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THE SPIRIT OF MODERN ART.

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(An address delivered at the Sixtieth Annual Meeting of the Fairmount Park Art Association, in the Hotel Bellevue-Stratford, Philadelphia, Pa., on January 20th, 1932)

Mr. President, Ladies and Gentlemen: I wish to take a minute of the forty-five allotted to me to tell you that I am always a trifle terrified when I speak in Philadelphia. I am Canadian by origin and for a Canadian Philadelphia inspires a greater respect than any other American city. When I speak in your city I am always afraid I shall show how much my residence in New York has dragged me down.

I have a special reason today for being nervous—that I am addressing an audience of so wide range of interests and opinions. I can see among you so many practising artists, and collectors and connoisseurs, and people who are fond of the old art, and people who have given their allegiance to the new art, that one would have to be a very hardened speaker indeed not to feel a trifle confused.

In the twenty-five years I have been lecturing on various phases of the arts, I have been interested specially in what underlies the effort of an artist to be an artist at all. I hope it will not seem eccentric of me therefore, if I take a little more time than seems necessary in getting to the subject of modern art. We take too much for

granted when we talk about art, and I think a fuller examination of the fundamentals will justify itself.

Why should a man spend his time trying to communicate his ideas and feelings? What is at the bottom of such effort? I wish to answer these questions by dealing first with an idea, which, although it is an unfamiliar one in our modern world, is by no means a new idea to mankind. It is an old notion which recurs in the history of human thinking, and curiously, it is present in every great flowering of creative activity. I am laying special stress upon it today because it is, and has always been, in a peculiar sense, the artist's working faith. It is the warrant under which he works and the motive force without which he would never return as he does, day after day to his task of communication. It is the theory upon which he offers his ideas, his feelings and his visions to the rest of mankind with any valid hope that even one person out of all mankind will understand what he is trying to do.

The idea I mean was ancient in the days of Confucius in China when it had its great exponent in the venerable Lao-Tsze the renewer of Chinese idealism. It runs all through the fabric of the sayings of Gautama Buddha in India and was a fundamental doctrine in the school of Pytha-

goras on the Mediterranean. It is most fully documented in Plato and six hundred years later in Plotinus and the Neoplatonists. It appears in the early structure of Christianity, later with the appearance of the Arabian philosophers in mediaeval Europe, and it had a magnificent flowering in Renaissance Europe when the Greek scholars came from Byzantium with their New Learning.

It is one of the most elusive of ideas, slipping in and out of life, an idea the scientist can scarcely contact except in the realm of mathematics and one which philosophers have managed to lose again and again.

The idea is briefly that in man, wherever he got it, however and whenever, there is a whole range of powers that he never could have acquired on this earth. This factor enters into every branch of human knowledge. It is present in everything we do in which we have recourse to those fundamental ideas that surpass ordinary human experience on this earth. Bergson calls these promptings of a superior knowledge within us, "immediate intuition" and the nature and extent of such intuition is the central problem with which Plato is preoccupied throughout all his work.

The most important things in life are not susceptible of proof in terms of this earthly plane of existence, nor can this knowledge of them be acquired here. You remember that wistful scene in the *Phaedo* of Plato when Socrates and his friends await the servant who will bring the poison, and fall to talking of the past and future of the soul and with it the enigma of the origin of human knowledge. How did knowledge come into the world? Then Socrates takes them through the famous argument about equal and unequal things showing the absolute impossibility of seeing equality of objects on this earth in spite of which the soul sets up its own criterion of equality every time it assumes to say two objects are unequal.

"Then", said Socrates, "before we began to see, or hear or use the senses, we must somewhere have gained a knowledge of abstract or absolute equality... for to know is to have acquired knowledge, and to have retained it without losing it, and the loss of knowledge is just what we mean when we speak of forgetting... And would not the process which we call learning really be recovering knowledge which is our own. And should we be right in calling this recollection?"

"Assuredly", says Simmias.

How can man have learned the fundamental concepts with which he faces life? How can he know a straight line? I look at a line and I say it is not straight. Someone shows me the most perfect line human mechanism can make and I put it under a microscope and it looks like a ploughed road. From no earth-made line can I ever have acquired my concept of a perfect line with only one dimension. Nowhere on earth have I ever seen a perfect triangle. The sides will never meet or will over meet. The law of incommensurables says that they will never exactly meet on this earth. But I have arrogated to myself the right to know perfect triangles. I arrogate the right to judge all circles, all spheres, all squares, all cubes because I have within me dimly seen but none the less exact models of perfect ones. I arrogate to myself the right then to judge all mathematical shapes, all order, all causation, perfect justice, perfect right, perfect truth, perfect goodness, perfect beauty.

On what high place do I stand? By virtue of what insight do I dare set myself up as a judge of the imperfections of this world unless I have, and have had, a consciousness of a superior world. Emerson raised the problem again and again, and answered it as Kant did by denying that all experience came in through the senses but holding rather that there is an important class of ideas or imperative forms which are not of earthly experience, but by means of which he judged the things of this world.

"We always read as superior beings", he says. "Universal history, the poets, the romancers do not. . . anywhere make us feel that we intrude, that this is for better men . . . All that Shakspeare says of the king, yonder slip of a boy that reads in the corner feels to be true of himself".

"We grant", he says again, "that human life is mean; but how did we find out that it was mean? What is the ground of this uneasiness of ours; of this discontent? What is the universal sense of want and ignorance but the fine innuendo by which the soul makes its enormous claim?"

This is the basis of that idea which has governed creative activity in man—the arrogance with which man sets himself up to do what is right, to be what is good, to know what is true, to make what is beautiful; the arrogance with which he brings this old and superior standard as a measuring stick for the phenomena of his present life.

I have no time here to go into the theories of the origin of these superior powers. There are many theories from which to choose. You can take the theological doctrine that says we draw these intuitions from a Father in Heaven, and that is an excellent and workable idea. You can take Emerson's idea that the Father is a community soul of mankind, an oversoul, in which we all share, and upon whose ideas we draw. You may take your Plato pure, unadulterated—and shocking—and add to Emerson's idea the further one that the soul of man has journeyed elsewhere in the universe, has acquired high powers which are in partial eclipse every time he is born into this nether world of earth. You can say with the modern metaphysician that all these admitted powers are merely inherent properties of the mind. For myself I find this last a poor sort of evasion. One of the properties of my mind is that I wish to know where and how my mind acquired these properties of the mind.

Or you can do as the scientist does, and say, "It does not come within my purview;

I have nothing, as scientist, to do with it". Of course he is talking nonsense, as the mathematicians have told him all along, and as the physicists are now finding out. It is really a basic datum of mathematics and therefore of all science. But I conjure you, by all you hold sacred, not to side with the hack writers who fill the magazines with startling pseudo-science or pseudo-psychology, and say that because science does not take cognizance of it, it is therefore not so. The artist has known for ages that it is so and if he did not draw hourly on the facts of it he would not be an artist.

You see the artist is not a scientist. He is an empiric. He does not ask, "Is it true?" He asks always "Does it work?" The painter, sculptor, author, architect, the writer for the theatre or whatever he is, is not much interested in actual knowledge. He paraphrases Nietzsche and says, "That is a good idea that makes me fertile". And if you give him an idea, however unprovable it may be as fact, he values it for the work it does, and the implications of which he can make immediate and creative use. Here are some of the implications of the notion of the superior soul in the limitations of earth:

That in each of us there exists a duality, a complex of something that is of this world and something that is above it which is comparatively divine and shares intermittently in ideas transcending earth.

That the artist must take his stand in that higher entity, identifying himself with it and saying, "I, I, I,—Outside me are the things I condemn, within me the things I value; within me experiences that are so marvellous that, having experienced them ever so little, I shall devote all I am to experience them again.

That I stand between something immense that I can invoke, and something else, too great attention to which can prevent my invoking the immensity.

That the world of nature and external forms is an elicitor of my interior stand-

ards of beauty.

That the nature world is incomplete and only beautiful as I read order and beauty into it.

That it recalls for me another beauty I have known, and that all beauty is, at the last, recollection, and all art the effort to communicate in some medium, that beauty I have known, in terms of the form and rhythm of the world I now see.

This I offer you as the only valid theory of art and the only one that takes into account its most mysterious phenomena, without cheapening as the materialist does that which the artist knows he must never cheapen, if he would stay fecund and vital.

I go out one day in the woods, I see something I may have looked at a hundred times before. It has never been anything but trees, some grass and a little patch of sky. There is nothing there for me. Suddenly there comes one of those great moments, more frequent with the artist because he cultivates them—prays for them. I have an intuition. The same trees, same patch of sky, same grass, but now there is an overtone of something else. I have always had it but this is the day of its elicitation.

The man who is not a practitioner of the arts may have the same experience but for lack of an outlet he will do nothing with it. The artist is not content merely to enjoy it and remember it. He must communicate it. He must tell somebody. You know that frantic feeling you had as a child when you wanted your father and mother to see what you were seeing. The frenzy that goes into such a moment is what the artist feels. He must communicate his miracle.

What is he to do? Merely to report the scene as he sees it, make a dull transcript? That will omit the miraculous intuition that has opened to him. Report merely the miracle? No. That will be unintelligible without the form. He must use the scene that elicited the intuition as its

vehicle, its carrier. He must make an understandable report and he must thread it through and through with its glimpses of beauty, its glimpses of meaning.

Let us transfer the problem to my art of the theatre. I go to a restaurant and I see people in a corner doing something I have seen a score of times before. This time it moves me; it seems intensely dramatic. If I can only space it a trifle, eliminate something, intensify something else, selecting as I go I may achieve a miracle in the art of motion.

Or perhaps I am a dancer. I see somebody move across the floor and it recalls something divine to me. I take out some of the motions and I pattern them. So with rhythm, selection, elimination, spacing I may achieve my transmission of a miraculous thing in the medium of the dance.

So our painter. He says "If I take this out and put that over a little, and heighten the blue of the sky until it feels like the blue I felt when I saw it, if I strengthen my shadow here and get advancing colour there, I shall have transmitted an understandable report of the scene as scene and riding on it my miraculous moment.

Have you ever seen a painter looking for a subject for a sketch? You painters know the mood. Why do you take one subject in preference to another? By a process of reasoning? Sometimes when your reason is at its best you will sketch all day and come back with nothing because you have missed that little gasp that comes with the feeling that here is something tremendous if you can only work fast enough to get it into paint.

The artist—any artist—has a double task. Until that moment of vision comes there is no creation. And unless the fruit of that vision be incorporated in something that is understandable and convincing to others there is no art. Vision without a believable vehicle is empty vapouring. A vehicle into which there is incorporated no vision is dull, inert stupid.

All these are implications of the theory I have offered—the theory that the true inner man, the thinker—is the custodian of higher powers than he ordinarily brings into currency on earth. Before I deal with the specific problem of the painter I must deal with another implication. I have said that the artist's task is a double one. I am compelled now to say that the artist himself is double, that he is a visioner and thinker but that he has within him—or shall we say lives within and in close association with another and lower person, a kind of animal or earthly self. This duality is evident in all spiritual, mental and moral conflicts when the artist experiences interior conflict, but it shows itself in him as painter most in the relation of form and colour; the two art media he will use towards his revelation.

If you have observed within the last few years there has been considerable preoccupation among thinkers with the dimensions in space. Especially has this been true of the fourth dimension which in the hands of a number of mathematicians, Riemann and Gauss and more currently Einstein, has been identified with time and is part of the recent time-space concept. Experiments towards the apprehension of four dimensions were made by C. H. Hinton and not long ago the Russian mathematician P. D. Ouspensky came forward with a well argued thesis that the animals are only capable of understanding two ways in space; that man understands three and that man by the development of dormant ranges of consciousness can know—Plato would have said, "Can regain the use of"—four ways in space.

The interesting point for us here is that the lower of the two natures in the complex of man, that which is animal in him can only apprehend two dimensions and has to bring mind to play on the light and shade he sees to translate them into three-space forms. That is, what comes in at my eyes has only breadth and height; distance I have to read into it mentally, after having

brought two eyes to bear on it and having toured over it a little with my glance. Bishop Berkeley in his "New Theory of Vision" pointed out that if man saw three dimensions he would be able to make a three-space star map, whereas we have never had more than a flat one in which a big speck of light might either be a little star close up or a thundering big one far off.

Two dimensions are a matter of sense; the third is a matter of intellectual analysis; a fourth dimension is a matter of intuition. Solid form then, is in a way a sacred thing which thinking man brings to earth. It is less something we see than something we make. Look at anything, a moulding, for example. It is only light and shadow, until as you analyze it it begins to swell forward here and move back there. Or look at a diagram in solid geometry—the familiar flight of stairs of the Gestalt psychologists and observe the way in which the mind moves the form backwards and forwards, making the eyes see what the mind determines. Form is then for the painter, a concept, a sensation received through the eyes attended to by the mind and given a new element of solidity by analysis.

And colour? Colour is only a sensation. It is something that swirls in at the windows of the eyes and although you can analyze it and break it up, you can give it nothing more. It is peculiarly of the lower man, it can be a beautiful thing and elicit great intuitions, there can be in painters a great mastery over it, but it is something man feels, not something he does.

If this be so—if form is what man thinks and colour is what he sees, we can expect to find in the greatest painters a great preoccupation with form. It would be the common ground on which mind speaks to mind. There would be no less enrichment of colour and appreciation of colour, but, after all, Nature can do colour as well as we can. Form, appreciated, analyzed, clarified, sublimated, made

divine, must always be central to the painter's art, and when form has to take a second place to anything which is merely emotional or sensational, the artist has deserted the vantage point on which he is a seer and prophet for his kind.

The great painters of the past have always been explicit about form. They have used it solicitously, expertly, lovingly, because without it, what they have to say can have no body. It has been their means of being serviceable.

May I take a moment here to remind you that serviceability is a first element of all art. In every generation we have foolish men in the arts who deny their responsibility to serve and the history of such a man is always the same. He always loses any powers he has to serve, until, if he lives long enough, he is forgotten in his very lifetime. Michelangelo, Dante, Shakspeare are profound but they are always serviceable. Jesus and Buddha spared no pains to shape their message to some measure of comprehension in the dullest man who heard them. When you come upon an insolent man who cares nothing about the services he performs you have met someone below the level of the arts.

And now to return to form. There has been a tendency among our artists within a generation or so to play fantastic tricks with form. Some of them have made form serve colour, which is to make the master serve the servant. Some of them took to painting form as it came in at the eye with the little wriggling line that was supposed to represent what the blood pulsations did to its form as you looked at a thing. Some of them painted form piecemeal with one part laid over the other as it actually appears when the eyes dart to and fro over a surface in obedience to the mind's effort to analyze it. Some of them threw all the planes but one out of focus because that is what the eyes do when they converge on any plane in the line of sight. Some of them essayed to paint light, which is an excellent thing to do, because physical

light, that elusive and magical thing that has so many affinities with the intuitions of man, requires to be painted. But most of them merely painted an incomplete view of something seen in bad light which is only to present a man with what he has too much of already. Some of them painted everything with a liberal admixture of the emotional reactions they aroused—this is the worst vice of modern art—and when they dallied in delight at any part of a figure, let us say, they bulged it out of shape as an indication that this was a good dallying place. Some of them read in a school-book somewhere that everything had once been crystalline and took to recrystallizing the world round about them.

The best of them were not merely being fantastic. The worst of them, I am sorry to say, were. They had come to the arts with an insufficient generosity and in lieu of the serviceability I talked of were seizing an easy road to celebrity. The best of them were suffering from another ailment. They had gone scientific.

Instead of returning an entire report which would incorporate their discoveries without interfering with the usefulness of their communication, they returned scientific documents and it came to be the fashion among art critics to speak of this painter as having made tremendous contributions to a certain branch and that artist as having solved the problem of something else as if they were research specialists. Research specialists are a big thing in science but they mean nothing in the arts. There is an unpleasant atmosphere of iodiform about the very word.

Leonardo was a research specialist on *chiaroscuro*? Michelangelo was a specialist in the possible distortions of the human body? Alberti and Brunelleschi were research specialists in perspective? I am sorry but they were not. They were great artists making great and believable interpretations which gained in believability because they incorporated special kinds of skill.

Much of our trouble in recent years has been due to a persistent reversal of these values. It has been so in the case of one of the greatest of the moderns, Paul Cezanne. In his days in Paris he was a painter of conventional subjects in a conventional way, some of them fine, some of them excessively dull, but all showing a tendency towards a new way of seeing form. Then when he returned to his home to devote himself to the working out of his theory he endeavoured to do what his great predecessors had done—to report nature—full and convincingly, incorporating in his work some measure of his special method. Sometimes he succeeded; sometimes he failed. When he succeeded thus in making an entire report, the form vehicle and his intuitions woven with it you have a great Cezanne. When he failed you have mere scientific jottings. You remember what happened to these last, how he would paint out of doors all day, and when he knew he had failed he would leave the failure leaning against a bush and come home without it. Then that night the thrifty Mme. Cezanne would sneak out and bring it in for future sale. It was not a painting. It was a document and was marketable to a certain type of buyer just as is a first edition with a misprint in it.

Sometimes you have Gauguin the artist. Sometimes only Gauguin the experimenter. When he is artist he is immense. When he is the scientist of colour and distortion of form he is merely interesting to the pundits. You will find Seurat, splendid in his grasp of colour and form, splendid in his composition and sometimes making the equivalent of reports on the behaviour of guinea pigs. Van Gogh, madman, artist and sometimes scientist is three persons. That curious curling flame-like line has greatly influenced modern painting. Sometimes it is the servant of the report he makes; sometimes it is master. Then you have only a document.

These men are entitled to rank among the great painters of the world, but only

when they make a great and whole communication. The documents, the mistakes, the unfinished fragments so sedulously treasured by our commercial camp followers in the arts are mostly rubbish a Renaissance master would have thrown away. With our vaunted historical sense we say, "These are the work of the master".

Did you ever see a complete edition of the writings of William Blake, with all the testy epigrams, the sarcastic couplets and the occasional indecencies? My, but they make you ashamed of William! We are confronted by the dangers arising out of a too heavily documented civilization where everything must be preserved for posterity. I hope posterity will not take it all as seriously as we do.

The most serious influence of our revolutionary modern masters has not been in their over-documentation. It has been in their imitators. Imitators are people who never see the whole of anything. After Leonardo developed light and shade a lot of painters said, "I know all about Leonardo! Light and shade!" and they did chiaroscuro until the world was sick. Others stared at Michelangelo and came away with the least of him, "We know the trick of it! Twist a leg!" And so they twisted legs for a century. So we have modern imitators of Cezanne (clouds and coolness) Gauguin (barrel-shaped bodies) Van Gogh (squirmy line). And because Gauguin went to the primitive peoples a lot of the others went up into Brittany and went savage—Les Fauves. And each took on a fragment of the experimental techniques. Braque took one, Matisse took another one, Picasso took one and they exploited their experiments as whole art. There were clear-eyed seers among them but when an artist goes scientist you must look out. He may not be talking to you. He may be reading a paper for his scientific association.

Let us take an example near home. I am of the theatre. Do I enjoy the Barretts of Wimpole Street? Of course I do. But

I do not go there to study the details of my art. I go down to Fourteenth Street to a burlesque house and watch Billy Arlington come down a flight of stairs backwards; I listen to him tormenting Dan about the hat that does not fit him. That is technique, the technique of a man who can come out on a bare stage with no sentimentalized surroundings, no wistful story no beautiful dresses—with nothing but his technique and take the scene or leave it at will.

What am I to do about it? Tell you passionately never to see the Barretts of Wimpole Street? Tell you all the drama of the past must be thrown away? Tell you you must never admire anybody but Billy Arlington? That would be nonsense and I would be a fool, but no worse fool than lots of the modern writers about art are making of themselves.

I sometimes think art would proceed far better if we had no critics. They are the people who stultify honest workers in revelation. The artists themselves are devoted human beings with broad sympathies and what the cognoscante would think were degraded tastes. I have in mind a great sculptor—one of the half dozen greatest alive today. What artist do you suppose he went over and over always with exclamations of delight. The illustrator Dore! He would say, "There was a man who knew form". And when the Saturday Evening Post had a cover by Norman Rockwell he would run his hand lovingly over it and say; "If our people only knew texture as that man does, what things we could do!" And I have in mind a celebrated American composer who sits at his piano and plays to himself by the hour. What, please? Lindy Lou, Carolina in the Morning, Josephine My Jo!

We take our critics far too seriously, and our dealers too seriously. Nobody is revolutionizing art. It is too eternal for that and too deeply embedded in the undying soul of man. Techniques can be changed but we must not too greatly exalt

the laboratory processes by which the change is achieved.

Professor Mitchell then showed lantern slides from the work of Cezanne, Van Gogh, Gauguin, Seurat, Matisse, Bracque, Picasso, Balla, and Ferdinand Hodler, discussing them in terms of the arguments advanced in his address.

THE YOGA SUTRAS OF PATANJALI

"The Book of the Spiritual Man"

An Interpretation by Charles Johnston

(Continued from Page 135.)

INTRODUCTION TO BOOK III.

The third book of the Sutras is the Book of Spiritual Powers. In considering these spiritual powers, two things must be understood and kept in memory. The first of these is this: These spiritual powers can only be gained when the development described in the first and second books has been measurably attained; when the Commandments have been kept, the Rules faithfully followed, and the experiences which are described have been passed through. For only after this is the spiritual man so far grown, so far disentangled from the psychical bandages and veils which have confined and blinded him, that he can use his proper powers and faculties. For this is the secret of all spiritual powers: they are in no sense an abnormal or supernatural overgrowth upon the material man, but are rather the powers and faculties inherent in the spiritual man, entirely natural to him, and coming naturally into activity, as the spiritual man is disentangled and liberated from psychical bondage, through keeping the Commandments and Rules already set forth.

As the personal man is the limitation and inversion of the spiritual man, all his faculties and powers are inversions of the powers of the spiritual man. In a single phrase, his self-seeking is the inversion of

the spiritual man: the ceaseless search after the divine and august Self of all beings. This inversion is corrected by keeping the Commandments and Rules, and gradually, as the inversion is overcome, the spiritual man is extricated, and comes into possession and free exercise of his powers.

The spiritual powers, therefore, are the powers of the grown and liberated spiritual man. They can only be developed and used as the spiritual man grows and attains liberation through obedience. This is the first thing to be kept in mind, in all that is said of spiritual powers in the third and fourth books of the Sutras. The second thing to be understood and kept in mind is this:

Just as our modern sages have discerned and taught that all matter is ultimately one and eternal, definitely related throughout the whole wide universe; just as they have discerned and taught that all force is one and eternal, so co-ordinated throughout the whole universe that whatever affects any atom measurably affects the whole boundless realm of matter and force, to the most distant star or nebula on the dim confines of space; so the ancient sages had discerned and taught that all consciousness is one, immortal, indivisible, infinite; so finely correlated and continuous that whatever is perceived by any consciousness is, whether actually or potentially, within the reach of all consciousness, and therefore within the reach of any consciousness. This has been well expressed by saying that all souls are fundamentally one with the Oversoul; that the Son of God, and all Sons of God, are fundamentally one with the Father. When the consciousness is cleared of psychic bonds and veils, when the spiritual man is able to stand, to see, then this superb law comes into effect: whatever is within the knowledge of any consciousness, and this includes the whole infinite universe, is within his reach, and may, if he wills, be made a part of his consciousness. This he may attain through

his fundamental unity with the Oversoul, by raising himself toward the consciousness above him, and drawing on its resources. The Son, if he would work miracles, whether of perception or of action, must come often into the presence of the Father. This is the birthright of the spiritual man; through it he comes into possession of his splendid and immortal powers.

Let it be clearly kept in mind that what is here to be related of the spiritual man, and his exalted powers, must in no wise be detached from what has gone before. The being, the very inception, of the spiritual man depends on the purification and moral attainment already detailed, and can in no wise dispense with these or curtail them.

Let no one imagine that the true life, the true powers of the spiritual man, can be attained by any way except the hard way of sacrifice, of trial, of renunciation, of selfless self-conquest and genuine devotion to the weal of all others. Only thus can the golden gates be reached and entered. Only thus can we attain to that pure world wherein the spiritual man lives, and moves, and has his being. Nothing impure, nothing unholy can ever cross that threshold, least of all impure motives or self-seeking desires. These must be burnt away before an entrance to that world can be gained.

But where there is light, there is shadow; and the lofty light of the soul casts upon the clouds of the mid-world the shadow of the spiritual man and of his powers; the bastard vesture and the bastard powers of psychism are easily attained; yet, even when attained, they are a delusion, the very essence of unreality.

Therefore ponder well the earlier rules, and lay a firm foundation of courage, sacrifice, selflessness, holiness.

BOOK III.

1. *The binding of the perceiving consciousness to a certain region is attention (dharana).*

Emerson quotes Sir Isaac Newton as

saying that he made his great discoveries by intending his mind on them. That is what is meant here. I read the page of a book while thinking of something else. At the end of the page, I have no idea of what it is about, and read it again, still thinking of something else, with the same result. Then I wake up, so to speak, make an effort of attention, fix my thought on what I am reading, and easily take in its meaning. The act of will, the effort of attention, the intending of the mind on each word and line of the page, just as the eyes are focussed on each word and line, is the power here contemplated. It is the power to focus the consciousness on a given spot, and hold it there. Attention is the first and indispensable step in all knowledge. Attention to spiritual things is the first step to spiritual knowledge.

2. *A prolonged holding of the perceiving consciousness in that region is meditation (dhyana).*

This will apply equally to outer and inner things. I may for a moment fix my attention on some visible object, in a single penetrating glance, or I may hold the attention fixedly on it until it reveals far more of its nature than a single glance could perceive. The first is the focussing of the searchlight of consciousness upon the object. The other is the holding of the white beam of light steadily and persistently on the object, until it yields up the secret of its details. So for things within; one may fix the inner glance for a moment on spiritual things, or one may hold the consciousness steadily upon them, until what was in the dark slowly comes forth into the light, and yields up its immortal secret. But this is possible only for the spiritual man, after the Commandments and the Rules have been kept; for until this is done, the thronging storms of psychical thoughts dissipate and distract the attention, so that it will not remain fixed on spiritual things. The cares of this world, the deceitfulness of riches, choke the word of the spiritual message.

3. *When the perceiving consciousness in this meditation is wholly given to illuminating the essential meaning of the object contemplated, and is freed from the sense of separateness and personality, this is contemplation (samadhi).*

Let us review the steps so far taken. First, the beam of perceiving consciousness is focussed on a certain region or subject, through the effort of attention. Then this attending consciousness is held on its object. Third, there is the ardent will to know its meaning, to illumine it with comprehending thought. Fourth, all personal bias, all desire merely to indorse a previous opinion and so prove oneself right, and all desire for personal profit or gratification must be quite put away. There must be a purely disinterested love of truth for its own sake. Thus is the perceiving consciousness made void, as it were, of all personality or sense of separateness. The personal limitation stands aside and lets the All-consciousness come to bear upon the problem. The Oversoul bends its ray upon the object, and illumines it with pure light.

4. *When these three, Attention, Meditation, Contemplation, are exercised at once, this is perfectly concentrated Meditation (sanyama).*

When the personal limitation of the perceiving consciousness stands aside, and allows the All-conscious to come to bear upon the problem, then arises that real knowledge which is called a flash of genius; that real knowledge which makes discoveries, and without which no discovery can be made, however painstaking the effort. For genius is the vision of the spiritual man, and that vision is a question of growth rather than present effort: though right effort, rightly continued, will in time infallibly lead to growth and vision. Through the power thus to set aside personal limitation, to push aside petty concerns and cares, and steady the whole nature and will in an ardent love of truth and desire to know it; through the power

thus to make way for the All-consciousness, all great men make their discoveries. Newton, watching the apple fall to the earth, was able to look beyond, to see the subtle waves of force pulsating through apples and worlds and suns and galaxies, and thus to perceive universal gravitation. The Oversoul, looking through his eyes, recognized the universal force, one of its own children. Darwin, watching the forms and motions of plants and animals, let the same august consciousness come to bear on them, and saw infinite growth perfected through ceaseless struggle. He perceived the superb process of evolution, the Oversoul once more recognizing its own. Fraunhofer, noting the dark lines in the band of sunlight in his spectroscope, divined their identity with the bright lines in the spectra of incandescent iron, sodium and the rest, and so saw the oneness of substance in the worlds and suns, the unity of the materials of the universe. Once again the Oversoul, looking with his eyes, recognized its own. So it is with all true knowledge. But the mind must transcend its limitations, its idiosyncrasies; there must be purity, for to the pure in heart is the promise, that they shall see God.

5. *By mastering this perfectly concentrated Meditation, there comes the illumination of perception.*

The meaning of this is illustrated by what has been said before. When the spiritual man is able to throw aside the trammels of emotional and mental limitation, and to open his eyes, he sees clearly, he attains to illuminated perception. A poet once said that Occultism is the conscious cultivation of genius; and it is certain that the awakened spiritual man attains to the perceptions of genius. Genius is the vision, the power, of the spiritual man, whether its possessor recognizes this or not. All true knowledge is of the spiritual man. The greatest in all ages have recognized this and put their testimony on record. The great in wisdom who have not consciously recognized it, have ever been full

of the spirit of reverence, of selfless devotion to truth, of humility, as was Darwin; and reverence and humility are the unconscious recognition of the nearness of the Spirit, that Divinity which broods over us, a Master o'er a slave.

6. *This power is distributed in ascending degrees.*

It is to be attained step by step. It is a question, not of miracle, but of evolution, of growth. Newton had to master the multiplication table, then the four rules of arithmetic, then the rudiments of algebra, before he came to the binomial theorem. At each point, there was attention, concentration, insight; until these were attained, no progress to the next point was possible. So with Darwin. He had to learn the form and use of leaf and flower, of bone and muscle; the characteristics of genera and species; the distribution of plants and animals, before he had in mind that nexus of knowledge on which the light of his great idea was at last able to shine. So is it with all knowledge. So is it with spiritual knowledge. Take the matter this way: The first subject for the exercise of my spiritual insight is my day, with its circumstances, its hindrances, its opportunities, its duties. I do what I can to solve it, to fulfil its duties, to learn its lessons. I try to live my day with aspiration and faith. That is the first step. By doing this, I gather a harvest for the evening, I gain a deeper insight into life, in virtue of which I begin the next day with a certain advantage, a certain spiritual advance and attainment. So with all successive days. In faith and aspiration, we pass from day to day, in growing knowledge and power, with never more than one day to solve at a time, until all life becomes radiant and transparent.

7. *This threefold power, of Attention, Meditation, Contemplation, is more interior than the means of growth previously described.*

Very naturally so; because the means of growth previously described were concerned with the extrication of the spiritual man

from psychic bondages and veils; while this three-fold power is to be exercised by the spiritual man thus extricated and standing on his feet, viewing life with open eyes.

8. *But this triad is still exterior to the soul vision which is unconditioned, free from the seed of mental analysis.*

The reason is this: The threefold power we have been considering, the triad of Attention, Contemplation, Meditation is, so far as we have yet considered it, the focusing of the beam of perceiving consciousness upon some form of manifesting being, with a view of understanding it completely. There is a higher stage, where the beam of consciousness is turned back upon itself, and the individual consciousness enters into, and knows, the All-Consciousness. This is a being, a being in immortality, rather than a knowing; it is free from mental analysis or mental forms. It is not an activity of the higher mind, even the mind of the spiritual man. It is an activity of the soul. Had Newton risen to this higher stage, he would have known, not the laws of motion, but that high Being, from whose Life comes eternal motion. Had Darwin risen to this, he would have seen the Soul, whose graduated thought and being all evolution expresses. There are, therefore, these two perceptions: that of living things, and that of the Life; that of the Soul's works, and that of the Soul itself.

(To Be Continued.) P-201

H. P. B.'s COMMENTARIES ON PLATO.

Second Article

By F. B. Housser

In the April 15th issue of The Canadian Theosophist a compilation was given of Madame Blavatsky's comments on Plato and the Platonic philosophy in respect to the great philosopher's scientific doctrines. In this present article we give her comments on Plato's teachings regarding the

principles of man.

Much confusion seems to exist among Platonists regarding the Platonic doctrine of the soul, some of them even going so far as to say that he entertained doubts as to its immortality although the dialogues teem with passages in which Socrates, or some other character doubtless speaking for Plato, states directly and emphatically that the soul is immortal. "The Greek philosophers" wrote H.P.B. "are alike made misty instead of mystical by their too learned translators". This perhaps is not altogether their fault, for, as she says in another place,—“the covert allusions of the Greek philosopher to esoteric things have manifestly baffled these commentators to the last degree. But this does not excuse them for, with what she calls their “unblushing coolness”, in making changes in the phraseology on the assumption that Plato really could not have meant what he said.

When it comes to the doctrine of the soul and the principles of man, not only Plato, but H.P.B herself are none too lucid, and, as we know from their writings that both could be lucid enough when they chose, we may assume that vagueness when it occurs was not without intention. “Plato never claimed to be the inventor of all that he wrote, but gave credit for it to Pythagoras, who in his turn pointed to the remote east as the source from whence he derived his information and his philosophy... Like the rest of the Initiates we see Plato taking great pains to conceal the true meaning of his allegories. Every time the subject touches the greater secrets of the Oriental Kabala, secret of the true cosmogony of the universe, and of the ideal pre-existing world, Plato shrouds his philosophy in the profoundest darkness. His *Timaeus* is so confused, that no one but an initiate can understand the secret meaning”. (Isis II: 38).

Plato and Paul Compared

“Plato was an initiate and therefore could not go into forbidden details; but he

who is acquainted with the Archaic doctrine finds the seven (principles) in Plato's various combinations of soul and spirit. He regarded man as constituted of two parts, one eternal—formed of the same essence as the Absoluteness: the other mortal and corruptible, deriving its constituent parts from the minor 'created' gods. Man is composed, he shows, of (1) a mortal body; (2) an immortal principle; (3) a separate mortal kind of soul. It is that which we respectively call the physical man, the spiritual soul or spirit (*Nous*), and the animal soul (*psuche*). This is the division adopted by Paul another initiate". (Key to Theosophy, Page 62).

"Paul calls Plato's *Nous* 'spirit', but as this spirit is substance, then of course *Buddhi* and not *Atma* is meant as the latter cannot philosophically be called substance under any circumstances. We include *Atma* among the human principles in order not to create additional confusion. In reality it is no human principle but the universal absolute principle of which *Buddhi*, the soul-spirit, is the carrier". (Key to Theosophy, Page 64. footnote).

The Seven Principles

The two parts,—immortal and mortal,—into which Plato divided man are the upper triad and lower quaternary (see table, page 63, Key to Theosophy). Plato claimed that when the soul (*psuche*) allies itself to *Nous*,—divine spirit or substance,—she does everything aright and felicitously, but the case is otherwise when she attaches herself to *anoia* (folly or the irrational animal soul).

"Here then we have *Manas* or the soul in general in its two aspects, when attaching itself to *anoia*—folly or animal soul—it runs toward entire annihilation as far as the personal ego is concerned. When allying itself to *Nous* (*Atma-Buddhi*) it merges into the immortal imperishable ego, and then its spiritual consciousness of the personal ego that was, becomes immortal". (Key to Theosophy, Pages 63-64).

"He—Plato—described the soul as a

self-moving unit (*monas*) composed of three elements, the *Nous* (spirit), the *Phren* (Mind) and the *Thumos* (life, breath) which three correspond to our *Atma-Buddhi* (higher spirit-soul), to *Manas* (the ego), and to *Kama Rupa* in conjunction with the lower reflection of *Manas*. That which the ancient Greek philosophers called soul in general, we call spirit or spiritual soul,—*Buddhi* as the vehicle of *Atma*, the *To Agathon* or Plato's Supreme Deity. The fact that Pythagoras and others state that *phren* and *thumos* are shared by us with the brutes proves that in this case the lower manasic reflection (instinct) and *Kama Rupa* (the animal living passions) are meant; and as Socrates and Plato accepted the clue and followed it, if to these five—namely—*To Agathon* (Deity or *Atma*); *psuche*, (soul in its collective sense); *Nous* (spirit or mind); and *thumos* (*Kama rupa* or passions), we add *eidolon* of the Mysteries (the shadowy form or human double), and the physical body,—it will be easy to demonstrate that the ideas of both Pythagoras and Plato were identical with ours". (Key to Theosophy, Pages 65-66).

Terminology Important

It is of the utmost importance, if we wish to get the most out of reading the Platonic dialogues, that we get a clear conception of the correspondences in terminology between Plato and the Secret Doctrine. Every one who tries to make the occult doctrines a living thing in daily life has to rationalize the principles of man for himself in his own way. For this reason every religion and every great philosopher, even the initiates, give what at first glance appears to be a slightly different classification. It makes no difference whether the system divides man into three, four, five, seven, or ten principles, they are always capable of resolution back into the ones given by Madame Blavatsky. It will be seen that Plato's method of dividing is slightly different from H.P.B.'s. Once the correspondences are seen, the writings of

Plato become the best of all commentaries on the Secret Doctrine and the Secret Doctrine the best of all commentaries on Plato. Hence we find H.P.B. at so much pains to elucidate Platonic conceptions.

Again she explains—"We speak of an animal, a human, and a spiritual soul, and distinguish between them. Plato for instance calls the rational soul that which we call Buddhi (spiritual soul)* But that *Words in brackets mine.

which we call the reincarnating ego,—Manas—he calls spirit—*nous*, etc, whereas we apply the term spirit when standing alone and without qualification, to Atma only. Pythagoras repeats our archaic doctrine when stating that the ego—*nous*—was eternal with Deity; that the soul only passed through various stages to arrive at divine excellence while *thumos* returned to the earth, and even *phren* the lower manas was eliminated. Again, Plato defines soul as 'the motion that is able to move itself'. Soul, he adds (Laws, Book X), is the most ancient of all things and the commencement of motion, thus calling Atma-Buddhi Soul and Manas Spirit,—which we do not". (Key to Theosophy, Page 78).

Ego is the Logos

"Let us not forget that even according to those philosophies which ignore our septenary division—in the human system the ego or thinking man is called the Logos or the Son of Soul and Spirit. Manas is the adopted son of King and Queen (the esoteric equivalents of Atma and Buddhi) says an occult work. He is the man-god of Plato who crucifies himself in 'space'; or the duration of the life cycle, for the redemption of matter. This he does by incarnating over and over again, thus leading mankind onward to perfection and making thereby room for lower forms to develop into higher... even the very rare event of his losing one of his personalities,—in the case of the latter being devoid of even the spark of spirituality,—helps toward his individual progress". (Key to Theosophy,

Page 127).

For purposes of simplification then we might sum up the correspondences mentioned by H.P.B. in the following table—

<i>Platonic Terms</i>	<i>Key to Theosophy and Secret Doctrine</i>
Rational or noetic soul	Atma-Buddhi
Divine Spirit or substance (<i>Nous</i>)	Manas, mind or the ego
Irrational or animal soul	Kama, Rupa or Lower Manas
Eidolon of the Mysteries	Human Double

Plato As An Influence

These correspondences and similarities between Plato's writings and Theosophy were dug out by H.P.B. to be used. It is my opinion that if the Theosophical Society were able to revive in this day the study of Plato, it would be achieving something of inestimable benefit to itself and to mankind. H.P.B. quoted him more perhaps than any other ancient philosopher and might probably have been ranked as one of the greatest Platonists of her day had she desired the title. It has been said that the secret of the high quality of statesmanship which the British seem to produce is in part due to the fact that almost all her greatest statesmen have been students of Plato. His works deal in a rational Theosophical manner with every problem which the world is facing to-day. He is what Whitman calls "An Answerer". His dialogues contain the old eastern archaic doctrines with the western emphasis and the western point of view.

The statesmen of Europe and America have been baffled for three years by problems of government. What is justice? is as much a question to-day as when Socrates tried to explain it to Alcibiades. Justice and good government is the theme of the *Republic*. Socrates' words to Glauco are borne in on us with special force to-day when he said,— "Unless philosophers govern in cities, or those who are at present called kings and governors philosophize really and thoroughly, and these two, the political power and philosophy, unite in one; and till the bulk of those who at

present pursue each of these separately are of necessity excluded, there shall be no end Glauco, to the miseries of cities, nor yet as I imagine, to those of the human race”.

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OFFICIAL NOTES

We regret that pressure on our space has once more compelled us to hold over Mr. Leonard Bosman's article, and also several reviews and other articles which we hope to present next month.

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"Theosophy in Ireland" is a less frequent visitor but is always interesting. Capt P. G. B. Owen has been contributing Secret Doctrine essays to it, and his review of Dr. de Purucker's book in our own magazine will indicate his worth.

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"I was mighty glad to get the July Canadian Theosophist," writes a correspondent. "It was several days late and I was scared stiff lest it had to discontinue." Another writes from California—"am delighted to know that it is to be continued. I would be lost without it."

Those who would care to have a set of The Canadian Theosophist, bound in cloth, 12 volumes \$2. each should order soon. We have just had a few volumes bound to make up five sets, and will sell them carriage paid to any address for \$25. including the present year's subscription.

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The trial for slander brought against Mr. George Smith by the head of the A. M. O. R. C. for telling the truth about him and his fakeries was held on July 19. The jury disagreed, it is reported, eight being for Mr. Smith and four for the complainant. A new trial has been set for September 22.

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We hear from India that Mrs. Besant "is still weak and has to spare herself all avoidable exertion. She is, however, somewhat stronger than she was two or three months ago." It has been decided to hold the December Convention at Adyar on account of the impossibility of Mrs. Besant going to Benares.

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There having been some doubt about the meetings proposed to be held in the Theosophical Hall by Mr. Krishnamurti, the latest information we have is that the dates arranged originally will be observed, November 4-6. It must be distinctly understood that the Theosophical Society has nothing to do with these meetings beyond the fact of giving the use of the Hall. Mr. Krishnamurti appears at all meetings strictly under his own auspices.

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Much sympathy will be felt for Mr. Ronald Garratt and for Mr. and Mrs. L. Garratt over the death of Victor, son of one and foster son of the latter, who was killed in a motor accident last month. Victor was an exceedingly bright boy and had taken a high place in his school studies. He had attained much musical proficiency and was eagerly alive to Theosophical truth. We had looked to him as one of the

banner-bearers of the future. That task is only postponed.

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We are happy to say that the response of the members at the opening of the present year has been greater than for years past. And besides the regular payments of dues there have been donations for the Magazine which, if we are to take them as harbingers of the future are certainly encouraging. A cheque for \$75, for instance came from the United States, a cheque for £5. from England and another for the same amount from Asia, while smaller donations which doubtless represented equal or even greater sacrifice have been most gratefully received.

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After reading the proposal of the editor of "The Occult Review" in its July issue it is of interest to read in the August issue of "The Beacon" one of the most striking documents that we have read since the Mahatma Letters were published. The whole issue is devoted to this article, which is entitled "The New Group of World Workers." One's first reflection was—if Dr. de Purucker had taken this course how he would have appealed to all and sundry! We have no space to deal with it at present but hope to present a precis next month. Meanwhile we recommend every student to procure a copy of it from The Beacon, at 11 West 42nd Street, New York City, the price, 15 cents.

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The hundred and first anniversary of Madame Blavatsky passes to close another year which more and more has shown the increasing influence of her work among the thinkers of the world. Apart from the Theosophical Movement proper in its various branches, other bogus societies have been profiting by using her books and her thought to attract members to their financial profit. It is unfortunate that the public are willing to pay large sums of money for such information as these bodies dispense, which is easily obtainable

through Theosophical sources for nothing. But as long as students are earnest, sincere and selfless in their aims they will discover the true path wherever they make their start. They owe what they receive, none the less, to her who brought to the West the greatest treasure the East had to give when she wrote *The Secret Doctrine* and her other books.

✻ ✻ ✻

The Occult Review becomes more and more Theosophical in the broad, eclectic, Blavatsky sense and should be a welcome visitor in many Theosophical homes. In the July issue, the first of a new volume, the leading editorial is concerned with the problem of spirituality. It is much too long to quote but we commend it to all earnest students of Theosophy. It says quite frankly that "the theosophical movement is in danger of foundering on the rock of intellectualism. Theosophy is essentially spiritual; not merely intellectual. The Masters may never be found by unaided intellect, and their servants are not necessarily numbered among the more conspicuously clever members of the race. The salt of the occult, mystical, and theosophical movement (for spiritually they are one), are those who find their inspiration in daily, hourly, at every moment, endeavouring to tread in the footsteps of those who have gone along a similar path before them, and left behind them hints as to the direction in which their efforts may best be directed with a view to reaching and passing through the Gates of Gold." The editor proposes a Spiritual League, "as loosely organized as possible, consistent with active existence," with a single article of faith, if an unshakeable intuition might so be called, in "the spiritual brotherhood of humanity." The same issue contains an article by W. W. Leisenring on "The Idol of 'The Physical World'."

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The International Psychic Gazette celebrated the twentieth year of its existence in June, and has been receiving the

congratulations of its contemporaries, in which we are glad to join. It has been standing up for the legal rights of spiritualists, and that contention is of value and benefit to all who are concerned with occult subjects. Theosophy has many inhibitions socially and legally, and the time is ever present when, whatever their disagreements, students of the "unexplained laws of nature and the powers latent in man" must stand together in defence of their rights and privileges. While none of us has any right to claim privileges for himself, there is certainly a duty to defend those of others. Mr. John Lewis has been editor of the magazine for some years, and in the July issue has an interesting account of his associations with the Scott residence and Abbotsford generally as a boy, with a further account of his attendance at a seance for the first time in 1896 when the Medium told him he had a message for him from Sir Walter Scott telling of a MS. in a safe in a certain room, which Sir Walter wished to have finished and with which he would help. Mr. Lewis wrote to Andrew Lang an account of this seance, and received the characteristic skeptical reply which dismissed the subject. Many of the things appearing in the *Psychic Gazette* suggest the question to what extent the Nirmanakayas take part in spiritualistic activities. This is a subject on which little has been said, and it is naturally one on which the most misleading information might easily be supplied.

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The *International Psychic Gazette* is, next to "Light" the most admirable of the Spiritualistic journals, and in point of readableness is perhaps ahead of its senior rival. We cannot say that we feel the intense disdain and superiority of some of our contemporaries for our spiritualistic friends. We only wish they were better acquainted with Theosophical literature and less inclined to take for granted what some of us feel is still very much under probation. But the contributions of spir-

itualism to the ethical world have been notable, and without the psychical research to which they have contributed so much, many of our friends would still be wandering in the wilderness of materialism. It is a great step even to reach the Borderland. The June issue of the *Gazette* contains a welcome centenary article on Sir William Crookes whose experiences with Katie King are classic and have never yet been satisfactorily explained by our Theosophical authorities. H.P.B. declares that "In the case of Professor Crookes' 'Katie King', the presence of a *physiological* mechanism—heart, lungs, etc.—was indubitably demonstrated." Sir William died a Spiritualist and a member of the Theosophical Society. Again we may say, *Si sic omnia!* The *Gazette* records also, to our great regret the passing of that fine old Theosophist and Spiritualist, Count Chedomille Mijatovich, formerly Serbian Minister for Foreign Affairs and Minister Plenipotentiary to the Court of St. James, and also to the Courts of Constantinople, Bucharest and The Hague. He did me the honour of paying me a visit in Toronto and we had a long talk about many occult matters. His fine spirit and breadth of view is well displayed in his volume, "The Memoirs of a Balkan Diplomatist." Count Mijatovich was much interested in Mrs. Wreidt with whom he had some extraordinary experiences which he described to me.

AMONG THE LODGES

The meetings of West End Lodge, Toronto, will be resumed September 11th after three months' vacation. The meetings are held Sundays, 3 p.m., in West End Veterans' Club House, 722 College St. Enter by east door, Crawford St. The membership at present is 13. We thank members of Toronto Lodge for generous assistance given on Sunday afternoons.—Elizabeth J. Belcher, Secretary.

✻ ✻ ✻

The following notes are extracted from

a series of discussions on Brotherhood in the Orpheus Lodge: What are we to say to the intelligent Enquirer who says, "I have read and am deeply attracted to your philosophy, but as to Universal Brotherhood and loving Humanity, the fact is the more I see of human beings the better I like dogs"; and the enquirer who makes this frank statement far from being unintelligent is usually observant, alert, and honest above the average. We must have a clear scientific hypothesis to put before him, and the only one in the field which will stand up to searching examination is the Theosophical philosophy. This teaching will show that the whole human race is one big family, which in the nature of things is so interrelated and interdependent that "we must sink or swim together"; a strictly private good or ill is an impossibility. Truly there is nothing to love or admire in the small meanness, the stupidity and pettiness which make up so much of ordinary human life, but within every human being lie the germs of greatness awaiting liberation, as the heroes, the seers and the great creators of history have proved by their lives and their attainments. Here is a race blinded and stupefied by superstition and ignorance with wonderful and glorious powers waiting to be awakened. What more magnificent task than to work for its liberation? What does it mean, what does it demand to serve this philosophy and make it as widely known as possible? Above all, the individual has to frankly realize that, "there is nothing in it for him" so when hard knocks come as they inevitably will, he will remember that he expected nothing for himself and be prepared. He has to get a new perspective and realize that this war against Darkness in which he enlists will go on for countless milleniums and to be prepared, if necessary, to lose all the battles because he knows that in the end the war will be won. Why? Because he knows that there is that at the centre of human life which will yet make it triumph over all the

baser elements. So he will be content to enter on this age-long warfare, certain that ultimate defeat is impossible and will not look for immediate or spectacular results from his efforts. To be of real use in this warfare and not merely some of the dead weight which has to be carried he has to impose upon himself a strenuous and very arduous discipline. Anyone with decent instincts can subscribe to the ideal of Brotherhood; to practice it is the biggest thing any human being can undertake. The secret desire to shine, to be looked up to, or to impose himself upon others, which is in everyone of us, will, until it has been utterly killed out vitiate all his work. What are some of the tests he can apply. If he sees another as well or better qualified than himself come and take over his work and be content and start again elsewhere; if when he is knocked out and believes himself an utter failure and out of the game, he yet has energy to cheer the others on, he can know that it was not only for himself that he was really working. We talk much of Brotherhood and yet are content to emulate the amiable familiarity of the Rotary club with its harmony based in the last analysis upon self-interest. We believe in our love of humanity but how far can we measure up to these tests of the neophyte in Brotherhood? We have been content with a washy, sentimental Brotherhood; something far more robust is needed. We have to face the straight fact that Brotherhood means nothing less than to strive to become an incarnation of the Ancient Aryan Wisdom. Anything less is to deceive oneself and become merely part of the "great Uplift".

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Heterogeneity will always have the upper hand over homogeneity, on this plane of illusions, and the nearer an essence is to its root principle, Primordial Homogeneity, the more difficult it is for the latter to assert itself on earth. Spiritual and divine powers lie dormant in every human being; and the wider the sweep of his spiritual vision the mightier will be the God within him.—Key.

WHAT I OWE TO A BOOK

By Capt. P. G. B. Bowen

A Reply to R. A. V. Morris' Review of "Fundamentals of the Esoteric Philosophy"

I have completed three months' study of a book, and it is borne in upon me that I owe a duty to the many whose position is more or less similar to that which was mine to indicate what my study has done for me.

The book of which I speak is *Fundamentals of The Esoteric Philosophy*, by G. de Purucker, M.A., D.Litt.

I began my study of Dr. de Purucker's work with, I regret to say, by no means an open mind. Since my first contact with organized Theosophy, which occurred half-a-dozen years ago I have observed with pain how the message which H. P. Blavatsky left to the world has been garbled and corrupted by persons who profess to be its interpreters and who ought to be its preservers and guardians. Like hundreds—perhaps thousands of others who observed what I observed, and who thought, more or less, as I thought, I grew into feeling that those who represent Theosophical organizations must, almost inevitably, become corrupters of the pure teachings, or fabricators of artificial parodies, either because of lack of knowledge, or because some form of self-interest urged them thereto. Notwithstanding this feeling, something deeper—inner hope fighting against outer pessimism—sent me continually searching, not merely throughout the British Isles but also in America for a School of Theosophy which existed but to preserve the Message of The Masters which H. P. Blavatsky brought to the West, and for a Teacher whose teaching would manifest the Spirit which lives in the Blavatsky teachings, and would not be a mere "Thought Form", the creation of an unregenerate human mind. Strange to say, though I encountered in my search a score or more of societies each claiming some variant of the title Theosophical, it was not until less than a year ago

that I heard of Dr. de Purucker. I confess that what I learned about him did nothing towards killing my prejudices. I looked upon certain statements which he had made as evidences of unwisdom, and was much inclined to regard him as being of one class with other, better known "revealers". Then, three months ago, as already said, a copy of *Fundamentals of the Esoteric Philosophy* came into my hands.

To show the impression which this book has produced upon me, and the change in my attitude towards its author which it has effected, I will pass in review a few of the more outstanding features of the teachings it contains. The items I select for comment are those which I anticipate will provoke adverse criticism—and have, to my knowledge already provoked it from students who otherwise might be expected to be in sympathy with the author and his aims and objects.

The FORM in which the teachings are presented will provoke (and already has provoked) adverse criticism. The book (it will be said) is chaotic, formless, filled with unnecessary repetitions, and irritating asides such as references to "The Teacher" (The Chair?), all of which may be quite in place, or readily excusable in a lecture, but not in a book.

In regard to the references to The Chair, I agree with the critics. Such things offend the student's aesthetic sense and serve no purpose in teaching him anything. They should be deleted from later editions.

The lack of form, etc., which the critic finds is to my seeing purely a surface appearance. True, the book is devoid of anything resembling *literary* form, but this is not to say that it does not possess a form which has been carefully planned. The rules of literary construction must be observed when presenting ordinary exoteric teaching in book form, because the aim in such teaching is to leave the reader with a clear-cut conception such as will satisfy his mind—for the time being at least. But in giving esoteric teachings, no such rules

apply, for the aim is not to give the student a cut-and-dried conception, but in fact to prevent him from forming anything of the kind. The esoteric teacher seeks to keep the minds of those he instructs in what may be termed a *fluid* state, and while inducing them to flow on through constantly expanding conceptions, to prevent them from crystallizing in any one. The form in which Dr. de Purucker presents his teachings has exactly the effect I describe. His methods seem to me to be practically identical with those of the Jnana Yoga Gurus, and of other non-European teachers of which I have had some experience.

The teaching concerning The Absolute will be severely criticized. A friend, devoted to the Blavatsky teachings, writes: "H.P.B. teaches of an Absolute Principle from which all proceeds, and into which all is absorbed at the end of the Maha-Manvantara... Dr. de Purucker seems to talk about every cycle of manifestation whether of an atom, or a universe as having its own Absolute, out of which it emerges, and into which it returns:... This is a meaningless absurdity".

I appreciate my friend's difficulty, but it is really only a difficulty to the finite human mind which faints before the thought of an "endless endlessness". Dr. de Purucker as I understand him, is wholly right, and he has done a great service to those who are anxious to become genuine esoteric students by putting the matter as he has done.

Let us consider this matter of the Absolute, a little. The average student, if he directs his mind towards the subject at all, thinks of The Absolute as some *thing* filling all Space, and pervading everything. But get to the bottom of his thought and it will be found that the "Space" he conceives is *dimensional* space, and not at all that which is meant by the word in *The Secret Doctrine*. Thinking of Space in this way his conception of The Absolute narrows down, absurdly, into something which to all intents and purposes is identi-

cal with the scientist's conception of an Ether of Space. He visualizes the universe, vaguely perhaps, as the manifestation of this "Absolute" of his. But all lesser entities he will think of but as manifestations of some "sparks"—that is *portions* of "the Absolute" which of course is another absurdity. The student who has allowed an idea of this kind to possess him will naturally kick violently at Dr. de Purucker's teaching, which, if considered at all, will do what the author constantly advises us to do, "break up the moulds of the mind".

The Absolute cannot of course be anything greater or lesser than absoluteness. But is there, or is there not some metaphysical difference between the Absolute which manifests in the Life-cycle of an atom, and that which manifests in the Life-cycle of a man, and that again which manifests in the Life-cycle of a Universe? Let us consider the matter. The Life-cycle of each of these entities begins in absoluteness, and ends by returning into the same state. The apotheosis of consciousness arrived at through a complete Life-cycle of self-experiences represents a return to and absorption in absoluteness. But the apotheosis of consciousness achieved through a Life-cycle of self-experiences by the atomic entity cannot be conceived to be the same as that which the human, or the universal entity achieves. Yet each is absolute. If not, then Life is not rooted in absoluteness, and the whole fabric of our philosophy collapses. To my seeing, Dr. de Purucker's teaching is wholly right. It leads the true esoteric student onward into clearer and wider conceptions, and that seems to be its purpose, not to provide "Guidebook" information. Failure to understand that to which it leads does not justify the critic in saying that the teaching is wrong.

The question of Nirvana arises naturally from that which has been discussed. Nirvana is the apotheosis of consciousness the man reaches (speaking now of the human

entity) through his complete life-cycle of self-experience. It is absorption into absoluteness, or attainment of absolute self-consciousness. Is it the end of all our endeavours, the ultimate goal, eternal rest and bliss? The average student turns with loathing from any suggestion that it is not. Even the Yogi who claims to have experienced Samadhi scorns the idea that it is not. But Dr. de Purucker teaches, quite calmly and clearly that it is not the end. Who is right? Is Dr. de Purucker, as the critic declares, a corrupter and exaggerator of *The Secret Doctrine*, letting his imagination run riot, and hurling words about in insane profusion?

Let's see whether *The Secret Doctrine*—the work which has been corrupted and exaggerated!—can help us in the matter. We do not have to go far to find something opposite. On page 2, Vol. i, we find these words, in reference to The Absolute:—

“It is the One Life, eternal, invisible, yet omnipresent, without beginning or end, yet periodical in its regular manifestations . . . unconscious, yet absolute consciousness . . . Its one *absolute attribute*, which IS ITSELF, eternal, ceaseless motion, is called The Great Breath which is the perpetual motion of the Universe”.

Now what does this “eternal, ceaseless motion” mean. It cannot mean purposeless motion round and round a barren circle, therefore it must mean (there is no alternative) “eternal, ceaseless PROGRESS”. If there is this eternal progress, how can man escape from sharing it? If he rests forever in the absolute consciousness of Nirvana he ceases to be a sharer in that “ceaseless, eternal PROGRESS which is absoluteness itself. Which is absurd. *Quod erat demonstrandum*.”

It is, again, the finite mind which can conceive a goal only as the end of effort. Yet the teaching of all true Teachers, whether they deal with the philosophy or with its practical application is different. “Desire the PATH, not the end of the Path”. The goal is PROGRESS, not the

state of having progressed.

The teachings of Dr. de Purucker concerning the Hierarchies, and his (apparent) multiplication of “The ONE, the summit or SELF of the hierarchy” will also incur criticism as exaggerations or corruptions, and yet of course he is right if only the reader has the vision to follow the LEADING which the teaching gives. It would be merely multiplying words and filling more space than an indulgent editor may be inclined to give me to set forth my own interpretation; because understanding of what I have tried to convey concerning The Absolute will lead to understanding of these matters also.

A critic says lightly that there is nothing new in the “Seven Keys” to understanding of the Esoteric Philosophy, which the author sets forth. Admittedly there is nothing unfamiliar in the enumeration of the doctrines but does the critic really understand the full import of this teaching?

The Seven Keys are: (1) Reincarnation. (2) Karma. (3) Hierarchies. (4) Swabhava. (5) Evolution. (6) Individual Self-knowledge. (7) Atma-vidya, or knowledge of the Selfless Self.

(I express (6) and (7) in my own way, but think my meaning is the same as that of Dr. de Purucker.

Now how do these doctrines constitute “Keys” to the esoteric philosophy? This is how I see the matter. Each one of those doctrines, or “Keys” has to be studied separately and severally, and fully comprehended. That done the knowledge, or wisdom gained from the study must be combined and held in the background of the mind as the basis of all further studies. Understanding of the working of Reincarnation, Karma, etc., etc., will not constitute knowledge of the Esoteric Philosophy. It will mean only that one holds so many “Keys” in one's hand. Not until one begins to apply the keys to the opening of the secret doors does one begin to penetrate into the hidden Arcanum.

The same critic finds another contradiction of the *Secret Doctrine* in the author's remarks concerning Pralaya (page 181). He contends that H.P.B. taught that Pralaya was a complete cessation of activity. But Dr. de Purucker implies that it is merely another form of activity. Now let us see what H.P.B. really did teach: On page 55, Vol. i, S.D. (b) we read:—

“This Breath, as seen, can never cease, not even during the Pralayaic eternities”.

There is a reference to the Chapter on “Chaos, Theos, Cosmos”. Study of this is recommended to the Critic.

One could go on to the extent of a decent sized volume indicating points which are sure to cause numerous worthy readers of *The Secret Doctrine* to rise in wrath and denounce them as “exaggerations or corruptions”. The answers I have already given are however sufficient indication of the manner in which, I think, all such criticisms may be dealt with. It is a fact, which I discovered during my five years' wandering in the Wilderness, that a very large number of most worthy people, genuinely wedded to the teachings of H. P. Blavatsky are not really students of *The Secret Doctrine* at all. At best they are students of certain portions of this great work, and merely readers of the rest. The result of all such partial study is to congeal the mind into rigid conceptions. Partial study will never lead to understanding of *The Secret Doctrine*. Those who criticize in the way I have illustrated, and there will be many, do not, as I hope I have shown, understand *The Secret Doctrine*. One must have some comprehensive view of the *Secret Doctrine* before one can venture to criticize a work like FUNDAMENTALS OF THE ESOTERIC PHILOSOPHY.

The simple fact to be noted about Dr. de Purucker's book is that it is a presentation of *Esoteric Instructions* and is specifically addressed to esoteric students. Its object is assuredly not to give additional information of the “Guidebook” kind, but to help to roll up another inch or so the veil which

hangs before the plan of existence. H. P. B. tells us that all that *The Secret Doctrine* does is to lift a corner of that veil. If we study her work comprehensively we will find that it does just that. We glimpse a corner of a wonderful landscape. We see roads and tracks leading on beyond the edge of the upturned corner of the veil. “We see a picture of incompleteness” as a friend not inaptly put it. Now the test to apply to Dr. de Purucker's work is, does that which he reveals to us, or rather that which he helps us to uncover for ourselves fit on to and extend the “incompleteness” already uncovered by the S.D.?

This is a question which each student must answer for himself. For myself, I can answer very definitely in the affirmative. In very many directions it has extended my vision, and these extensions fit accurately on to the view which I already possessed. In saying this I do not for a moment imply that I have grasped more than a fraction of all that the book contains. There is much, very much which eludes me in the book, but more which, though it brings no clear vision yet sets shadowy pictures moving in the upper reaches of my mind. But I note that many things are deliberately veiled from those who are not members of Dr. de Purucker's School, and I am grateful for what I have got, all the more so as it was wholly unexpected.

The greatest debt I owe to this book is not however the additional enlightenment which it has led me to, but is the fact which it has revealed to me that there is in existence a genuine Esoteric School in which the Spirit of the Masters' teachings survives. Therefore I need no longer be a wanderer in the Wilderness.

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No man can receive more or less than his deserts without a corresponding injustice or partiality to others; and a law which could be averted through compassion would bring about more misery than it saved, more irritation and curses than thanks.—
Key.

THE PURUCKER CLAIMS

It is now two years since Dr. Purucker put forward his ideas as to the future of the Theosophical Movement, and his own personal claims in relation thereto; and there has been ample time to estimate the reception and results therefrom. What are they?

I analyzed Dr. Purucker's statements in an Open Letter to him in October 1930; and there is just one statement in that letter to which I may now call attention. It is this:—"Your methods and propaganda ... must inevitably fail to achieve any wide-spread Unity."

That they have so failed can hardly be contested; nor is there any hope that they can have any better success in the future. The very limited and somewhat promiscuous "Fraternization" meetings which have been held are all to the good; but they are not the *Unity* which Dr. Purucker put forward as his aim and objective. He has stated definitely that he wished to promote a *Super-Society under one Spiritual Head*; and he has not concealed the fact that it is he himself who should be at the head of such a Super-Society. He has also spoken of the possibility of gathering all the other Societies under the "majestic wings" of the Point Loma Society. Dr. Stokes has very aptly referred to this in the May number of *The O. E. Literary Critic* in the following words:

"What difference would there be between a super-society with one spiritual head, as far as its essential character is concerned, and the Roman Catholic Church? The plan of official spiritual leadership, as existing in the Point Loma Society, is its own affair; but the moment the extension of that system is suggested, other theosophists will not only prick up their ears, but begin to show their teeth, and I am with them."

This spiritual leadership is claimed by Dr. Purucker by right of an "occult succession". There has been, and there is at

the present time, a great deal of controversy about this succession. It is claimed that it runs by appointment from H. P. Blavatsky to W. Q. Judge, and from him to K. Tingley, and from her to Dr. Purucker. At present the supporters of this succession appear to be abandoning the claim to a definite nomination by each individual turn, and to be falling back upon a natural "occult" succession in virtue of fitness for the post. Be that as it may, however, it does not alter the nature of the claim.

Now I am going to speak for myself, but I know that what I am going to say is endorsed by many of the old leading Theosophists.

I do not believe for one moment in the "succession" which is claimed. I stand by Judge's own words in the first instance, that "Madame Blavatsky has no 'successor', could have none, never contemplated, selected or notified one." But I should have held precisely this view even if it had not been so definitely stated by Judge. Apart from that, however, and whatever may have been Judge's own qualifications, the "succession" of Tingley was entirely her own doing; aided and abetted by a lot of credulous individuals ready to believe almost anything "occult" if put forward with sufficient personal aplomb. The position here was in fact exactly the same as in the case of those who accepted Mrs. Besant's "occult" claims. It is significant that so many who were devoted to Judge, and who in the first instance supported the Tingley claims, and were the leaders in the American Society at that time, very quickly found her out as soon as she assumed control, and abandoned her organization. For those who remained—well, that is their affair.

What then is the position to-day? It can be stated in a very few words. These "occult claims" stand in the way of the accomplishment of any real Unity in the Theosophical Movement as a whole. I—and others—will do all in our power to see

that they do not become a plank in the Theosophical platform as Theosophy is presented to the public.

Let it be clearly understood here that I have no concern with the Point Loma Society so long as they keep these claims to themselves. I hold very strongly that whether genuine or not, this "occult succession" should have been confined strictly to the *Esoteric* Section. Indeed, Dr. Purucker himself has told us that the very fact of making these claims public proved the claimant to be "*de facto* an impostor." Nor has he shown us how he escapes from this category. (See *Theosophical Forum*, Dec, 1931, page 88).

Now, if the Point Loma Society like to bring these "occult claims" into their own *Exoteric* Organization — that is their affair; we cannot deny them the right to do so; only they must recognize that thereby they make themselves into a theosophical *Sect*, and can only attract those who, like themselves, accept these claims. What I and others are concerned with is to prevent these from being thrust upon the Theosophical Movement as a whole.

And so the present issue is quite clear. There can be no *Unity* in the Theosophical Movement so long as any Section or Organization in it is found to be fostering and favouring (a) the worship of personalities; (b) personal occult claims; (c) the establishment of a hierarchical system. All these are as clearly in evidence in the Point Loma Society as they have been in the Adyar Society, where their disastrous nature has been so fully demonstrated. In these respects, therefore, Point Loma is only a second edition of Adyar; and if Dr. Purucker and his henchmen cannot *now* see that their "methods and propaganda must inevitably fail to achieve any wide-spread Unity"—notwithstanding all their talk about "Fraternization" under which they camouflage their claims—then they are blind indeed to the requirements of the situation, and of the Blavatsky Tradition which they profess to be supporting.

W. Kingsland.

DISSEMINATING THEOSOPHY

By James Morgan Pryse

In promulgating Theosophy by word of mouth and by the printed word there are three sorts of men (including women, of course, and even the children!) to whom it should be presented; and the form of presentation that may gain the attention of one sort may with the others be wasted on unhearing ears. The three sorts are our old friends, who appear in the Bhagavad Gita, the Tamas-persons, the Rajas-persons, and the Sattva-persons. This classification is based upon individual character, not upon any class-distinctions such as caste, rank, wealth, poverty, or social station; and instead of being clearly distinct the three classes merge one into the other, each possessing in some degree the qualities of the two others. Thus the Tamas-man, gross, of the earth earthy, is not wholly destitute of the psychic and spiritual qualities; while the Sattva-man, spiritual-minded, refined, is not altogether free from Rajas, psychic restlessness, and Tamas, mental sluggishness. It is only the Sattva-quality that enables anybody to grasp the teachings of Theosophy. To Tamas they are incomprehensible, while Rajas perverts and pollutes them. The various mountebanks who have travestied Theosophy exhibit the Rajas-quality at its very worst.

The Tamas-persons and the Rajas-persons are under the sway of the Brute World-soul, (*anima bruta*), the lower Astral Light; while the consciousness of the Sattva-persons comes under the influence of the Divine World-soul, (*anima divina*), the higher Astral Light. The dual World-soul has thus an objective and a subjective side. Clairvoyance, which is simply the Astral sense of sight, reaches only to the objective, lower Astral, and is of itself of little help in comprehending the truths of Theosophy. Tamas-persons (and even horses, dogs and other animals) may be clairvoyant and at the same time stone-blind to all spiritual verities; whereas a

Sattva-person may intuitively comprehend the verities without being able to see objectively in the lower Astral. In Yoga-meditation the disciple awakens *all* the Astral senses, but passes quickly beyond them, pressing on to reach the true Oversoul, where abides his immortal Self. Nothing has done greater harm to Theosophical propaganda than the misteaching disseminated broadcast by the self-dubbed "trained clairvoyant", whose published writings afford conclusive evidence that he is neither clairvoyant nor intuitive, is unable to perceive in the lower Astral or to apprehend intuitively the divine truths of Occult philosophy. The cause of Theosophy cannot be promoted, but is indeed stultified, by inculcating psychism, either genuine or bogus. The spread of Theosophy has been greatly retarded, almost incalculable harm has been done, by the dugpa-controlled fakers, within and without the Society, who have poisoned the propaganda with their sham psychism and pseudo-occultism.

The Tamas-persons, they who are saturated with the quality (Guna) of this physical world and of "this too, too solid flesh", make up the great majority of mankind, and just now they are undergoing such great tribulations that they need Theosophy as never before in the world's chequered history. I once heard a political orator declaiming against majority-rule. "Majorities", he asserted, "are always wrong, for ignorance is always in the majority". Like Plato, he distrusted democracy and said that the wise should hold the reins of government. But where in this age are the wise? Even if they were here no truly wise man would be willing to govern without the consent of the governed; and inasmuch as the people, though incapable of selecting wise rulers, are justly opposed to any form of government that savours of despotism, nothing remains but for them to rule themselves as best they may. Moreover, by being their own rulers (or, indirectly, by electing representative rulers,

who are more often than not incompetent and unworthy politicians, mostly Rajas-persons) the people get experience. Right now they are getting it plentifully. After slaughtering and maiming many millions of men in a war waged by one side to extend imperialism and by the other "to make the world safe for democracy" (and ochlocracy) they are now staggering under a back-breaking burden of woes, while the inefficient heads of their demoralized governments are feebly trying to devise ways and means to clean up the mess they have made and to avert still more disastrous slaughter-orgies for which the nations are foresightedly "prepared" with armies and navies weaponed with every murderous contrivance that modern science can furnish, some of these means of destruction being more frightful than is ever admitted by the military authorities, who seek by propaganda to mislead the people into thinking that the horrors to be expected in future wars have been "grossly exaggerated by imaginative writers". The T. S. is non-political; it favours no one form of government, and does not advocate capitalism, socialism or communism. But it does offer the one and only remedy for the evil conditions which the people have brought upon themselves; and that remedy is the true philosophy of life, so simple that even the Tamas-persons are capable of understanding it. They can be taught the immortality of the individual Self, the unity of all Selves, and the operation of Karma and reincarnation. In the words of the Maha-Chohan:

"Teach the people to see that life on this earth, even the happiest, is but a burden and delusion—that it is but our own Karma (the cause producing the effect) that is our own judge, our saviour in future lives—and the great struggle for life will soon lose its intensity".

But it may be objected that such teaching strikes at the roots of "modern civilization". (Notice the quotation marks!) If all men were convinced that life on this

earth is a delusion, what incentive would there be for scientists and inventors to continue their work, adding other things to the engines, motors, steamships, railroads, automobiles, telescopes, telephones, radios, artillery, machine-guns, torpedoes, bombing planes, poison-gases, and all the other adjuncts of "modern civilization"? Now, according to the dictionaries a nation is said to be civilized when a large proportion of those belonging to it have their intellectual and moral faculties and all their higher nature in large measure developed, after the nation has achieved a considerable amount of material prosperity. That puts every existing nation out of the running. There is not a really civilized nation on earth today. The best of them are civilized only in spots. Theosophy must be preached to a mass of meat-eating, war-stricken, crime-cursed semi-savages who are labouring under the delusion that they are civilized. And what is "delusion"? A standard authority, Trench, thus defines it: "A delusion is a false view entertained of something which really exists, but which does not possess the quality or attribute erroneously ascribed to it". Hence it is a delusion to view the modern nations as civilized when in fact they do not possess the intellectual and moral culture essential to civilization, though they have achieved a great amount of material prosperity, which, however, is very unevenly distributed. If men were convinced that earthly existence is "a burden and delusion", and also that Karma and reincarnation are verities, they would not thereby be discouraged from scientific investigation and the invention of useful things productive of prosperity; but the belief in Karma would certainly restrain them from giving out to the world the destructive contrivances that are now making our "modern civilization" as horrible as is debased savagery. Therefore the essential teaching that Theosophists should strive to bring home to the masses is that man's true Self is immortal and divine, while his deluded

lower self is bound by Karma to the wheel of rebirth. However, most of the Theosophical literature goes clear over the heads of "the people", the Tamas-persons. In the earlier days of the T. S. several brief text-books of Theosophy were brought out, but they all flew too high and missed the mark. Other works produced later have the same fault, besides being more or less tainted with Neo-theosophy. It is to be hoped that some Theosophist will distinguish himself by writing a simple and attractive text-book that will make Theosophy understandable by "the common people", to whom the *Secret Doctrine* is virtually a sealed book.

Once when talking with H.P.B. on the subject of Theosophical propaganda she laid great stress on the vital importance of it, and said to me that Theosophy is the world's only hope, and that if the people did not accept it "the most terrible things" would soon happen. The T. S. proved false to its trust, Theosophy made but little headway, and "the most terrible things" have happened and are still happening. Yet if only a goodly sprinkling of people throughout our Western "civilization" had accepted the Theosophical teachings and applied them the terrible things would *not* have happened. For several years after H.P.B. passed away the Theosophical propaganda was carried on energetically, but soon dissension arose in the T. S. and the various Theosophical factions gave the world a striking example of untheosophical unbrotherliness. Then the parent T. S. smothered the true doctrines of Theosophy with the slime of so-called Neo-theosophy, trotted out a "world teacher", with twelve disciples, and a dancing "world mother", and with these and similar tomfooleries made Theosophy a subject to be ridiculed by all who were unacquainted with the original teachings. Likewise not one of the factions that broke away from the parent T. S. has been disseminating pure Theosophy; in every one of them "the enemy", the dugpas and their puppets, have been

sowing tares among the wheat. The latest example of this vicious adulteration of Theosophical teachings is a book (ably reviewed by R.A.V.M. in the June C. T.) by the self-styled "Leader of the Theosophical Movement". Like the now discredited "trained clairvoyant" whose foolish fabrications were calculated to make the T. S. a laughing-stock, the author of the book in question claims to have "esoteric" information that goes far beyond anything given out by H.P.B. and her Teachers. That his claims are as false as those of the "trained clairvoyant" is apparent from the utter nonsensicalness of the "fundamentals" which he tries to foist in the esoteric doctrine, as when, to take a fair example, he asserts that the One, the Absolute, "was once in incalculable æons gone by a Man", and that there is an infinite series of such super-man Absolutes. (If the "Man" who perpetrated that "Fundamental" ever gets to be an Absolute the series will then be enriched with an Absolute Faker enveloped in a Mulaprakritic Veil of Absolute Fatuity). Even the "trained clairvoyant" would balk at plunging into such abysmal balderdash.

When an author puts forth material which he tries to make marvellous, asserting that it is esoteric, passing beyond the teachings vouchsafed by H.P.B. and the Masters, and was received by him personally from those same Masters, it should be obvious to every well-posted student of Theosophy that such claims are mendacious and that the pretended additional esoteric information is remarkable only for its foolishness. Likewise it is plain to be seen that any such fraudulent claimant to esoteric knowledge and contact with the Masters is not endeavouring to popularize Theosophy, but is merely trying to gain prestige and get himself accepted by ill-informed and dupeable Theosophists as their "leader".

There is not at this time the slightest need of any further unveiling of esoteric doctrines. Theosophists have already been

furnished with all the material they can use in the work of disseminating Theosophy, and all that any individual requires if he is qualified to enter the Path. Theosophists should devote themselves to sowing broadcast among the people the simple basic truths of Theosophy. To do so effectively they should aim at producing attractive Theosophical literature, presenting clearly and in terms easily understood the true philosophy of life that is so greatly needed in these troublous times. If the people refuse to accept it now, there will come a time in the not distant future when, as said by H.P.B., those of them who survive the tragic downfall to which "modern civilization" is helplessly drifting will be compelled to embrace Theosophy as a measure of self-preservation.

THE OCCULT IN SCOTT

(Continued from Page 160)

By Cecil Williams

Astral Bodies

The most remarkable circumstance in the vision of the seer, Allan M'Auley, is the reversal of the plaid. It would seem that the clairvoyant not only apprehended the future event but perceived his own astral body. And Scott tells us in a note, Wraiths, to *A Legend of Montrose* that "a species of apparition similar to what the Germans call a Double-Ganger was believed in by the Keltic tribes and is still considered as an emblem of misfortune or death".

Two authorities are cited by the author in the note: Rev. Robert Kirke, minister of Aberfoil and a Rev. Fraser. The former states that the seers called "this reflex man a Co-Walker, every way like the man, as a twin brother and companion haunting him as his shadow". The "copy, echo or living picture" is seen both before and after death, and "goes at last to his own herd". The entry of the double into a house was regarded as a notice to the inhabitants that

the "original" would visit them in a few days. The double accompanied the man" for ends best known to itself, whether to guard him from secret assaults of some of its own folk, or only as a sportful ape to counterfeit all his actions. The Roman [church] invention of good and bad demons and guardian angels particularly assigned is called by them [the seers] an ignorant mistake, springing only from this original".

The Rev. Fraser had been informed that the natives of St. Kilda were haunted before their death (when their inner sight might conceivably be sharpened) by the appearance of their double. One man experimented by replacing his garters with straw rope ones; and a woman put the upper part of her dress back to front; in both instances the same change was visible in the apparition and both persons died shortly after.

As in these two cases the double appeared near the individual it might be supposed that what they saw was the *linga sarira*, for this astral body cannot be projected very far, but the reference to the double entering a house some days before the owner's physical body (which we may conclude to be at some distance at the time) points rather to the *mayavi rupa*, whose range is not restricted.

The *linga sarira* is able to assume all forms (*vide*, Blavatsky's *Astral Bodies or Doppelgangers*), and this plasticity is the basis of the legends of were-wolves, weretigers, were-jaguars, etc. There is a reference to a were-wolf in a note, Manx Superstitions, to *Pevenil of the Peak*. A wild common near Kirk Jarmyn mountains was believed to be haunted by an apparition which assumed the shape of a wolf and filled the air with its howlings. The vampire bat "of Indian brake" and its supposed habit of fanning its victims to sleep are mentioned in *Rokeby* (Canto First, verse 32).

The aches those with amputated limbs say they feel in the missing members is an

intimation of the existence of an astral double: the physical arm or leg is gone, but the astral limb is still there. A reference to a similar experience is contained in *The Fair Maid of Perth* (15). Ramorny, who has lost an arm, feels his "tingling nerves stretch and contract themselves as if they still actuated the fingers that once could clutch a dagger". Hebane Dwining, the leech attending him, says the phenomenon is well known, and that there is an "occult" sympathy between the severed nerves and those belonging to the amputated limb. Dwining regrets he cannot recover the missing arm to watch the severed fingers quiver and strain; had he been clairvoyant he might have seen not the physical but the astral fingers move.

Fern seed, it was believed, could make one invisible. "They say she has gathered the fern seed," says Dandie Dinmont of Meg Merrilies, the gypsy," and can gang any gate she likes, like Jock-the-Giant-Killer in the ballant wi' his coat o' darkness and his shoon o' swiftness". (*Guy Mannering*, 45). In a note to Chapter 5 of *The Fair Maid of Perth*, Scott refers to the tradition that one Jamie Keddie "found in ancient days a ring, possessing the properties of that of Gyges, in a cavern of the romantic hill of Kinnoul, near Perth". The ring of Gyges gave its possessor the power of invisibility, according to the legend preserved by Plato (*Republic ii*), which legend is referred to in *The Key to Theosophy* (U.L.T. edition, page 93) in connection with the projection of the astral body.

In *Pevenil of the Peak*, Fenella, known to the Manx people as the Countess of Derby's "elf", was alleged to have a double, which "slept in the countess' anteroom or bore her train or wrought in her cabinet, while the real Fenella joined the song of the mermaids on the moonlight sands, or the dance of the fairies in the haunted valley of Glenmoy or on the heights of Snawfell and Barool". (16).

The *mayavi rupa* may be consciously or

unconsciously projected at the death of the physical body (*Astral Bodies or Doppelgangers*). In *The Bride of Lammermoor* Ravenswood sees the apparition of Blind Alice at the moment of her passing. Her astral form appears to wear a shroud and Ravenswood's horse refuses to proceed, sweating "as if experiencing that agony of fear with which the presence of a supernatural being is supposed to agitate the brute creation" (23).

Dame Glendinning in *The Monastery* (4) saw the astral form of her husband with an arrow in his hand, a prophetic vision, for he was afterwards killed by one of these weapons. He and Father Nicholas (true to the policy of the Church) asserted, however, that the apparition was a trick played on her, but she did not believe them for she knew that Simon Glendinning "gude man, liked not it should be said that he was seen out o' the body".

In *The Bride of Lammermoor*, Scott temporarizes with the belief in the astral body: Ravenswood is said to have met with the "singular adventure" of the apparition of Blind Alice. In three other novels the author gives a "rational" explanation of supposed appearance of the "double": it is not really the doppelganger which is seen, but the individual in the flesh. Such is the explanation of the appearance of Clara Mowbray to Hannah Irwin in *St. Ronan's Well* (38); of the several appearances of the heroine of *Anne of Geierstein* on secret errands bound for her father, president of the dreaded Holy Vehme (10, 12, 17, 22); and, in *Old Mortality* (38) of the heroine's vision of the supposedly dead hero, Henry Morton, on the eve of her wedding to another man.

The incident in *Old Mortality* was suggested to Scott by a remarkable account of astral projections related in *The History and Reality of Apparitions*, a work written by Daniel Defoe under the assumed name of Morton. Scott summarizes the story in a note, *Supposed Apparition of Morton*. To abbreviate still further: A stepmother

urged her husband to disinherit his son, whom they had not heard of for years. During one of their disputes, the woman saw a hand at the window endeavouring to open the casement. A search of the garden revealed no trace of an intruder, and the husband remarked that the devil was apt to haunt those who had evil consciences. "It was no devil", retorted the lady, "but the ghost of your son come to tell you he is dead". "He came to tell me he is alive", replied the man, and exclaimed, "Alexander, Alexander! If you are alive show yourself". At these words the casement opened of itself and the form of Alexander looked in staring angrily at his stepmother. The woman was frightened, but she turned the occurrence to her purpose, alleging that her husband had a familiar spirit.

To escape the charge the unhappy man agreed to disinherit his son, and a meeting of friends was held to execute the deed. As the wife was about to cancel the old settlement by tearing off its seal the party heard noises as if someone had come in one door and gone out another, but they saw nothing. The stepmother again essayed to destroy the old deed, but as she raised the paper the casement flew open, though fastened on the inside, and the shadow of a body was seen standing in the garden, and staring at the woman with a stern and angry countenance. "Hold!" cried the spectre, closed the casement and vanished. By mutual consent the new settlement was abandoned, and four or five months later, Alexander returned from the East Indies where he had been at the time of the occurrence. The son could not explain the apparition, but said he had dreamed his father had written him an angry letter threatening to disinherit him.

In *Marmion* the story is told of the summoning by King Alexander of Scotland of the astral body of King Edward I of England, though the English monarch was then "a thousand miles afar". (Canto third, verse 23). The Scottish king tilts with

the phantom and defeating it compels the apparition to reveal the future. Forthcoming historical events, the war with and the defeat of the Danes, are here imagined to have been shown the victor. But King Alexander had started at the sight of the doppelganger, with the result he is slightly wounded. His grazed skin bled and smarted annually on the anniversary of the uncanny encounter, (Canto third, verse 25).

An adept, says Blavatsky (*Astral Bodies and Doppelgangers*), can appear in several places almost simultaneously and she mentions the appearance of Apollonius of Tyana who was seen in two places at once while his body was at Rome. In a note to Canto first, verse 23 of *The Lady of the Lake* there is an instructive extract from *Martin's Description of the Western Islands*, which contains some curious particulars about second sight and doppelgangers, the most striking of which is that "the same object is often seen by different persons living at a considerable distance from one another".

Martin recorded that he himself had been seen by seers of both sexes at some hundred miles' distance.

"It is ordinary with them [the seers] to see houses, gardens and trees in places void of all three", he observes, "and this in progress of time comes to be accomplished, as at Mogshot, in the Isle of Skie, where there were but a few sorry cowsheds thatched with straw, yet in a few years after the vision, which appeared often, was accomplished by the building of several good houses on the very spot represented by the seers, and the planting of orchards there".

(To Be Continued.)

CORRESPONDENCE

COURTEOUSLY CONTROVERSIAL

Editor, Canadian Theosophist:—In the July C. T. the "Editors, Theosophy" quote my eulogy of Mr. Judge published early in 1896 and assert that there is "an irrecon-

cilable difference between the opinions expressed" therein and my "opinions uttered" in the June C. T. They are greatly mistaken. In that eulogy, written over 36 years ago, there is not a word that I would change today; for it expresses my appreciation of Mr. Judge and his splendid Theosophical work as accurately as if it were now fresh from my typewriter. In the June C. T. I put forth no "opinions" whatever concerning Mr. Judge, but only stated verifiable facts, my sole purpose being to show how baseless are the claims of various fakers who have alleged that in Occultism he was H.P.B.'s equal, each of those fakers claiming to be, through him, her "successor." One of them was Robert Crosbie, who asserted that he was Mr. Judge's "chela," charged by him to "reincarnate the T.S. and the E.S." Upon that false foundation the U.L.T. was erected; and as the facts in my letter strike at that sham foundation the "Editors, Theosophy" were so exacerbated that they resorted, hysterically, to the *argumentum ad hominem*.

Because Mr. Judge cherished a dream-delusion that he had a personality in India who slept sixteen or eighteen hours daily so that his personality in America could be awake during that time, or because Mr. Judge when in broken health, slowly dying of tuberculosis, and harassed by his accusers, fell into the clutches of fake spirit-mediums, and wrote foolish things in his diary, he should not be thought of with "scorn and contempt" by any good-hearted Theosophist. I felt only sorrow for him, with no lessening of brotherly affection.

James Morgan Pryse.

WANTS OPEN DISCUSSION

Editor Canadian Theosophist:—As the one absent member of the Executive at the recent meeting reported in the July number of the Magazine, may I submit the following regarding the motion passed at that meeting concerning correspondence in the Canadian Theosophist. Whilst in full agreement, of course, that the Editor should

refuse publication to correspondence which lacks the courtesy of ordinary literary usage, or when it is obviously the intention to use the Magazine to vent personal animus, I would like to point to the undoubted fact that the considerable value and success which the Magazine has achieved, a success and influence not in the least to be measured by its circulation, is due to its policy of encouraging free and open discussion on all matters of importance to the Movement.

It is the aim of every student to reach the place where he can be sure that he will under any circumstance prefer the truth to comfortable feelings, and we are working together toward the time when it will never be considered necessary to soften and water down the truth from fear of hurting someone's feelings, and therefore any alteration of policy which might threaten full freedom of discussion must be rigidly scrutinized.

For the past many years the Magazine has easily and by a wide margin been the best Sectional Magazine in the Society, and anything which would tend to lessen this margin would not be for the best interest of the Theosophical Movement. When serious students put their finest energy into contributions to the Magazine and find the Editor, because of squeamishness in some quarters, has been forced to delete probably the very point the article or letter was written to emphasize, it is not going to be, to say the least, very encouraging.

Any policy which would tend to lessen the freedom of discussion in the Magazine would therefore in my opinion markedly lower, and eventually destroy its value, and, assuming the Executive Committee have such restrictions in mind in the motion they have passed, I must emphatically dissociate myself from any such policy.

Washington E. Wilks.

Vancouver.

HESITATES OVER MAGAZINE

Editor, Canadian Theosophist:—Your Report in the July issue is hardly fair in its suggestion that those who hesitate to circulate the Magazine indiscriminately are wanting in tolerance and a sense of fraternal duty. No one needs to be sheltered from differing opinion but to put into the hands of an enquirer Mr. James Pryse's treatment of books of devotion such as THE VOICE OF THE SILENCE, or the BHAGAVAD GITA, is not a question of offending a stranger with conflicting opinion, as you put it, but of offering a stone to one who asks for bread.

It is hard enough for a Westerner to subdue his lower mental self-assertiveness which is a bar to intuitive perception of the true significance of these books. At the beginning of his quest to recommend as sound reading Mr. Pryse's aggressive method of attack upon and dissection of such work, allowing the enquirer to infer from the prominent place given to the articles in the C. T. that this is the correct approach, would, in my view, be a disservice, which loyalty to the teaching as well as fraternal duty forbids.

H. Henderson.

The "H.P.B." Library,
Victoria, B.C., Aug. 1st, 1932.

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If humanity can only be developed mentally and spiritually by the enforcement, first of all, of the soundest and most scientific physiological laws, it is the bounden duty of all who strive for this development to do their utmost to see that these laws shall be generally carried out. All Theosophists are only too sadly aware, that, in Occidental countries especially, the social condition of large masses of the people renders it impossible for either their bodies or their spirits to be properly trained, so that the development of both is thereby arrested. As this training and development is one of the express objects of Theosophy, the T.S. is in thorough sympathy and harmony with all true efforts in this direction.—Key.