion of his countrymen. Ajnana, in truth, means simply "ignorance of the *true* Wisdom," or literally, "Wisdomless" and not at all "fool." To explain that the word "fool" is "never understood intellectually" is to say nothing, or worse, an Irish bull, as, according to every etymological definition and dictionary, a *fool* is one who is *deficient in intellect*" and "destitute of reason." Therefore, while thanking the kind doctor for the trouble he has taken to explain so minutely the vexed Sanskrit term, I can do so only in the name of *LUCIFER'S* readers, not for myself, as I knew all he says, minus his risky new definition of "fool" and plus something else, probably as early as on the day when he made his first appearance into this world of *Maya*. No doubt, neither Bacon, Humboldt, nor even the great Haeckel himself, the "light of Germany," could ever be regarded as "jnanis"; but no more could any European I know of, however much he may have rid himself of all "individual wants and desires." - **End of comment.**

4. As we agree, that all existence, in fact, the whole world and the whole of its evolutionary process, its joys and evils, its

gods and its devils, are *Maya* (illusion) or erroneous conceptions of the true reality: how can it appear to us worthwhile to assist and to promote this process of misconception? (a)

H.P.B.'s comment: - (a). Precisely, because the term *maya*, just like that of "*ajnani*" in your own words - expresses only a relative notion. The world ... "its joys and evils, its gods and devils," and men to boot, are undeniably, when compared with that awful reality, *everlasting eternity*, no better than the productions and tricks of *maya*, illusion. But there the line of demarcation is drawn. So long as we are incapable of forming even an approximately correct conception of this *inconceivable* eternity, for us, who are just as much an illusion as anything else outside of that eternity, the sorrows and misery of that greatest of all illusions - human life in the universal *mahamaya* - for us, I say, such sorrows and miseries are a vivid and a very sad reality. A shadow from your body, dancing on the white wall, is a reality so long as it is there, for yourself and all who can see it; because a reality is just as relative as an illusion. And if one "illusion" does not help another "illusion" of the same kind to study and recognize the true nature of Self, then, I fear, very few of us will ever get out from the clutches of *maya*. - **End of comment.**

5. Like all world-existence, time and causality also **are** only **Maya** or - as Kant and Schopenhauer have proved beyond contradiction - are only our conditioned notions, *forms* of our intellection. Why then should any moment of time, or one of our own unreal forms of thought, be more favourable to the attainment of paranirvan? a than any other? To this paranirvana, Atma, or true reality, any manvantara is just as

unreal as any pralaya. And this is the same with regard to **causality**, as with respect to **time**, from whichever point of view you look at it. If from that of absolute reality, all causality and karma are unreal, and to realize this *unreality* is the secret of deliverance from it. But even if you look at it from the *ajnana* - view, that is to say, taking existence for a reality, there can never (in "time") be an end - nor can there have been a beginning - of causality. It makes, therefore, no difference whether any world is in pralaya or not; also Vedanta rightly says that during any pralaya the Karana-Śarira (causal body, *ajnana*) of Ívara and of all *jivás*, in fact, of all existence, is continuing (b). And how could this be otherwise? After the destruction

H.P.B.'s comment: - (b). This is again a *Viśishtadvaita* interpretation, which we do not accept in the esoteric school. We cannot say, as they do that while the gross bodies alone perish, the *sukshma* particles, which they consider uncreated and indestructible and the only real things, alone remain. Nor do we believe any Vedantin of the Śankaracharya School would agree in uttering such a heresy. For this amounts to saying that *Manomaya kóśa*, which corresponds to what we call *Manas*, mind, with its volitional feelings and even *Kama-rupá*, the vehicle of the *lower* manas, also survives during pralaya. See page 185 in *Five Years of Theosophy* and ponder over the three classifications of the human principles. Thence it follows that the *Karana-Śarira* (which means simply the *human Monad* collectively or the reincarnating ego), the "causal body," cannot continue; especially if, as you say, it is *ajnana*, ignorance or the *wisdomless* principle, and even agreeably with your definition "a fool." The idea alone of this "fool" surviving during any pralaya, is enough to make the hair of any Vedanta philosopher and even of

a full blown Jivanmukta, turn grey, and thrust him right back into an "ajnani" again. Surely as you formulate it, this must be a *lapsus calami*? [slip of the pen] And why should the *Karana-Śarira* of Íśvara let alone that of "all Jivás" (!) be necessary during *pralaya* for the evolution of another universe? Íśvara, whether as a personal god, or an *intelligent* independent principle, *per se*, every Buddhist whether esoteric or exoteric and orthodox, will reject; while some Vedantins would define him as ParaBrahmām *plus* MAYA only, *i.e.*, a conception valid enough during the reign of maya, but not otherwise. That which remains during *pralaya* is the eternal potentiality of every condition of *Pragna* (consciousness) contained in that plane or *field* of consciousness, which the *Ádvaita* calls *Chidakasan* and *Chinmatra* (abstract consciousness), which, being absolute, is therefore perfect *unconsciousness* - as a *true* Vedantin would say. - **End of comment.**

of any universe in *pralaya*, must not another appear? Before our present universe must there not have been an infinite number of other universes? How could this be, if the cause of existence did not last through any *pralaya* as well as through any *kalpa*? And if so, why should any *pralaya* be a more favorable moment for the attainment of paranirvan?a than any *manvantara*?

6. But if then one moment of time and one phase of causality were more favorable for this than any other: why should it just be *any* *pralaya* after a *manvantara*, not the end of the *maha-kalpa* or at least that of a *kalpa*. In any *kalpa* (of 4,320 millions of earthly years) there are 14 *manvantaras* and *pralayas* and in each *maha-kalpa* (of 311,040 milliards of earthly years) there are (36,000x 14) 504,000 *manvantaras* and *pralayas*. Why is this opportunity of paranirvana offered

just so often and not oftener, or not once only at the end of each universe. In other words, why can paranirvan?a only be obtained by spurts and in batches; why, if it cannot be attained by any individuality at its *own* time, why must one wait only for the whole of one's present fellow-humanity; why not also for all the animals, plants, amoebas and protoplasm, perhaps also for the minerals of our planet - and why not also for the entities on all the other stars of the universe? (a)

H.P.B's comment - (a). As Dr. Hubbe-Schleiden objects in the form of questions to statements and arguments that have never been formulated by me, I have nothing to say to this. - **End of comment.**

7. But, it appears, the difficulty lies somewhat deeper still. That which has to be overcome, in order to attain paranirvana, is the erroneous conception of separateness, the selfishness of individuality, the "thirst for existence" (*trishna, tanha*). It stands to reason, that this sense of individuality can only be overcome individually. How can this process be dependent on other individualities or anything else at all? Selfishness in the abstract which is the cause of all existence, in fact, **Ajnana** and **Maya**, can never be *all together* removed and extinguished. Ajnana is as endless as it is beginningless, and the number of jivás (atoms?) is absolutely infinite; if the jivás of a whole universe were to be extinguished in paranirvan?a, jivaship and ajnana would not be lessened by one atom. In fact, both are mere unreality and misconception. **Now**, why should just one batch of humanity have to unite, in order to get rid each of his own misconception of reality? (b)

H.P.B's comment - (b). Here again the only "unreality and

misconception" I can perceive are his own. I am glad to find my correspondent so learned, and having made such wonderful progress since I saw him last some three years ago, when still in the fullness of his *ajñana*; but I really cannot see what all his arguments refer to? - **End of comment.**

Summing up, I will now give three instances of the difference in which I think, a Mystic or (exoteric) Buddhist, Bhikshu or Arhat, on the one side, and an occultist or theosophist on the other, would act, if both are fully consistent with their views and principles. Both will certainly use any opportunity which offers itself to do good to their fellow-men; but the good which they will try to do, will be of a different kind.

Supposing they met a poor, starving wretch, with whom they share their only morsel of bread: the mystic will try to make the man understand that the body is only to be kept up, because that entity which lives in it has a certain spiritual destination, and that this destination is nothing less than getting rid of all existence, and, at the same time, of all wants and desires; that having to beg for one's food is no real hardship, but might give a happier life than that of rich people with all their imaginary worries and pretensions, that, in fact, the life of a destitute who is nothing and who *has* nothing in the world, is the "happy life" - as Buddha and Jesus have shown - when it is coupled with the right aspiration to the eternal, the only true and unchangeable reality, the divine peace. If the mystic finds that the man's heart is incapable of responding to any keynote of such true religiousness, he will leave him alone, hoping that, at some future time, he too will find out that all his worldly wants and desires are insatiable and unsatisfying, and that after all true and final happiness can only be found in striving for the eternal. - Not so the occultist. He will know that he himself *cannot* finally

realize the eternal, until every other human individuality has likewise gone through all the worldly aspirations and has been weaned from them. He will, therefore, try to assist this poor wretch first in his worldly affairs; he will perhaps teach him some trade or handicraft by which he can earn his daily bread, or he will plan with him some socialistic scheme for bettering the worldly position of the poor.

H.P.B comment - Here the "Mystic" acts precisely as a Theosophist or Occultist of the Eastern school would. It is extremely interesting to learn where Dr. Hübbe-Schleiden has studied "Occultists" of the type he is describing? If it is in Germany, then pitying the Occultist who *knows* "that he himself *cannot* finally realize the eternal" until every human soul has been weaned from "worldly aspiration" I would invite him to come to London where other Occultists who reside therein would teach him better. But then why not qualify the "Occultist" in such case and thus show his nationality? Our correspondent mentions with evident scorn "Socialism" in this letter, as often as he does "Cosmology?" We have but two English Socialists, so far, in the T. S., of which two every Theosophist ought to be proud and accept them as his exemplar in practical Buddha- and Christ-like charity and virtues. Such socialists - two active altruists full of unselfish love and charity and ready to work for all that suffers and needs help - are decidedly worth ten thousand Mystics and other *Theosophers*, whether German or English, who talk instead of acting and sermonize instead of teaching. But let us take note of our correspondent's second instance. - **End of comment.**

Secondly, supposing further the mystic and the occultist meet two women, the one of the "Martha" sort, the other of the "Mary"

character. The mystic will first remind both that everyone has, in the first instance, to do his or her duty conscientiously, be it a compulsory or a self-imposed duty. Whatever one has once undertaken and wherever he or she has contracted any obligation towards a fellow-being, this has to be fulfilled "up to the uttermost farthing." But, on the other hand, the mystic will, just for this very reason, warn them against creating for themselves new attachments to the world and worldly affairs more than they find absolutely unavoidable. He will again try to direct the whole of their attention to their final goal and kindle in them every spark of high and genuine aspiration to the eternal. - Not so the occultist. He may also say all that the mystic has said and which fully satisfies "Mary"; as "Martha," however, is not content with this and thinks the subject rather tedious and wearisome, he will have compassion with her worldliness and teach her some esoteric cosmology or speak to her of the possibilities of developing psychic powers and so on.

H.P.B. comment - Is the cat out of the bag at last? I am asked to "oblige" our correspondent by answering questions, and instead of clear statements, I find no better than transparent hints against the working methods of the T. S.! Those who go against "esoteric cosmology" and the development of psychic powers are not forced to study either. But I have heard these objections four years ago, and they too, were started by a certain "Guru" we are both acquainted with, when that learned "Mystic" had had enough of Chelaship and suddenly developed the ambition of becoming a Teacher. They are stale. - **End of comment.**

Thirdly, supposing our mystic and our occultist meet a sick man who applies to them for help. Both will certainly try to cure him

the best they can. At the same time, both will use this opportunity to turn their patient's mind to the eternal if they can; they will try to make him see that everything in the world is only the *just* effect of some cause, and that, as he is consciously suffering from his present illness, he himself *must* somewhere have consciously given the corresponding and adequate cause for this illness, either in his present or in any former life; that the only way of getting finally rid of all ills and evils is, not to create any more causes, but rather to abstain from all doing, to rid oneself of every avoidable want and desire, and in this way to lift oneself above all causality (karma). This, however, can only be achieved by putting good objects of aspiration into the place of the bad, the better object into that of the good, and the best into that of the better; directing, however, one's whole attention to our highest goal of consummation and living in the eternal as much as we can, this is the only mode of thought that will *finally* deliver us from the imperfections of existence.

If the patient cannot see the force of this train of argument or does not like it, the mystic will leave him to his own further development, and to some future opportunity which might bring the same man near him again, but in a more favorable state of mind.

Not so the occultist. He will consider it his duty to stick to this man to whose Karma, as to that of everyone else, he is irremediably and unavoidably bound; he will not abandon him until he has helped him on to such an advanced state of true spiritual development that he begins to see his final goal and to aspire to it "with all his heart, with all his soul, and with all his might." In the meantime, however, the occultist will try to prepare him for that by helping him to arrange his worldly life in a manner as favorable to such an aspiration as possible. He will make him see that vegetarian or rather fruit diet is the only food fully in

accordance with human nature; he will teach him the fundamental rules of esoteric hygienics; he will show him how to make the right use of vitality (mesmerism), and as he does not feel any aspiration for the nameless and formless eternal, he will meanwhile make him aspire for esoteric knowledge and for occult powers.

Now, will you do us the great favor to show us reasons *why* the mystic is wrong and the occultist right, or why paranirvana should not be attained by any individuality and at any time, when its own karma has been burnt by *jnana* in *samadhi*, and independent of the karma of any other individual or that of humanity.

Yours sincerely,
Hübbe -SCHLEIDEN.

Neuhaugen bei Munchen, September, 1889.

H.P.B.'s comment: - As no Occultist of my acquaintance would act in this supposed fashion no answer is possible. We theosophists, and especially your humble servant, are too occupied with our work to lose time at answering supposititious cases and fictions. When our prolific correspondent tells us *whom* he means under the name of the "Occultist" and *when* or *where* the latter has acted in that way, I will be at his service. Perhaps he means some Theosophist or rather member of the T.S. under this term? For I, at any rate, never met yet an "Occultist" of that description. As to the closing question I believe it was sufficiently answered in the earlier explanations of this reply.

Yours, as sincerely,
H. P. BLAVATSKY.

Editor's note:

[1] See *Lucifer*, 1889 v. 4 July p.430 - Correspondence - *World Improvement or World Deliverance*, Hübbe Schleiden.

Bibliographical source:

Lucifer, Vol. V, October, 1889, pp. 156-165.

Let Every Man Prove His Own Work



"The more thou dost advance, the more thy feet pitfalls will meet. The Path that leadeth on is lighted by one fire - the light of daring burning in the heart. The more one dares, the more he shall obtain."

H.P.B

H.P.B.'s comment - Such is the title of a letter received by the Editors of *LUCIFER*. It is of serious a nature that it seems well to make it the subject of this month's editorial. Considering the truths uttered in its few lines, its importance and the bearing it has upon the much obscured subject of Theosophy, and its visible agent or vehicle - the Society of that name - the letter is certainly worthy of the most considerate answer.

"Fiat Justitia, ruat caelum!"
[*May justice be done though the heavens fall.*]

Justice will be done to both sides in the dispute namely; Theosophists and the members of the Theosophical Society* on the one hand, and the followers of the *Divine Word* (or Christos), and the so-called Christians, on the other.

Not all the members of the Theosophical Society are Theosophists; nor are the members of the so-called Christian Churches all Christians, by any means. True Theosophists, as true Christians are very, very few; and there are practical

Theosophists in the fold of Christianity, as there are practical Christians in the Theosophical Society, outside all ritualistic Christianity. "Not every one that saith unto me, "Lord, Lord", shall enter the kingdom of Heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven" (Matthew, vii, 21.) "Believe not in ME, but in the truths I utter." (Buddha's *Aphorisms*). - **End of comment.**

We reproduce the letter:

"To the Editors of Lucifer.

"What a grand chance is now open in this country, to the exponents of a noble and advanced religion (if such this Theosophy be**) for proving its strength, righteousness and verity to the Western world, by trowing a penetrating and illuminating ray of its declared light upon the terrible harrowing and perplexing practical problems of our age.

H.P.B's comment - "This" Theosophy is not a religion, but rather *the* RELIGION - if one. So far, we prefer to call it a philosophy; one, moreover, which contains every religion, as it is the essence and the foundation of all. Rule III of the Theos. Body says: "The Society represents no particular religious creed, is entirely *unsectarian*, and includes professors of all faiths". - **End of comment.**

"Surely one of the purest and least self-incrusted duties of man, is to alleviate the sufferings of his fellow man?

"From what I read, and from what I daily come into immediate contact with, I can hardly think it would be possible to over-rate in contemplation, the intense privation and agonizing suffering

that is - *aye, say it - at this moment* being endured by a vast proportion of our brothers and sisters, arising in a large measure from their not absolutely having the means for procuring the *bare necessities of existence?*

"Surely a high and Heaven-born religion - a religion professing to receive its advanced knowledge and Light from 'those more learned in the Science of Life,' should be able to tell us something of how to deal with such life, in its primitive condition of helpless submission to the surrounding circumstances of - civilization!

"If one of our main duties is that of exercising disinterested love towards the Brotherhood, surely 'those more learned' ones, whether in the flesh, or out of it, can and will, if appealed to by their votaries, aid them in discovering ways and means for such an end, and in organising some great fraternal scheme for dealing *rightly* with questions which are so appalling in their complexity, and which must and do press with such irresistible force upon all those who are earnest in their endeavours to carry out the will of Christ in a Christian Land?

L. F. FF
October 25, 1887."

H.P.B's comment - This honest-spoken and sincere letter contains two statements; an implied accusation against "Theosophy" (*i.e.*, the Society of that name), and a virtual admission that Christianity - or, again, rather its ritualistic and dogmatic religions - deserve the same and even a sterner rebuke. For if "Theosophy", represented by its professors, merits on external appearance the reproach that so far it has failed to transfer divine wisdom from the region of the metaphysical into that of practical work, "Christianity," that is,

merely professing Christians, churchmen and laymen lie under a like accusation, evidently. "Theosophy" has, certainly, failed to discover *infallible* ways and means of bringing all its votaries to exercise "disinterested love" in their Brotherhood; it has not yet been able to relieve suffering in mankind at large; but neither has Christianity. And not even the writer of the above letter, nor any one else, can show sufficient excuse for the Christians in this respect. Thus the admission that "those who are earnest in their endeavours to carry out the will of Christ in a Christian Land" *need the help of* 'those more learned,' whether (pagan adepts) in the flesh, or (spirits?) out of it" is very suggestive, for it contains the defence and the *raison d'être* [reason for existence] of the Theosophical Society. Tacit though it is, once that it comes from the pen of a sincere Christian, one who longs to learn some practical means to relieve the sufferings of the starving multitudes - this admission becomes the greatest and most complete justification for the existence of the Theosophical Brotherhood; a full confession of the absolute necessity for such a body independent of, and untrammelled by, any enchaining dogmas, and it points out at the same time the signal failure of Christianity to accomplish the desired results.

Truly said Coleridge that "good works may exist *without* saving (?) principles, therefore cannot contain in themselves the principles of salvation; but saving principles never did, never can exist without good works". Theosophists admit the definition, and disagree with the Christians only as to the nature of these "saving principles". The Church (or churches) maintain that the only saving principle is belief in Jesus, or the carnalized Christ of the soul-killing dogma; theosophy, undogmatic and unsectarian, answers, it is not so. The only *saving* principle dwells in man himself, and has never dwelt outside of his immortal divine self; *i.e.*, it is the true Christos, as it is the true Buddha, the divine

inward light which proceeds from the eternal unmanifesting unknown ALL. And this light *can only be made known by its works - faith* in it having to remain ever blind in all, save in the man himself who feels that light within his soul.

Therefore, the tacit admission of the author of the above letter covers another point of great importance. The writer seems to have felt that which many, among those who strive to help the suffering, have felt and expressed. The creeds of the churches fail to supply the *intellectual* light, and the true wisdom which are needed to make the practical philanthropy carried out, by the true and earnest followers of Christ, a *reality*. The "practical" people either go on "doing good" unintelligently, and thus often do harm instead; or, appalled by the awful problem before them, and failing to find in their "churches" any clue, or a hope of solution, they retire from the battlefield and let themselves be drifted blindly by the current in which they happen to be born.

Of late it has become the fashion for friends, as well as for foes, to reproach the Theosophical Society with doing no practical work, but losing itself in the clouds of metaphysics.

Metaphysicians, we are told, by those who like to repeat stale arguments, have been learning their lesson for the last few thousand years; and it is now high time that they should begin to do some practical work. Agreed; but considering that the Christian churches count nearly nineteen centuries of existence, and that the Theosophical Society and Brotherhood is a body hardly twelve years old; considering again that the Christian churches roll in fabulous wealth, and number their adherents by hundreds of millions, whereas the Theosophical Brotherhood is but a few thousand strong, and that it has no fund, or funds, at its disposal, but that 98 per cent. of its members are as poor and as uninfluential as the aristocracy of the Christian church is

rich and powerful; taking all this into consideration, there would be much to say if the theosophists would only choose to press the matter upon the public notice. Meanwhile, as the bitterest critics of the "leaders" of the Theosophical Society are by no means only outsiders, but as there are members of that society who always find a pretext to be dissatisfied, we ask: Can works of charity that will be known among men be accomplished without money? Certainly not. And yet, notwithstanding all this, none of its (European) members, except a few devoted officers in charge of societies, will do *practical* work; but some of them, those especially who have never lifted a finger to relieve suffering, and help their outside, poorer brothers, are those who talk the most loudly, and are the bitterest in their denunciations of the *unspirituality* and the unfitness of the "leaders of theosophy." By this they remove themselves into the outer ring of critics, like those spectators at the play who laugh at an actor passably representing Hamlet, while they themselves could not walk on to the stage with a letter on a salver. While in India, comparatively poor theosophists have opened gratuitous dispensaries for the sick, hospitals, schools, and everything they could think of, asking no returns from the poor, as the missionaries do, no abandonment of one's forefathers' religion, as a heavy price for favours received, have the English theosophists, as a rule, done a single thing for those suffering multitudes, whose pitiful cry rings throughout the whole Heavens as a protest against the actual state of things in Christendom?

We take this opportunity of saying, in reply to others as much as to our correspondent, that, up till now, the energies of the Society have been chiefly occupied in organizing, extending, and solidifying the Society itself, which work has taxed its time, energies, and resources to such an extent as to leave it far less powerful for practical charity than we would have wished. But,

even so, compared with the influence and the funds at the disposal of the Society, its work in practical charity, if less widely known, will certainly bear favourable comparison with that of professing Christians, with their enormous resources in money, workers, and opportunities of all kinds. It must not be forgotten that practical charity is not one of the *declared objects* of the Society. It goes without saying, and needs no "declaration", that every member of the Society must be practically philanthropic if he be a theosophist at all; and our declared work is, in reality, more important and more efficacious than work in the every-day plane which bears more evident and immediate fruit, for the direct effect of an appreciation of theosophy is to make those charitable who were not so before. Theosophy creates the charity which afterwards, and of its own accord, makes itself manifest in works.

Theosophy is correctly - though in this particular case, it is rather ironically - termed "a High and Heaven-born religion". It is argued that since it professes to receive its advanced knowledge and Light from "those more learned in the Science of Life," the latter ought and *must*, if appealed to by their votaries (the theosophists), aid them in discovering ways and means, in organizing some great fraternal scheme", etc.

The scheme was planned, and the rules and laws to guide such a practical brotherhood, have been given by "those more learned in the Science of (practical, daily, *altruistic*) life;" aye, verily "more learned" in it than any other men since the days of Gautama Buddha and the Gnostic Essenes. The "scheme" dates back to the year when the Theosophical Society was founded. Let anyone read its wise and noble laws embodied to this day in the Statutes of the Fraternity, and judge for himself whether, if carried out rigorously and applied to practical life, the

"scheme" would not have proved the most beneficent to mankind in general, and especially to our poorer brethren, of "the starving multitudes." Theosophy teaches the spirit of "non-separateness", the evanescence and illusion of human creeds and dogma, hence, inculcates *universal love and charity for all mankind "without distinction of race, colour, caste or creed,"* is it not therefore the fittest to alleviate the sufferings of mankind? No true theosophist would refuse admission into a hospital, or any charitable establishment, to any man, woman or child, under the pretext that he is *not* a theosophist, as a Roman Catholic would when dealing with a Protestant, and *vice versa*. No true theosophist of the original rules would fail to put into practice the parable of the "Good Samaritan" or proffer help only to entice the unwary who, he hopes, will become a pervert from his god and the gods of his forefathers. None would slander his brother, none let a needy man go unhelped, none offer fine talk instead of practical love and charity.

Is it then the fault of Theosophy, any more than it is the fault of the Christ-teachings, if the majority of the members of the Theosophical Society, often changing their philosophical and religious views upon entering our Body, have yet remained practically the same as they were when professing *lip* Christianity? Our laws and rules are the same as given to us from the beginning; it is the general members of the Society who have allowed them to become virtually obsolete. Those few who are ever ready to sacrifice their time and labour to work for the poor, and who do, unrecognized and unthanked for it, good work wherever they can, are often too poor themselves to put their larger schemes of charity into objective practical form, however willing they may be.

"The fault I find with the Theosophical Society," said one of the

most eminent surgeons in London to one of the editors, quite recently, "is that I cannot discover that any of its members really lead the Christ-life." This seemed a very serious accusation from a man who is not only in the front rank of his profession, and valued for his kindly nature, by his patients, and by society, and well-known as a quiet doer of many good deeds. The only possible answer to be made was that the Christ-life is undeniably the ideal of every one worthy in any sense of the name of a Theosophist, and that if it is not lived it is because there are none strong enough to carry it out. Only a few days later the same complaint was put in a more graphic form by a celebrated lady-artist.

"You Theosophists don't do enough good for me," she said pithily. And in her case also there is the right to speak, given by the fact that she leads two lives - one, a butterfly existence in society, and the other a serious one, which makes little noise, but has much purpose. Those who regard life as a great vocation, like the two critics of the Theosophical movement whom we have just quoted, have a right to demand of such a movement more than mere words. They themselves endeavour very quietly to lead the "Christ-life," and they cannot understand a number of people uniting in the effort towards this life without practical results being apparent. Another critic of the same character who has the best possible right to criticise, being a thoroughly practical philanthropist and charitable to the last degree, has said of the Theosophists that their much talking and writing seems to resolve itself into mere intellectual luxury, productive of no direct good to the world.

The point of difference between the Theosophists (when we use this term we mean, not members of the Society, but people who are really using the organization as a method of learning more of

the true wisdom-religion which exists as a vital and eternal fact behind all such efforts) and the practical philanthropists, religious or secular, is a very serious one, and the answer, that probably none of them are strong enough yet to lead the "Christ-life," is only a portion of the truth. The situation can be put very plainly, in so many words. The religious philanthropist holds a position of his own, which cannot in any way concern or affect the Theosophist. He does not do good merely for the sake of doing good, but also as a means towards his own salvation. This is the outcome of the selfish and personal side of man's nature, which has so coloured and affected a grand religion that its devotees are little better than the idol-worshippers who ask their deity of clay to bring them luck in business, and the payment of debts. The religious philanthropist who hopes to gain salvation by good works has simply, to quote a well-worn yet ever fresh witticism, exchanged worldliness for other-worldliness.

The secular philanthropist is really at heart a socialist, and nothing else; he hopes to make men happy and good by bettering their physical position. No serious student of human nature can believe in this theory for a moment. There is no doubt that it is a very agreeable one, because if it is accepted there is immediate, straightforward work to undertake. "The poor ye have always with you." The causation which produced human nature itself produced poverty, misery, pain, degradation, at the same time that it produced wealth, and comfort, and joy and glory. Lifelong philanthropists, who have started on the work with a joyous youthful conviction that it is possible to "do good", have, though never relaxing the habit of charity, confessed to the present writer that, as a matter of fact, misery cannot be relieved. It is a vital element in human nature, and is as necessary to some lives as pleasure is to others. It is a strange

thing to observe how practical philanthropists will eventually, after long and bitter experience, arrive at a conclusion which, to an occultist, is from the first a working hypothesis. This is, that misery is not only endurable, but agreeable to many who endure it. A noble woman, whose life has been given to the rescue of the lowest class of wretched girls, those who seem to be driven to vice by want, said, only a few days since, that with many of these outcasts it is not possible to raise them to any apparently happier lot. And this she distinctly stated (and she can speak with authority, having spent her life literally among them, and studied them thoroughly,) is not so much from any love of vice, but from love of that very state which the wealthy classes call misery. They prefer the savage life of a bare-foot, half-clad creature, with no roof at night and no food by day, to any comforts which can be offered them. By comforts, we do not mean the workhouse or the reformatory, but the comforts of a quiet home; and we can give chapter and verse, so to speak, to show that this is the case, not merely with the children of outcasts, who might be supposed to have a savage heredity, but with the children of gentle, cultivated, and Christian people.

Our great towns hide in their slums thousands of beings whose history would form an inexplicable enigma, a perfectly baffling moral picture, could they be written out clearly, so as to be intelligible. But they are only known to the devoted workers among the outcast classes, to whom they become a sad and terrible puzzle, not to be solved, and therefore, better not discussed. Those who have no clue to the science of life are compelled to dismiss such difficulties in this manner, otherwise they would fall, crushed beneath the thought of them. The social question as it is called, the great deep waters of misery, the deadly apathy of those who have power and possessions - these things are hard]y to be faced by a generous soul who has

not reached to the great idea of evolution, and who has not guessed at the marvellous mystery of human development.

The Theosophist is placed in a different position from any of these persons, because he has heard of the vast scope of life with which all mystic and occult writers and teachers deal, and he has been brought very near to the great mystery. Indeed, none, though they may have enrolled themselves as Fellows of the Society, can be called in any serious sense Theosophists, until they have begun to consciously taste in their own persons, this same mystery, which is, indeed, a law inexorable, by which man lifts himself by degrees from the state of a beast to the glory of a God. The rapidity with which this is done is different with every living soul; and the wretches who hug the primitive task-master, *misery*, choose to go slowly through a tread-mill course which may give them innumerable lives of physical sensation - whether pleasant or painful, well-beloved because tangible to the very lowest senses. The Theosophist who desires to enter upon occultism takes some of Nature's privileges into his own hands by that very wish, and soon discovers that experiences come to him with double-quick rapidity. His business is then to recognise that he is under a - to him - new and swifter law of development, and to snatch at the lessons that come to him.

But, in recognizing this, he also makes another discovery. He sees that it takes a very wise man to do good works without danger of doing incalculable harm. A highly developed adept in life may grasp the nettle, and by his great intuitive powers, know whom to relieve from pain and whom to leave in the mire that is their best teacher. The poor and wretched themselves will tell anyone who is able to win their confidence that disastrous mistakes are made by those who come from a different class and endeavour to help them. Kindness and gentle treatment will

sometimes bring out the worst qualities of a man or woman who has led a fairly presentable life when kept down by pain and despair. May the Master of Mercy forgive us for saying such words of any human creatures, all of whom are a part of ourselves, according to the law of human brotherhood which no disowning of it can destroy. But the words are true. None of us know the darkness which lurks in the depths of our own natures until some strange and unfamiliar experience rouses the whole being into action. So with these others who seem more miserable than ourselves.

As soon as he begins to understand what a friend and teacher pain can be, the Theosophist stands appalled before the mysterious problem of human life, and though he may long to do good works, equally dreads to do them wrongly until he has himself acquired greater power and knowledge. The ignorant doing of good works may be vitally injurious, as all but those who are blind in their love of benevolence are compelled to acknowledge. In this sense the answer made as to lack of Christ-like lives among Theosophists, that there are probably none strong enough to live such, is perfectly correct and covers the whole question. For it is not the spirit of self-sacrifice, or of devotion, or of desire to help that is lacking, but the strength to acquire knowledge and power and intuition, so that the deeds done shall really be worthy of the "Buddha-Christ" spirit.

Therefore it is that Theosophists cannot pose as a body of philanthropists, though secretly they may adventure on the path of good works. They profess to be a body of learners merely, pledged to help each other and all the rest of humanity, so far as in them lies, to a better understanding of the mystery of life, and to a better knowledge of the peace which lies beyond it.

But as it is an inexorable law, that the ground must be tilled if the harvest is to be reaped, so Theosophists are obliged to work in

the world unceasingly, and very often in doing this to make serious mistakes, as do all workers who are not embodied Redeemers. Their efforts may not come under the title of good works, and they may be condemned as a school of idle talkers, yet they are an outcome and fruition of this particular moment of time, when the ideas which they hold are greeted by the crowd with interest; and therefore their work is good, as the lotus-flower is good when it opens in the midday sun.

None know more keenly and definitely than they that good works are necessary; only these cannot be rightly accomplished without knowledge. Schemes for Universal Brotherhood, and the redemption of mankind, might be given out plentifully by the great adepts of life, and would be mere dead-letter utterances while individuals remain ignorant, and unable to grasp the great meaning of their teachers. To Theosophists we say, let us carry out the rules given us for our society before we ask for any further schemes or laws. To the public and our critics we say, try to understand the value of good works before you demand them of others, or enter upon them rashly yourselves. Yet it is an absolute fact that without good works the spirit of brotherhood would die in the world; and this can never be. Therefore is the double activity of learning and doing most necessary; we have to do good, and we have to do it *rightly*, with knowledge.

It is well known that the first rule of the society is to carry out the object of forming the nucleus of a universal brotherhood. The practical working of this rule was explained by those who laid it down, to the following effect:

"HE WHO DOES NOT PRACTISE ALTRUISM; HE WHO IS NOT PREPARED TO SHARE HIS LAST MORSEL WITH A WEAKER OR POORER THAN HIMSELF; HE WHO NEGLECTS TO HELP HIS BROTHER MAN, OF WHATEVER RACE, NATION, OR CREED, WHENEVER AND WHEREVER HE MEETS SUFFERING, AND WHO TURNS A DEAF EAR TO THE CRY OF HUMAN MISERY; HE WHO HEARS AN INNOCENT PERSON SLANDERED, WHETHER A BROTHER THEOSOPHIST OR NOT, AND DOES NOT UNDERTAKE HIS DEFENCE AS HE WOULD UNDERTAKE HIS OWN - IS NO THEOSOPHIST."

Bibliographical source:

Lucifer, November 1887, Vol. I pp. 161-169.

This electronic edition of

Theosophy Forward

was created by the Rman Institute,
a non-for-profit private organization owning
the Theosophical web site

THEOSOPHY IN SLOVENIA

in collaboration with the
Editor of the Theosophical e-magazine

THEOSOPHY FORWARD

If you are interested in having an electronic version
of your Theosophical publication in DNL Format,
please send an e-mail message to
webmaster@teozofija.info
with the subject
Theosophical E-publication.